Lesson 1

What is Vermicomposting?

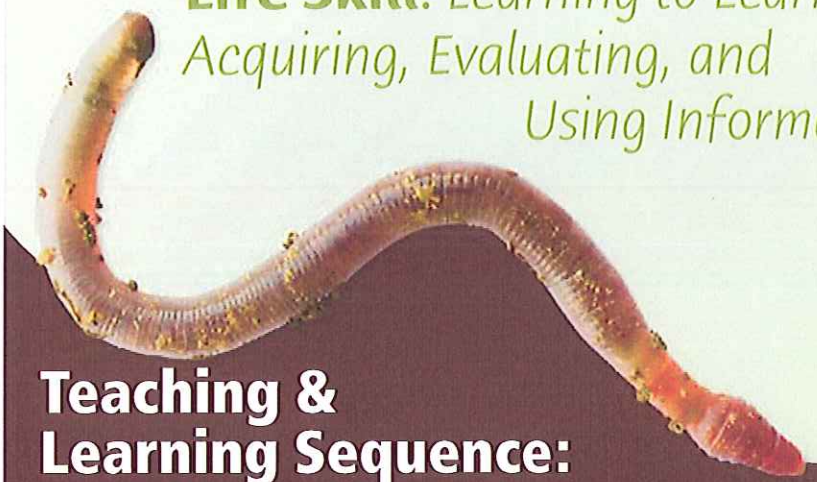
Introduction to Vermicomposting

Length of Lesson:
45–50 minutes

Materials

- PowerPoint presentation on vermicomposting
- Vermicomposting statement cards for evaluation

Life Skill: *Learning to Learn—Acquiring, Evaluating, and Using Information*



Standard Course of Study:

Competency Goal 1: The learner will conduct investigations to build an understanding of the interdependence of plants and animals.

1.1 Describe and compare several common ecosystems (communities of organisms and their interaction with the environment).

1.2 Identify and analyze the functions of organisms within the population of the ecosystem:

- Consumers
- Decomposers

Learning Objectives:

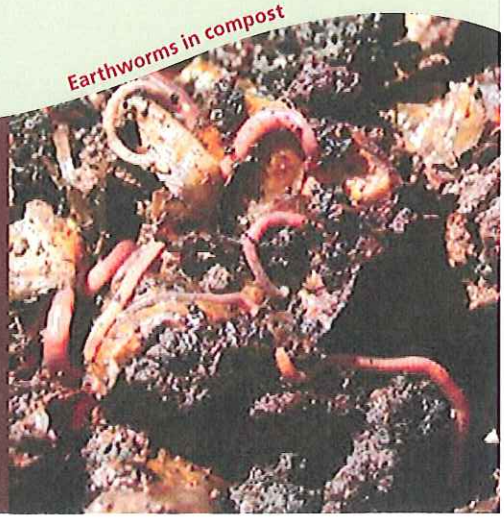
By completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- **Identify** the concepts of vermicomposting
- **List** several advantages of vermicomposting to recycle food waste
- **Indicate** how vermicomposting is beneficial to plants and soils
- **Recall** some ways earthworms have influenced history
- **Describe** categories of earthworms

Teaching & Learning Sequence:

Begin the lesson by asking students to share examples of organic material decomposing, such as rotting food, decaying animals on highways, or decomposing leaves in the yard. Explain that the decaying process is a natural part of the life cycle of living things, and that all organic material begins to decompose, or decay, once it dies. Explain that decomposing material can be used to enrich soil and add nutrients by using worms in a process called *vermicomposting*. Vermicomposting uses worms and microorganisms to convert dead organic matter into nutrient-rich humus. The organic matter passes through the worm's digestive tract and is excreted as castings.

At this point, you may use the PowerPoint presentation to help present information on vermicomposting.



Earthworms in compost