



Decomposers: Earthworms Do Good Work

NGSS Addressed

K-LS1-1 Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.

2-LS4-1 Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

3-LS4-3 Construct an argument with evidence that in a particular habitat some organisms can survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.

3-LS4-4 Make a claim about the merit of a solution to a problem caused when the environment changes and the types of plants and animals that live there may change.

CCSS Addressed

K.RI.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

1.RI.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

2.RI.1 Ask and answer such questions as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

3.RI.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

4.RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

5.RI.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.



Materials

Copies of the text “Decomposers: Earthworms Do Good Work” for students in 2nd- 5th grade.

Success Skills

- **Collaboration** with peers.
- **Communication** of ideas.



Challenging Question

How can I make sure my seeds grow in the school garden?

(K-5) Access prior knowledge

Say: Authors of informational text communicate ideas and facts about a topic they want you to understand. *Good readers keep questions in their mind while reading informational texts.* When you read a text, you do not need to memorize every word you hear or read.

Ask: What questions should you keep in your mind to help you understand a text? Think about your answer and talk to your group about some of the answers you have.

Say: Good readers of informational text are able to *ask and answer questions about the text*, and use the text to supporting their answers.



Explore

Kindergarten through Fifth Grade Explore

Write the Challenging Question on the board.

Explain: There are some reading strategies that can give you clues to determine answers or help you ask questions about the text.

- The title might give you a clue. Read the title to students. (“Earthworms Do Good Work”) Look at the picture. This tells you the *topic*, perhaps, but not what the author wants to tell you about the topic.

Ask: What do we know about decomposers? Talk to your shoulder partner (or table group) about earthworms. Why are they important when we are growing a garden?

Explain: When we look a text before we begin reading it, it is called *browsing* a text.

Ask: Do you think browsing will give us all the information we need to know about a text?

Say: we must actually read the text to see if our browsing was correct. We need to check (make a checkmark in the air) for understanding by reading the text, and then looking through the text again to check that we understand what the author is telling us.

- Read the text “Earthworms Do Good Work” aloud to the students (K-1) or chorally (2nd-5th) with the students. Remind students to keep this question in their mind throughout the story: *Why are earthworms important when we are growing a garden?*
- When finished reading the text, have students discuss in groups or with partners the role of earthworms (and other decomposers) in the garden

Kindergarten through Fifth Grade Revision and Reflection

Have students draw a picture of an earthworm and write about the benefits of having them in the garden.



Decomposers: Earthworms Do Good Work



Earthworms live underground. Do you know how wiggly worms help plants?

Earthworms dig tunnels in the dirt. The tunnels help bring air and water into the dirt. That keeps the dirt wet and healthy.

Earthworms eat dirt and leaves as they make tunnels. They leave their droppings in the soil. Those droppings help the soil stay healthy. Plants grow well in healthy soil.

Some people buy earthworms to put in their gardens. Those people want to keep the soil in their gardens healthy!

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