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Stuff! Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

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Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway
Reading Level: Preschool, Primary
Rating: Dependable
Genre: Picture books;
Subject: Garage sales--Juvenile fiction; Animals--Juvenile fiction; Junk--Juvenile fiction; Books-Reviews;

Pinch is a pack rat, and when his neighbors organize a tag sale, he doesn't want to participate. As he watches his neighbors sell their belongings, Pinch thinks of all the new stuff he can buy if he has a change of heart and sells his old stuff. Items that had cluttered his home make their new owners happy. However, when Heddy the hedgehog suggests that the proceeds of the tag sale go to purchase a tree for the town, Pinch needs to think about it. Overnight he reconsiders, and the next day he brings his extended family with all their stuff for another tag sale to make enough money to buy a dozen trees.

The Kool-Aid® bright art is rendered in mixed media, digital illustrations. The first double-page spread depicts Pinch's home overflowing with clutter, and the last page shows the community planting a dozen new trees with a sign in the background that reads Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. The book's title is catchy but somewhat misleading. Although STUFF fills the story, the three Rs are omitted from the narrative. The reader must interpret from Pinch's behavior that he has embraced recycling. The storyline is more about de-cluttering and community involvement than recycling. Some readers may not be familiar with the term tag sale, but the illustrations allow them to see a community yard sale or garage sale. For youngsters who have difficulty letting go of possessions they no longer need, this book could be used as a discussion starter.

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