



Picture Books

Crashed, Smashed, and Mashed: A Trip to Junkyard Heaven

Joyce Slayton Mitchell, Steven Borns (photographer)

Tricycle Press

978-1-58246-034-5

(March 31, 2001)

Alive with vibrant photographs and teeming with fascinating facts, this book will capture young imaginations and encourage explorations into the world of auto recycling. Few topics incite as much interest as large machinery and how-things-work books. This one takes children inside a salvage yard and demonstrates the process of dismantling smashed cars—from when they come in on a flatbed trailer to when they are pulverized into all different sorts of dust.

With accessible text, direct and engaging language, and fabulous pictures, the book appeals to many age levels, ranging from preschoolers to late elementary school-aged children. The descriptions, while never too detailed or long for young children, are at the same time in-depth, and open the window to further exploration and research for older children. To supplement the text, the author also provides an expertly written glossary and a summary of recycling facts.

Teachers and parents can utilize *Crashed, Smashed, and Mashed* to broaden children’s understanding of recycling beyond the scope of household recycling. Children learn that reusing car parts is not only common, but also good for the environment: “Automobile recycling centers and salvage yards are the largest volume recyclers of natural resources in the world.”

They also learn all the different ways in which salvage yards reuse, recycle, and keep the environment clean, from draining dangerous fluids out of vehicles to reusing engine parts to recycling fabric fibers from the seats. The combination of uncommon environmental education and the straightforward appeal of photographs of forklifts and blowtorches makes *Crashed, Smashed, and Mashed* a delight for all readers.

Kate Husband