



Environmental Education for Preschoolers



Reusing Paper





Reusing Boxes





Indiana's Environment and You

Activity: Paper Pounds

Materials: Paper, scale, bag

Instructions: Have students collect paper for 5 days. At the end of the week have each student weigh their bag of paper and see how much the class collected in a week.

Talk with students about what they can do with all their paper. Recycle or Reuse.



Indiana's Environment and You

Activity: Air in Motion

Purpose: To show that even though air is invisible, you know it's there because you can see the effects of air in motion, and you can feel the pressure of wind.

Materials: Paper, crayons

Instructions: Take students for a walk to the playground to determine how they know the air is there. Ask them to draw and record what they see or smell. Students will use their senses to learn about the nature of air. Although we usually don't see air, we frequently experience the effects of air's actions.

www.Idem.IN.gov/4124.htm



Composting with Worms





Items needed for composting with worms:

- Worm Bin (dark in color - plastic or wood)
- Bedding
- Water
- Worms
- Food Scraps



Bedding

- Newspaper
 1. Shred paper and soak in water for 24 hours
 2. Wring excess water out of paper (wet sponge)
 3. Fluff paper and add a handful of soil
 4. Cover bottom of bin 4-6 inches



Water

- Should not need additional water; bedding & food should provide enough moisture
- Bin too dry: lightly spray with water
- Bin too wet: add strips of cardboard or paper



Worms

- Worms – Red Wigglers
- Cocoons (worm eggs)
 - Cocoon lemon shaped
 - Cocoon starts off yellow colored, turns dark red/brown as worms mature
 - 5-11 weeks for cocoon to hatch
 - 3 worms per cocoon
 - 2 - 2 ½ months for hatchlings to mature
 - In 4 months population will have tripled







Food

- Fruits and vegetables
- Leaves (oak leaves too acidic), flowers, grass clippings
- Coffee grounds/filter and tea leaves/grounds
- Eggshells (rinse and crush)
- Start slow with food, check every few days in beginning to see how much they eat
- Avoid overfeeding



Harvesting Castings (cleaning worm container)

- Castings will need to be harvested every 4-6 months
 - Let worms harvest themselves by pushing castings to one side of bin and add new bedding to other half. Feed worms only on far side of bin with bedding.
 - Worms will migrate in a few weeks
 - » Or



Harvesting

- You will need a tarp, 2 containers, and some time.
 - Lay tarp out and make four cone shaped piles
 - Let the piles sit while you clean bin and add new bedding and soil
 - Remove the top two inches of casings from each pile and put it in one container, worms will move towards the bottom of the pile. Wait 10 minutes and repeat.





What to keep an eye on

- Molds and Fungi
 - Naturally helps break down food
 - Only problem if people have allergies
- Fruit Flies
 - Bury food
- Worms trying to escape
 - Too hot, too wet, too many worms in bin



5-Star Program for Child Care



- On-site Assistance
- Self Assessment
- Recognition
- Lead Risk Assessment
- Placemats, Posters, Materials, etc.



Who can participate?

- Licensed Centers
- Licensed Homes
- Registered Ministries
- Must be in compliance with state regulations
- Must operate more than four hours a day, 10 consecutive work days
- Must care for more than 5 children



The Nitty Gritty of the Program

- Can apply for 1, 3, or 5 stars
- Completely voluntary
- No bearing on licensing status
- Must reapply every 2 years



Three Core Issues

- **Environmental Threats**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Environmental Stewardship**

» See application



Environmental health threats to be on the lookout for:

- Lead
- Mercury
- Radon
- Asbestos
- PCBs
- Mold and Moisture
- Pesticides
- Secondhand Smoke
- Carbon Monoxide





Environmental Contaminants can Affect Children Differently than Adults

- Children may be more highly exposed to contaminants
- Children may be more vulnerable to the toxic effects of contaminants.

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