

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

EWV INTERSTITIAL 111: MS MOLE

Worms in compost

Written by Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson

FOLLOWS: "Composting"

CONNECTION: More detail on what worms do to turn leaves and veggie scraps into compost.

CURRICULUM: Worms eat dead leaves and what "comes out the other side" is an important part of the soil.

Goals: LS5. Begin to understand that animals and plants depend on other living things and nonliving things in the environment to meet some of their needs: [The kids realize that worms help turn old food and leaves into new soil for plants.]

ES3b Demonstrate an awareness of and the ability to discuss in simple terms the need for conservation, recycling, and respect for the environment. [The kids learn that their fruit and veggie scraps can be composted]

FIRST DRAFT: 3/11/2019

1. INT CLASSROOM -- DAY

Open on Ari holding an apple core, approaching the garbage can.

MZ. MOLE

Ari, bring that apple core over here. I have a special garbage can for leftover fruits and veggies!

Mz. Mole shows him a mini garbage can of veggie and fruit scraps and puts Ari's apple in. Elinor and Olive come over, looking interested.

ELINOR

What's that little garbage can for, Mz. Mole?

MZ. MOLE

This garbage will be someone else's lunch!

ARI

Gross! Who would eat that?

MZ. MOLE

Worms! To them it's delicious! I'll tell you all about it in today's story time.

The kids gather round. She opens a book with a diagram of a the compost cycle [apple -> apple core -> soil -> tree -> apple...] on the cover.

2. INT COMPOST PILE -- DAY

We see a pile of red and yellow leaves and fruit and veggie scraps.

MZ. MOLE (CONT'D)

Nature has a wonderful way to reuse leftover food, and also old leaves.

ARI

That's compost! We do that at home.

We zoom into the pile, showing leaves and scraps in more detail. As we watch, they get old and dry and brown.

MZ. MOLE

That's right! If you pile up leftover fruits and veggies and old leaves, it will turn into new soil after a while.

We see a time progression [sunrise/sunsets?] as the pile turns into rich soil.

ELINOR

That's so INTERESTING, Mz. Mole!
But HOW do leaves and leftovers
turn into new soil?

As it turns into soil, we see worms are wriggling around inside.

MZ. MOLE

That's a great question, Elinor!
The leaves and food get dry and
crumbly, but there are also some
special helpers. Worms! They eat it
up!

We see the worms diving in and eating with gusto. <SFX:
CHOMP, CHOMO>

ARI

Yuck! <beat> Wait, do they LIKE it?

The worms stop eating for a second.

MZ. MOLE

It's their favorite!

The worms dive in with renewed energy. <SFX: CHOMP, CHOMO>

OLIVE

Eating the old stuff turns it into
soil, Mz. Mole? How does that work?

We zoom in on the worms, see the food going in their mouths.

MZ. MOLE

Well, the worms eat the leaves and
leftovers and then when they... Um,
when it comes out again, it becomes
part of the soil!

We see worm casings coming out of the back of the worms.

ARI

At home, we put the new soil in our
garden.

We see the compost sprinkled into a garden.

MZ. MOLE

Yup! It helps other plants grow.

OLIVE
And those plants can make more food
for US! It's all a big circle!

The book illustration shows the cycle.

3. INT CLASSROOM -- DAY

All the kids are excitedly putting their leftover apple cores, and orange and banana peels into the compost bin.

MZ. MOLE
Look at all this wonderful worm
food!

OLIVE
First it's lunch time for us....

ELINOR
...then it's lunch time for the
worms!