

## Topic: COMPOSTING

**MAIN MESSAGE:** Composting allows us to reduce our trash and help our community grow in a healthy, sustainable way.

### VOCABULARY:

- 1) **Waste** - A material that is thrown away or discarded.
- 2) **Organism** - An individual living thing.
- 3) **Composting** - The process of breaking down organic materials into nutrient-rich compost that can be used as fertilizer for plants and flowers.
- 4) **Organic Materials** - Living things that come from the remains of dead plants and animals.
- 5) **Nutrient** - Something that plants, animals and people need to live and grow.
- 6) **Bulking Agent** - Bits of material that create space and thus, airflow, within a compost heap.
- 7) **Fertilizer** - A product that adds nutrients to soil, which helps grow healthy plants. Fertilizer comes in organic (compost) and inorganic (synthetic) versions. The inorganic type are produced using natural resources, which means their production is unsustainable and cannot be continued indefinitely.  
  
*\*Note to Teachers: We realize this definition might be a little too complex, but the aim is to underscore the negative impacts of synthetic fertilizers and help the kids understand that compost is a better alternative.*
- 8) **Vermicompost** - A process that uses worms to break down food scraps and recycle them into compost.
- 9) **Reduce** – To make smaller or less in amount, degree or size.
- 10) **Waste-to-Energy Facility** - A facility that burns trash to produce steam or electricity.
- 11) **Mulch** - Ground up trees and branches that are used in gardens and landscapes to conserve moisture, improve soil health and reduce weed growth.
- 12) **Food scraps** - Leftover bits of food that are uneaten, or that resulted from food preparation. These can come from your home or businesses such as grocery stores, restaurants and schools. Food scraps are an example of organic materials that can be composted.

*Compost Vocabulary Continued –*

- 13) **Microscopic** - Something that is too small to be seen by the unaided eye, but can be viewed under a microscope.
- 14) **Bacteria** - Tiny living beings, also called microorganisms. They are neither plants nor animals; they belong to a group all by themselves. Bacteria are tiny single-cell microorganisms, usually a few micrometers in length that normally exist together in millions.
- 15) **Decompose** - A process that means to break down or decay; to separate into components or basic elements.
- 16) **Ton** - A unit of weight equal to 2,000 pounds.
- 17) **Thrive** - To grow or develop well or vigorously.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Compost: Acrostic Poem

**C** \_\_\_\_\_

**O** \_\_\_\_\_

**M** \_\_\_\_\_

**P** \_\_\_\_\_

**O** \_\_\_\_\_

**S** \_\_\_\_\_

**T** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Compost: Creative Writing

**Directions:** Pretend you are an apple that has been eaten down to its core. The person who ate you puts you in their compost bin. Write about your composting experience.

Remember to write this report from the viewpoint of the apple core!

- First, a good resource for you to use is [OCRRA.org](http://OCRRA.org).
- Next, take notes on this form to help you remember the composting steps.
- Be factual, but add humor and voice to make your writing lively.
- Good luck and have fun!

First, \_\_\_\_\_

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Next, \_\_\_\_\_

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Then, \_\_\_\_\_

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After that, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Finally, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Great job! The hard part is done. Now it is time to organize your writing and prepare your final copy!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Compost: Memory Match Vocabulary

Directions: Draw a line to match the **bold** vocabulary word with its definition.

<b>Organic Materials</b>	the process of turning what you may think is waste into reusable material	Breaking down of organic materials into nutrient-rich compost
to break down	<b>Vermicomposting</b>	<b>Decompose</b>
<b>Composting</b>	ground-up trees and branches used for gardens and landscapes	food scraps and yard trimmings
composting with a special kind of worm that digests food quickly	<b>Recycling</b>	<b>Mulch</b>

## Compost: Memory Match Vocabulary Answer Key

<b>Organic Materials</b>	the process of turning what you may think is waste into reusable material	Breaking down of organic materials into nutrient-rich compost
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Compost: Word Bank

**Directions:** Fill in the blanks using words from the word bank.

1. Food scraps and yard trimmings are called organic \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the breaking down of organic material into nutrient rich compost.
3. We can add \_\_\_\_\_ to soil to increase its ability to grow big and beautiful plants.
4. Composting is something you can do at \_\_\_\_\_.
5. If you don't have space inside to compost you can create a compost bin indoors with a little help from some unlikely friends called \_\_\_\_\_.

Word Bank		
Fertilizer	Worms	Materials
Home		Composting

## Compost: Word Bank Answer Key

1. Materials
2. Composting
3. Fertilizer
4. Home
5. Worms

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Compost: Test

**Directions:** Answer the following questions after watching the Compost video.

1. What effect does composting have on our soil?
  - A. None at all
  - B. Fertilizes the plants
  - C. Makes the soil smell good
  - D. All of the above
2. What causes the food scraps and yard waste to decompose?
  - A. More food scraps
  - B. Fluorescent lights
  - C. Microscopic bugs and bacteria
  - D. None of the above
3. What effect does a special kind of worm have on your compost pile?
  - A. Breaks down your food
  - B. Breaks down your yard waste
  - C. Turns it into compost
  - D. All of the above
4. What effect does OCRRA have on our local businesses?
  - A. Will compost their food scraps
  - B. Will clean their garbage pails
  - C. Will plant their flowers
  - D. All of the above
5. What can cause our plants to thrive and be beautiful?
  - A. Bicycle tires
  - B. Compost
  - C. Garbage
  - D. Snow

## Compost: Test Answer Key

1. B. Fertilizes the plants
2. C. Microscopic bugs and bacteria
3. D. All of the above
4. A. Will compost their food scraps
5. B. Compost