

Worms Eat My Garbage!

Grade Level: Preschool- 2

Time Needed: 30-45 minutes

Supplies: Puppet Theater, Puppets, Magnifying Glasses/Boxes, Redworms, Dishpans

Location: Classroom (Newspaper on the tables or floor will be helpful, as some of the worm bedding will fly out of the dishpan

Objective: Students will learn about the different jobs of worms in nature during a puppet show. They will then learn that special composting worms can be used to eat certain kitchen scraps.

Introduction: A puppet theater needs no introduction-but everyone has so many questions and wants to look behind the theater.

Puppet Show: *Wiggle Forest Puppet Show*-the students will meet 4 worms
Mick the Earthworm (construction worker)-likes to dig tunnels
Julia the Night Crawler (chef)-likes to mix the dirt
Bubba the Redworm (big eater)- eats $\frac{1}{2}$ his body weight in food/day
Anna the Redworm (baby)- likes to teach kids the word "castings"

- Review at the end of show-what jobs did the worms have?
- Who wants to meet some real redworms?!!!!

Activity II: *Up Close & Personal with the worms!*

Take worms out of the *Worm-A-Roo* Worm Bin and put them into dishpans for the different groups.

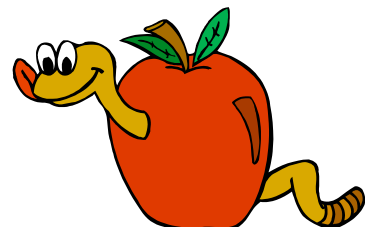
Goals for this part of the activity:

- Hold a worm in your hand and see if it is a good dancer
- See if we can find worm cocoons!
- Find out what the worms have been eating

Activity III: What do redworms like to eat?

On the felt board, we will make three lists, Foods that are *Yummy* to Worms, *Yucky*, or Foods that are *Too Stinky* for an indoor worm bin.

For classes that will be adopting the worm bin for 3-4 weeks, we will discuss the proper way to WORMSIT.



Worms Eat My Garbage!

Grade Level: 3-Adult

Time Needed: 45-60 minutes

Supplies: Magnifying Glasses/Boxes, Redworms, Dishpans, Calculators

Location: Classroom (Newspaper on the tables or floor will be helpful, as some of the worm bedding will fly out of the dishpan)

Objective: Students will learn about vermicomposting (composting with worms). The students will fill out a science worksheet about redworms while rotating through four worm stations.

Introduction: Explain the word vermicomposting, and the important role that composting (of any kind) will play in addressing the amount of organic waste currently headed to Iowa landfills.

The students will rotate through 4 stations, spending 6-8 minutes at each station.

- Station I: Excavation Site-What do redworms like to eat? Why don't we use Earthworms? What food items would we exclude?
- Station II: Worm Trivia- 4 problem solving questions (calculator needed)
- Station III: Up Close & Personal- Worm Anatomy- Does it have teeth? How does it move? Do you find any cocoons?
- Station IV: The Finished Product- Look at the finished compost-What should we do with it? Are there other critters in the worm bin?

- Gather together and go over the worksheet.
- For the 3rd & 4th grade students try having them complete the "Worm Food in Your Trash" handout (page 63 from *Worms Eat Our Garbage; Classroom Activities for a Better Environment*). Book is included in the Bremer County Recycling *Tub of Worm Stuff*.
- For classes that will be adopting the worm bin for 3-4 weeks, we will discuss the proper way to WORMSIT. The students will weigh and record the types and amounts of food scraps fed to the redworms in the Worm Log.

