



VICTORY GARDENS

Lesson and Activity Suggestions for Grades K - 2

Worms

As you know, Victory Gardens were gardens that Americans planted during a time when our soldiers were fighting in a big battle called World War II. During that time, food was in short supply, and Americans were asked to plant vegetable gardens to make sure that families had healthy foods.

Children planted victory gardens at their schools, adults planted victory gardens at their place of work, and no matter where they lived, in the city or in the country, families planted Victory Gardens together.

When the fruits and vegetables were harvested, families, neighbors, and coworkers shared what they had grown. Food could be eaten fresh or canned for later use in the winter. Everyone worked together, and everyone shared.

How is your Victory Garden growing? Have you seen any changes? In earlier lessons you learned that plants need air, water, and soil to grow, vegetables and fruits and how to know the difference. You've also learned about the important parts of plants and flowers, and in your last lesson, you learned all about soil and mud.

In this lesson, you will learn about our slimy, slithering little friends that live in the soil under our garden plants and help them grow. That's right...WORMS! Ready to get your hands dirty again? Me, too! Let's go!



Worms: Nature's Helpers

Have someone read this information to you and discuss together. You can then use this information when you complete the activities and worksheets. Pages 1-3 may be best suited for your Kindergarteners, while pages 4-5 may be best suited for your 1st and 2nd graders.

Sure, worms might seem gross, but worms are actually very helpful creatures. It is not always easy to spot worms. They live in the soil of many gardens. They are usually reddish or brown in color and their bodies appear slimy, as well. The slime is actually moisture that helps the worm move through the dirt. If a worm does not get enough moisture, it will dry out and die. However, it will also die if it gets too much moisture. This is why after a big rain storm you may see lots of earthworms coming out of the ground, on top of the grass or soil, or even on sidewalks and playgrounds. The next time there is a big rain, check your garden or your sidewalk for worms. If you see them, you'll know they've gotten too much water and need to dry out.

Earthworms have no ears or eyes. Their bodies are very sensitive to light, so they prefer the darkness. They don't use their mouths to breathe, they breathe through their skin! They use their mouths to eat dirt (soil), and as they move and eat, they create tunnels in the soil. The tunnels they create, bring moisture and air to their roots and help plants and trees grow. They are like little plows. The worms eat leaves and grass and break them down into things that plants can use. After eating, the worms leave castings behind that are a very valuable type of fertilizer.

Worms hatch from tiny little eggs. After they are born, they are not cared for by their parents like humans. The tiny worms are born knowing just what to do. As soon as they hatch, they begin eating dirt and dead leaves.

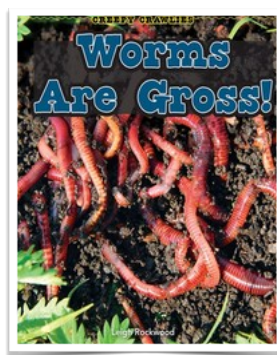
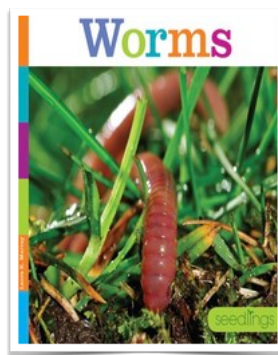
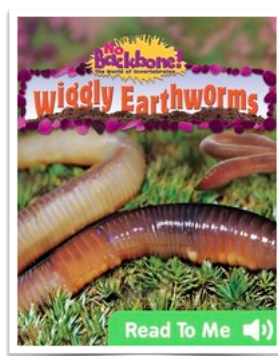
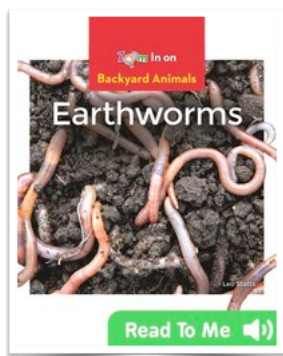
So, remember, the next time you see a wiggly, slimy worm on the ground after a storm, leave it alone, or move it to a garden that isn't too wet. These little slimy creatures are nature's helpers and will help your garden grow!

