



DIY ACTIVITY

MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST GRADES 3-5

OBJECTIVES

- Use microbial decomposition to dispose of food waste.
- Recognize that decomposers are present all around us.
- Understand the role of decomposition in nature.

PROCEDURE

1. Put on your gloves.
2. Mix food waste together in a large bowl or other container.
3. Add a layer of dry twigs at the bottom of the large container.
4. Then add a layer of food waste on top of the twigs.
5. Next add a layer of dry compost (dry leaves).
6. Using the watering can, sprinkle water over the top till damp.
7. Leave your compost for natural decomposition.
8. The process is slow (could take 3-6 months) but eventually you will have a rich soil like material to use in a garden.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Twigs
- Dry leaves
- Food waste (such as egg shells, coffee grounds, tea bags, apple cores, orange and banana peels—no meat)
- Plastic gloves
- Large bowl or other container for mixing
- Large plant pot or other container with holes on the bottom
- Watering can

WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?

Decomposition is nature's way of recycling. Dead plants and animals are broken down into basic components that become part of the Earth. Decomposition happens when decomposers, such as insects, bacteria, and fungi, eat and digest plant and animal remains.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

Research which types of food waste can and cannot be composted and create posters to share with your family and friends. You might want to post one on your composting container! You can also start a composting program at school!

⚠ Wear gloves when working with food waste. Do not compost meat or dairy products.