

## Action Guide

### Film Synopsis

*THE STORY OF PLASTIC* takes a sweeping look at the man-made crisis of plastic pollution and the worldwide effect it has on the health of our planet and the people who inhabit it. Spanning three continents, the film illustrates the ongoing catastrophe: fields full of garbage, veritable mountains of trash, rivers and seas clogged with waste, and skies choked with the poisonous emissions from plastic production and processing. With engaging original animation, archival industry footage beginning in the 1930s, and first-person accounts of the unfolding emergency, the film distills a complex problem that is increasingly affecting the planet's and its residents' well-being.

### Discussion Questions

- The heroes featured in *The Story of Plastic* are working on the problem across all fronts, from petrochemicals, to ocean pollution, to zero waste. Do you identify with any of the heroes? How so?
- *The Story of Plastic* illustrates how we can't recycle our way out of the plastic pollution crisis. What steps can we take to address the problem at the source? Does the film make you question your own (or your school's, or your company's) plastic use/recycling methods? What can you do to address the problem?
- The plastics value chain is complex and spans the globe. What stage of the plastic value chain (from oil and gas extraction to plastic production and distribution to consumption and finally disposal, recycling, incineration, and export) are present in your community or region? Are there any efforts by local groups to address these impacts that you can support? What are steps that you as an individual or community can take?
- How might we reimagine a future without single-use plastics? What kinds of policies and systems might we implement (both in our communities and on a wider scale) to help us get there?

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- Corporations (including the oil and gas industries and food, beverage, consumer goods and retail industries) have been pushing the pro-plastics narrative for decades. Can you cite examples of the types of false narratives they've perpetuated? Which of these narratives are debunked in the film? What pro-plastic narratives do you notice around you in the world today?
- The film reveals the links between the plastics crisis and other pressing issues: climate, human health, environmental justice, and the global waste trade, among others. What are your reflections on these intersections? Which communities are affected most?

## What Can You Do?

### Have a Discussion

Use the discussion questions above to create a dialogue with your community members after the film. We recommend preparing a mix of questions— those that are easily answered, slightly challenging, or highly complex.

### Join the Conversation

Post or tweet about the issues from the film using the hashtags #StoryOfPlastic and #BreakFreeFromPlastic. Call out the companies and officials who need to be part of the solution. Follow the heroes and organizations featured in the film and amplify their voices!

### Take Action

We're calling for corporate responsibility and pushing for public policy that puts human and environmental health above corporate profit. There are multiple active campaigns that need your support. Visit The Story of Plastic website to find an active campaign near where you live or near to your heart: [www.storyofplastic.org/take-action](http://www.storyofplastic.org/take-action)

### Join the Break Free From Plastic Movement

Learn about the work of [Break Free From Plastic](http://BreakFreeFromPlastic) members from around the world, find a group active in your region, or get support starting your own initiatives in your community. Whether you're a new activist or established organization, the global Break Free From Plastic movement is Join the movement [here](http://here).

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## Educational Resources

[These viewing guides](#), created by the good folks at Algalita, were designed to assist educators and students with understanding the film content, processing emotional responses to the film, facilitating meaningful conversation, and taking actionable steps toward making change in their community. There are two versions of the materials:

- **Distance Experience Learning Guide** - Designed for educators to facilitate virtual screenings and discussions with their students during the pandemic stay-at-home time frame.
- **In-classroom Experience Guide** - Designed for educators to facilitate in-classroom screenings and discussions with their students once they return to the classroom. Educators may adapt activities and discussions from this guide into their application of the Distance Experience Learning Guide for virtual screenings.