

Mini-lesson Feed the Soil



grades 3-5



20 minutes

Objectives

- Students learn what composting is.
- Students learn how composting can help our environment.
- Students take action to try composting for themselves.

Essential Questions

- What is composting?
- What are the benefits of composting?
- How can composting help our community?

This Mini-lesson was written by ThinkGive Student Advisory Board member, Sophia Cherawala.

MEDIA TO PREP

Video: [Composting for kids](#) (5:56)

(Digging Deeper) Video: [Making a homemade composter](#) (2:53)

THEMES

Self-awareness
Community
Social responsibility

Vocabulary

COMPOST: verb: to collect and store plant material so it can decay and be added to soil.

Before you Begin

- If doing the Digging Deeper and making a compost, you will need 2 liter bottles, dirt, shredded paper, leaves, water, and some food for them to compost with.
 - Place it somewhere where they have sunlight.
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Program Connections

This activity is focused on giving to the environment—a theme that runs through all of our core programs. Visit [Our Programs](#) page to learn more.

THINK • GIVE

What is Composting and How Does it Work?

Watch: [Composting for Kids](#) (5:56). In this brief video, students will learn about compost, the importance of closing the loop on their food system and how to separate food scraps effectively.

Discuss:

- Have you composted before? If so, when and where?
- What goes in compost? What goes in the trash?
- How can composting help our Earth?
- What are some of the challenges of starting composting?
- What is a small step you could take towards being someone who practices composting? If you're already a composter, how could you help others to start?

Digging Deeper

Watch: [Making a homemade composter](#) (2:53).

Explain: Now that we have learned what composting is all about, let's start a compost bin at home and/or in our classroom. Although the process is slow, we are helping create new life!

Instructions: Cut off the top of the bottle and use a push pin to poke holes in the bottom. Add dirt, paper, leaves, and then your food to the bottle. Pour some water into your bottle and leave it in the sunlight (use top of bottle as a cap). After seeing your compost turn into dirt, go outside and spread it around to help plants grow.

Discuss:

- How is composting a cycle? (what comes from the ground can go back into the ground)
- Can we use composting in our everyday lives?

CONNECT + CLOSE

Inspiring Others

Explain: We can all make a change not only by taking action, but by inspiring others!

Discuss:

- Can you inspire your family with this new knowledge to think about composting at home?
- Can you find a composting program in your town that you could join?
- Is there someone you could talk to about starting a composting program at your school?
- Could you make a presentation at a school meeting? Or make posters to spread the word?

ACTION

Take a step towards being a composter at home, and/or take an action to inspire someone else! Think about the ideas that came out of the brainstorm and try to make one a habit.

REFLECTION

Discuss or have students journal:

- What items did you put in the compost bin?
- What, if anything, was challenging about composting?
- How can composting help the environment in the short-term? In the long-term?