

# COMPOSTING FOR HEALTHY SOIL

## GRADE LEVEL:

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

## CONCEPTS TAUGHT:

Composting, sorting, identification

## ACTIVITY TIME:

20 minutes

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

What is compost made of?  
What can be composted?  
Why is it important to compost?  
What makes soil healthy?

## MATERIALS:

News paper, twigs, leaves, fruits and veggies, plastic baggies, granola bar wrappers, meat, bread, tennis ball, etc.

Composting bin & garbage bin

## OBJECTIVES:

Students will understand the importance of composting.

Students will be able to sort and identify items that can and cannot be composted.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Discuss the decomposition process of matter (food) and how nutrients are recycled to create healthy soil. Show students soil with compost added, and compare to soil that does not have compost added. (5 minutes)
2. Discuss what students think can and cannot be composted. Reach clarification and understanding through discussion.(5 minutes)
3. Break students up into small groups with parent volunteers. Each small group will have a compost pail, a trash pail, and a pile of materials that are either compostable, or non-compostable. Ask students to sort the materials as either compostable or non-compostable. (5 minutes)
4. Review students' sorting, and discuss how composting can be implemented in their homes. (5 minutes)

## KEY:

Can be composted: News paper, twigs, leaves, fruits and veggies, bread, etc.

Cannot be composted: Plastic baggies, granola bar wrappers, meat, tennis ball, etc.

## EXTENSIONS/MODIFICATIONS:

This lesson can be continued in the classroom by building a classroom compost system, and comparing nutrient levels of soil with compost vs. soil without compost.