



Reel Fun
Film Festival



A Recycled Life

Grade 7-12

Documentary ~ Nominated for an Academy Award, Best documentary, Short 2007

38 minutes

This is a compelling story about life and survival. The filmmakers have captured the beauty, humor and the remarkable contrast that resonates throughout this vast wasteland of garbage. Generations of families struggle through the ongoing cycle of life. From the toxic depths of the largest landfill in Central America, a beautiful story of the human spirit arises. For decades, the Guatemala City garbage dump and its inhabitants ("guajeros") who recycle the cities trash have been shunned by society, and ignored by the government until a disastrous and fateful event in 2005 forever changed the face of the landfill and the many people who call it home.

Subject areas and themes covered in the film:
waste, recycling, community, landfills, poverty, a glimpse into Guatemalan life in the landfill, culture, human spirit, community, and optimism, humanitarianism.

Activities to complete before or after watching the film:
Answer and discuss any or all of the following:

1. Define community?
2. Are the people who work at the "dump" helping Guatemalan society?
3. How do you feel when you see these people working in the landfill?
4. What else could these people do to earn money?
5. Why do the "guajeros" seem so happy?
6. What are the dangers of working in the landfill?
7. Explain how methane gas is created.
8. Write a report about Guatemala.
9. Compare life in Canada with life in Guatemala.



10. Do we have similar problems in Canada as they do in Guatemala?
11. Are there other places in the world that have similar problems?
12. Why is it important to receive an education?
13. Who and what does UNICEF represent