

### BEFORE YOU READ

If young people do not act responsibly toward the environment, wild or crazy things might happen—or so this poet claims. What could those wild and crazy things be? Get ready to find out as you read “Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out” and “Turning Off the Faucet.”



**Reading Standard 3.4**  
Define how tone or meaning is conveyed in poetry through word choice, figurative language, sentence structure, line length, punctuation, rhythm, repetition, and rhyme.

# Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out

Shel Silverstein

Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout  
Would not take the garbage out!  
She'd scour the pots and scrape the pans,  
Candy the yams and spice the hams,  
5 And though her daddy would scream and shout,  
She simply would not take the garbage out.  
And so it piled up to the ceilings:  
Coffee grounds, potato peelings,  
Brown bananas, rotten peas,  
10 Chunks of sour cottage cheese.  
It filled the can, it covered the floor,  
It cracked the window and blocked the door  
With bacon rinds and chicken bones,  
Drippy ends of ice cream cones,

### WORD KNOWLEDGE

In lines 1–10 circle the **alliteration**—repetition of the same beginning consonant sound. What effect does the use of alliteration have on you, the reader?

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“Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out” from *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein. Copyright © 1974 by Evil Eye Music, Inc. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.





## OWN THE POEMS

### PRACTICING THE STANDARDS

**Tone and Meaning** Fill in the Tone Cards on the following page to analyze the tone of each poem. Share your completed cards with a partner, noting similarities and differences in your choices.

**Tone** Prepare one of these poems for reading aloud. The Silverstein poem is longer and more difficult. You might want to present that poem in a group reading. If you select a group reading, you will have to determine which lines will be spoken by which reader. In your reading, focus on pronunciation and fluency, but you will also have to think about tone. What tone do you want to convey in your poem?

### KEEPING TRACK

**Personal Word List** Record the words you learned from the poems in your Personal Word List.

**Personal Reading Log** Record these poems in your Personal Reading Log. Write a few sentences telling how the poems might be the subject of a poster you find in a hallway or classroom of your school. Give yourself 1 point on the Reading Meter.

**Checklist for Standards Mastery** Each time you read, you learn more. Check your progress in mastering the standards using the Checklist for Standards Mastery.

# Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out; Turning Off the Faucet

■ *Interactive Reading, page 287*



## Interact with Literary Texts

**Tone Cards** Use the following cards to analyze the poems you have just read. When you finish, write a brief description of the tone of each poem.

**Title:** "Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out"

**Word Choice:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Rhyme and Other Sound Effects:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Rhythm:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Tone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** "Turning Off the Faucet"

**Word Choice:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Rhyme and Other Sound Effects:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Rhythm:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Tone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out; Turning Off the Faucet

Shel Silverstein/Jeff Moss ■ page 287

## INTRODUCE

- Tell students that these poems teach students lessons about life and responsibility as they entertain them simultaneously with vivid images and humor. Ask students if they are familiar with either of the poets. If so, have them share their opinions of other poems by the poet they have read.

## MODEL

- Have students locate and read the first note, Word Knowledge, dealing with alliteration. Read aloud to students the first six lines of the poem, placing deliberate emphasis on the “s” sound. Point out to students that the alliteration in the rest of the poem may not be so heavily based on a single consonant sound, but that they should be able to find many other examples of the technique in almost every line of the poem.

## TEACH

- Have students continue reading the poems, using the side-column notes to guide their reading.
- After students have finished reading, divide the class into small groups, and have students discuss their responses to the side-column notes.
- Have students add these poems to their Personal Reading Logs.

## ASSESS

- Use the Tone Cards on *Interactive Reading* page 291 to evaluate students’ understanding of tone.
- Photocopy and distribute the “Text Reformulation” Chart in Section Three of the Teacher’s Edition to use as an informal assessment.
- Use the Comprehension Check on Teacher’s Edition page 95 to evaluate students’ mastery of the comprehension standard.

## DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout  
Would Not Take the  
Garbage Out; Turning  
Off the Faucet ↓

- **Learners Having Difficulty**  
It might be helpful for students to hear these poems read aloud, line by line, as they sit back with closed eyes and visualize what is taking place in each.
- **Benchmark Students**  
Challenge students to create comic books for one of the poems. Make sure each comic book includes the title of the poem and accurately presents the character and events in the selection. The completed comic books may be used by other students as a reader’s guide to these poems.
- **Advanced Students** Have student groups discuss other topics of personal or social importance, such as eating nutritious foods or conserving energy. Ask students to develop a fact sheet to support their cause, and then have them find or write a poem that encourages their readers to take their message seriously. Students can present their research findings and poems to each other or to other classes.

## TEACHER TO TEACHER

Both of the poems in this selection lend themselves to partnered or group reading in which two or more students take turns reading a line from a poem and explaining in prose (that is, reformulating) the meaning and tone expressed in the line through the poetic elements of rhyme, repetition, rhythm, word choice, sentence structure, punctuation, or figurative language.

# Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out; Turning Off the Faucet

## Comprehension Check

■ *Interactive Reading*, page 287

**Reading Standard 3.4** Define how tone or meaning is conveyed in poetry through word choice, figurative language, sentence structure, line length, punctuation, rhythm, repetition, and rhyme.

### Academic Vocabulary

<b>tone</b>	attitude the speaker takes toward the subject
<b>rhyme</b>	sound repeated at the ends of words
<b>rhythm</b>	musiclike pattern of stressed and unstressed sounds
<b>word choice</b>	selection of words for sound (rhyme and rhythm) and sense (meaning) in a poem

**A.** Circle the letter of the correct response to each item.

- How would you describe the pattern of **rhymes** in “Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out”?
 

**A** Only the first and last lines rhyme.    **C** Every fourth line rhymes.  
**B** Every line has the same rhyme.    **D** Every two lines rhyme.
- How would you compare the pattern of **rhythm** in Silverstein’s and Moss’s poems?
 

**F** Neither poem has a pattern of accented and unaccented syllables.  
**G** The poems have two stressed syllables in each line.  
**H** The first poem has a pattern of stressed syllables in each line, but the second poem does not.  
**J** The first poem has no regular rhythm, and the second poem has a lot of rhythm.
- Which of the following words from Silverstein’s poem shows how **word choice** affects a poem’s **tone**?
 

**A** out    **C** tangerines  
**B** gloppy    **D** fate

**B.** Suppose that you were reading these poems to younger children. What would you say to them about these poems as a brief introduction?

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# Chapter 7

## Practice Read: The Just Us Club

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### Comprehension Check, page 92

- A:** 1. B  
2. H  
3. A
- B:** Answers will vary. Sample answer: I hope my friend will learn to be friendly with everyone and not treat some people as if they were inferior.

## If We Didn't Have Birthdays . . .

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### Comprehension Check, page 93

- A:** 1. C  
2. G  
3. B
- B:** Answers will vary. You might suggest a list of tones and ask them to choose among serious, funny, sarcastic, preachy, cruel, awed, affectionate, etc.

## Save Our Earth

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### Comprehension Check, page 94

- A:** 1. A  
2. G  
3. D
- B:** Answers will vary. Most students will point out that the article is well researched, full of statistical evidence.

## Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out; Turning Off the Faucet

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### Comprehension Check, page 95

- A:** 1. D  
2. H  
3. B
- B:** Answers will vary. Students could say that there is a message beyond each poem. The poets use funny language to get the messages across to children.



**Save Our Earth** ■ Interactive Reading, page 281

Interact with an Informational Text

**Argument-Evaluation Chart** Evaluate the arguments in “Save Our Earth” by filling in the Argument-Evaluation Chart. Then, rate the writer’s argument based on your findings.

**Statement:** Although 2/3 of Earth’s surface is water, we are able to use only a fraction of it.  
**Support:** Seawater makes up 97%; 2% is frozen; and 1% is freshwater.

**Statement:** Trees and forest are very important to the environment.  
**Support:** Trees use carbon dioxide and give off oxygen; they provide homes for animals.

**Statement:** Cutting down trees can affect the climate.  
**Support:** The area grows drier, causing a change in the local climate.

