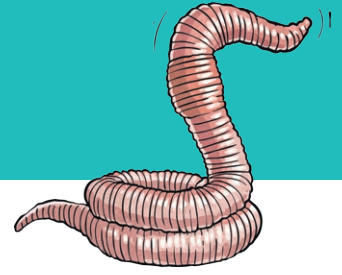




Teach Outside the Box: STEM

Make Your Own Wormery



Introduction

Worms are everywhere! It is estimated that in every square metre of earth there will be anywhere from 70 to 700 worms depending on soil conditions. Making your own wormery enables you to study the habitat and lifestyle of worms in the comfort of your own classroom.

You will need:

- Earthworms
- Large, clean jar or clear container
- Plastic tray
- Soil
- Sand
- Gravel or small stones
- Water
- Old leaves, plants or flowers
- Fruit and vegetable peelings
- Black paper
- Sticky tape
- Somewhere cool and dark (like a cupboard)

What to do:

1. Begin by washing and drying your chosen jar or container. Then place the container into the plastic tray.
2. Pour in some gravel or small stones - this will help to drain any excess water.
3. Then add alternate layers of sand and soil.
4. Continue adding layers of sand and soil until you have nearly filled the container to the top. Each layer should be about 2cm deep. There needs to be about 5cm of space at the top of the container.
5. Add just a little water so that the top layer of soil is damp.
6. Then find some earthworms to put into your wormery! Carefully place the worms onto the top layer of soil.
7. Next, gently place some leaves, plants or flowers and some fruit and vegetable peelings on the top.
8. Then poke some holes into the lid and place onto the container.
9. Stick the black paper around the container and place somewhere cool and dark, like a cupboard.
10. Leave for a few days and then see what the worms are doing! Remember to hold the container carefully and place it on a table to keep it steady. What is happening to the different layers? What has happened to the leaves and food on top of the soil? Can you see any patterns the worms have made in the soil?



11. To care for your worms, ensure that the contents of the wormery are kept moist – not too wet and not too dry. Earthworms don't like to be kept anywhere too hot or too cold, so somewhere cool is best. New food can be added once the first lot has been eaten. Plants, leaves and flowers or food scraps are good, and some newspaper or cardboard scraps can also be added.

Links

Look at a wormery being made outdoors. How does it compare with the classroom one?

How to Build A Wormery

Teacher Note

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