



# The Clean-up Crew

by Michael Price

## Book Summary

This book features some of nature's clean-up crew, such as ants, earthworms, fungi and bacteria, and how they help clean up the environment.

## Themes

Animals birds and insects, Earth Science, Environment, Habitats, Plants

## Features of the Book

- The information contained in the photographs, captions, Did You Know? text and glossary
- Anchor words for discussion: *crew, rock, leaves, rubbish, plants, animals, forest, floor, fungi, bacteria, earthworm, ants, woodlice*
- Prepositions: *under, on, in, over*

## Strategies

*The Clean-up Crew* introduces and reinforces the following strategies:

- making connections
- finding main ideas
- compare and contrast

## Materials

- copies of the BM, pencils

## Introducing the Text

Begin by asking the students what springs to mind when you say the words *clean-up crew*. (Answers will vary, but might be something such as a group of people who clean up other people's mess or the environment.)

## Reading the Text

Ensure each student has a copy of the text. Make sure that the anchor words (*crew, rock, leaves, rubbish, plants, animals, forest, floor, fungi, bacteria, earthworm, ants, woodlice*) are integrated naturally into the discussion. An understanding of these terms will help the students appreciate the author's purpose. Encourage the students to use the information in the photographs and text to determine the strategies of making connections, finding main ideas and comparing and contrasting as you work through the book.

## Cover

Together, read the book's title and the name of the author. Point to the photograph and say *Have you ever watched ants go about their work or carry things from place to place?* (Answers will vary.) Together, read aloud the preview question on the back cover: Have you seen a clean-up crew? Point to the photograph of the child using a magnifying glass to observe nature in action. Explain to the students that there are many living things that are part of nature's clean-up crew. Say *Let's read the book to find out more about how different living things clean up the environment.*

## Title Page

Turn to the title page and read the title aloud. Discuss the photograph. *What is the child holding?* (fungi) *Together, let's find out more about how fungi are part of the clean-up crew.*

## Page 2

Point out the photograph of the boy lifting up a rock. Read the text with the students. Ask the students if

they have ever lifted up an old log or a big rock. *What did you find living underneath?* (Answers will vary.) *Let's read on to find out about the kinds of things you will find.*

## Page 3

Now turn to page 3 and point out the photograph of the earthworms. Ask the students if they have ever picked up an earthworm or observed one in the soil. Talk about what the students know about what earthworms do in the garden. Explain that earthworms are good for the soil, because they loosen it as they burrow into it. Now read the text on page 3 together. Briefly, talk about how earthworms help break down dead plants in the soil and that's why they are part of the clean-up crew. Talk about the glossary words get rid and waste. Turn to page 16 to read their definitions in the glossary.

## Pages 4-5

Point the heading and read it with the students. Read the labels of the different living things to the students and have them put up their hands if they have come across them in a park or a garden. Have them share their experiences. For example, some of the students might have a worm farm or even an ant farm at home. Many of them might have come across a slimy slug or snail at night. Say *Let's continue to read to find out why these living things are part of the clean-up crew.*

## Page 6

Point to the photograph of the woodlice and explain that these animals are called woodlice. *Why do you think they are called woodlice?* (Answers will vary, but may include because they are often found in old wood.) Ask the students to read the body copy text and caption with you.

## Page 7

Read the heading and point to the photograph of the ants. Say *Have you ever watched ants carrying things such as crumbs from the*

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*floor? Ants are very strong, and they work together.* Together, read the text. Then point to the bolded word nutrients. Ask the students if they have heard this word before. If so, what do they think that it means? Now turn to the glossary on page 16 to check the students' responses.

## Page 8

Point to the picture and ask the students what animal is under the ground (earthworms). Encourage the students to share their experiences with earthworms. Have the students read the heading, body copy text and the caption aloud with you. Now have the students compare an ant's life to the life of an earthworm. How are they the same? How are they different?

## Page 9

Read the Did You Know? text with the students. Discuss how the students might feel if they came across an earthworm that was over three metres long. (Answers will vary.)

## Page 10

Point to the photograph and ask the students if they have seen these before and what they are (fungi). Read the first sentence to the students and explain that fungi are plant-like organisms that have no leaves, flowers or roots. Remind the students that it is important to keep the main idea of the page in mind as they read. Have the students read the rest of the text with you. Tell the students that other ideas on the page often tell more about the main idea and that these are called supporting details. Now ask the students what the main idea of the page is. (Fungi are part of the clean-up crew.) Ask the students to tell you what the supporting details are. (Fungi do not move around. Fungi send out long, thin threads to search for dead plants. The threads break down the plants into food.)

## Page 11

Point to the photographs and ask the students if they have ever seen any

of these fungi. Have the students share their experiences. Read the text with the students. Remind the students that not all fungi are safe to eat and that you must never eat unidentified fungi. Tell the students that some fungi are toxic or even deadly.

## Page 12

Say *Look at the picture. Some clean-up crew are so tiny that they can't be seen with the naked eye.* Together, read the first two sentences together. Ask the students if they know what a microscope is (a machine used to view small objects). If they don't know, have them turn to the glossary on page 16 and read the definition. Together, read the remainder of the text. Remind the students that it is important to wear gloves while handling soil or to wash your hands thoroughly after touching soil because some bacteria can cause illness.

## Page 13

Together, read the heading and the first caption. Then ask the students to look at the photograph of the green vegetables. Ask *Having read the caption and looked at the photograph, what do you think you should do with the vegetables before you eat them?* (wash them) Now read the last caption with the students.

## Page 14

Read the text with the students. Talk about the bolded word recyclers and how the clean-up crew break down waste and help us use it (or recycle it) again. For instance, they break down decayed plants and animals and add nutrients to the soil.

## Page 15

Point to the photograph of the two children cleaning up an area. Ask the students if they have seen the symbol that is on the green box. Explain that it is a recycle symbol. Talk about how the two children are picking up plastics. Discuss how some plastics can be recycled and turned into something new. Ask the

students if they have ever taken part in a clean-up crew, such as cleaning up a park or a stream. (Answers will vary.) Now read the text with the students and enjoy how the author has related nature's many clean-up crews to people and what they can do to help the environment.

## Page 16

Look at the glossary. Ask the students what they notice about the glossary. (It is in alphabetical order.) Tell the students that a glossary explains the meaning of technical or specialised words and phrases used in a book. Together, read the glossary entries and definitions.

## Revisiting the Text

- Choose two animals from the book and find out three more interesting facts about them. Share your findings with a friend or the rest of the class.
- Revisit the last sentence on page 12 and point to the words *in*, *under* and *on*. Explain that these are known as prepositions. A preposition is a word that often can help tell where something is, such as bacteria in the dirt, **under** logs, **on** rocks and leaves. It might also tell when something happens. For example: The earthworm dug a tunnel **in** the morning. Write some sentences that contain the following prepositions: *in*, *on*, *over*, *under*.

## Following Up

- Imagine that you are an animal that is part of a clean-up crew. Write a brief conversation that you and three of your animal workmates might have when you come across a piece of bread that someone has left at a picnic or you come across some rotting plants in the soil. Share your work with a friend.
- Give the students copies of the BM for this title. They can compare and contrast the two featured clean-up crews.