**Evaluation of argument:**  
 Student answers will vary.

Literature

POETRY

BEFORE YOU READ

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WORD KNOWLEDGE

In lines 1–10 circle the alliteration—repetition of the same beginning consonant sounds. What effect does the use of alliteration have on you, the reader?

**Sample response:**

**Alliteration makes the poem funny.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IDENTIFY**

Underline the adjectives in lines 16–33 that describe the garbage. What effect do these words have on you?

**Most students will say the adjectives make the garbage disgusting.**

15 Prune pits, peach pits, orange peel,  
Gloppy glumps of cold oatmeal,  
Pizza crusts and withered greens,  
Soggy beans and tangerines,  
Crusts of black burned butter toast,  
Crisly bits of beefy roasts . . .  
20 The garbage rolled on down the hall,  
It raised the roof, it broke the wall . . .  
Greasy napkins, cookie crumbs,  
Globs of gooey bubble gum,  
25 Cellophane from green baloney,  
Rubbery blubbery macaroni,  
Peanut butter, caked and dry,  
Curdled milk and crusts of pie,  
30 Moldy melons, dried-up mustard,  
Eggshells mixed with lemon custard,  
Cold french fries and rancid meat,  
Yellow lumps of Cream of Wheat.  
At last the garbage reached so high  
That finally it touched the sky.

35 And all the neighbors moved away,  
And none of her friends would come to play.  
And finally Sarah Cynthia Stout said,  
“OK, I’ll take the garbage out!”  
But then, of course, it was too late . . .  
40 The garbage reached across the state,  
From New York to the Golden Gate.  
And there, in the garbage she did hate,  
Poor Sarah met an awful fate,  
That I cannot right now relate  
45 Because the hour is much too late.  
But children, remember Sarah Stout  
And always take the garbage out!

**INFER**

What do you think happened to Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout (line 43)?

**Answers will vary.**

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Chapter 7 Rhyme and Reason

**TEXT STRUCTURE**

This poem is a series of comical causes and effects. The first event, the original cause, is cited in line 1. The final event occurs in line 20. Underline all the events that happen in between. You should be able to find ten events.

## Turning Off the Faucet

**Jeff Moss**

If you don't turn the faucet off tight  
When you're done in the bathroom,  
You'll be wasting water.  
Also, the sink might fill up  
5 And overflow and flood the bathroom,  
And then the bathroom would fill up  
And overflow and flood the bedroom,  
And all your clothes would get soaking wet,  
And when you wore them, you'd catch a horrible cold  
10 And have to stay home from school  
And you couldn't learn anything  
Or see your friends.  
And after you'd missed school long enough,  
All your friends would forget you  
15 And you would be so sad and wet  
You'd probably just stay in bed  
Wearing your sad, wet clothes  
With your sad, wet head  
On your sad, wet pillow  
20 Until you just shriveled up and wasted away.  
And nobody would care.  
Except your parents  
And they'd be all sad and wet  
And shriveling and wasting away, too,  
25 Because you didn't turn the faucet off.

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Turning Off the Faucet From *The Best Poetry Jar* Poems by Jeff Moss. Copyright © 1995 by Jeff Moss. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

**OWN THE POEMS**

**290** Chapter 7 Rhyme and Reason

**PRACTICING THE STANDARDS**

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**291**

Graphic Organizer

**TONE**

**Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out; Turning Off the Faucet** ■ *Interactive Reading, page 287*

Interact with Literary Texts

**Tone Cards** Use the following cards to analyze the poems you have just read. When you finish, write a brief description of the tone of each poem.

**Title:** "Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out"

**Word Choice:** **great sound effects: gloppy glumps, gristly bits, globs of gooey bubble gum**

**Rhyme and Other Sound Effects:** **rhymes every two lines except lines 37–38; some funny rhymes: peel/oatmeal, ceilings/peelings, baloney/macaroni; lots of alliteration**

**Rhythm:** **bouncy and lively; four stressed syllables per line**

**Description of Tone:** **funny, silly, nonsensical**

**Title:** "Turning Off the Faucet"

**Word Choice:** **normal; expected words for the situation described**

**Rhyme and Other Sound Effects:** **none**

**Rhythm:** **conversational; some sentences repeated for rhythm**

**Description of Tone:** **serious but silly**