Discuss the answers to these questions about worms:

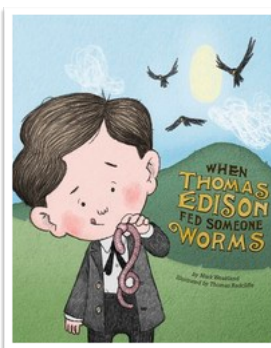
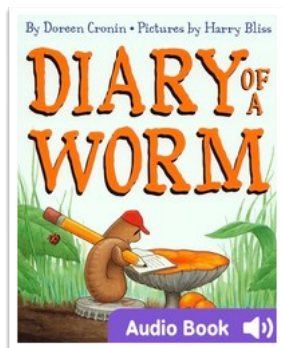
1. Why do worms have slimy skin?
2. How do worms dig tunnels?
3. Name two ways worms help nature.
4. Why do worms come out in a big rain storm?

Here are some books that can be found on your Epic! app. Using the search bar, find the titles below to continue learning more about Worms! Included are some fun stories about worms. Enjoy!

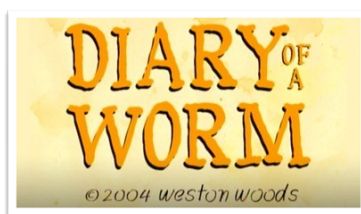
Non-Fiction Books about worms:



Fiction Books about worms:



Video:



Worm Farms for Kids

Young children love to play with worms. You can turn their curiosity with worms into a science project with just a few items from your house and garden. Here is how to make your own worm farm for kids.

Supplies Needed:

- Empty two-liter pop bottle
- Exacto knife
- Dirt
- Small shovel
- Sand
- Grass clippings
- Kitchen compost (apple peelings, etc.)
- Worms

Directions:

Before you let your child loose in the garden, you will need to cut off the entire top of the bottle. An Exacto knife works well for this, however, **children should not use this tool.**

Help your child create a label for the container that has the child's name and "worm farm" printed on it. You can make it by hand or on the computer. Tape the label to the front of the container.

Go out to the garden and let your child shovel a couple of inches of dirt into the plastic container. Pat the dirt down so the next layer of sand won't filter through. Explain to your child that they need to be careful not to shake or jar the bottle or the sand and dirt will become mixed. Add a thin layer of sand, and then continue with a couple of inches of dirt and another thin layer of sand. The top layer should be dirt. Leave an inch or two of space at the top of the bottle.

Next add a few grass clippings on top of the last layer of dirt. The worms will need food. Have your child add a few pieces of fruits or vegetables in with the grass, such as apple or orange peelings.

If you are lucky enough to have worms in your yard, help your child dig for a few worms for his/her worm farm. Right after a rain is a great time to find worms!

Worm Observations:

Let your child play with the worms before putting them in the worm farm. Help them make observations about their worms. Check out the Epic! Books and videos or search for information online about worms. Talk to your child about how a worm's job is to eat waste and mix it into our soil to fertilize it.

After your child places a couple of worms into the worm farm, they will be able to see how worms mix up soil. When the worms dig through the container, they will leave a trail of sand behind them that your child will be able to see mixing into the dirt.

For the most worm activity, place the worm farm in a dark place or tape a piece of paper around the worm farm to keep the light out. Worms do most of their work at night.

Your child will have a lot of fun creating his or her worm farm. From digging in the dirt, to playing with worms...what's not to like!



Edible Gardener's Dirt

Materials:

Chocolate Sandwich Cookies (like Oreos) - crushed
Chocolate Pudding Mix
Milk
Whipped Topping (like Cool Whip)
Gummy Worms




Directions:

The amounts needed depend on how much soil you want to make. Make the pudding as directed. Fold in the whipped topping to make a mousse consistency. In the bottom of a bowl, cake pan, or in individual cups, put down a thick layer of crushed cookies and a gummy worm. Next, add the pudding mix as the next layer. Then, put another layer of the crushed cookies. After that, add some gummy worms. Last, Eat and enjoy!



Extension Activities

Here are some fun YouTube videos you can watch and sing along to! Just ask a parent to help you find them!

	<p>Herman the Worm (one hour version) LlamaFloof • 27K views • 1 year ago Original Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-rg7Elt1x4.</p>
	<p>Herman the Worm 🎵 Camp Songs for Children 🎵 Kids Brain Breaks Songs by The Learning Station TheLearningStation - Kids Songs and Nursery Rhymes • 62M views • 6 years ago One of the most popular children's songs, "Herman the Worm" is from the award-winning CD, "Action! Fun! Dance!" "Action! Fun!" CC</p>
	<p>Herman the Worm - Popular Nursery Rhymes Playlist for Children - by The Learning Station TheLearningStation - Kids Songs and Nursery Rhymes • 26M views • 4 years ago Herman the Worm - Popular Nursery Rhymes Playlist for Children - by The Learning Station Check out our popular kid's song, ...</p>

The following websites and blogs were used for information and ideas for this lesson:

[Earthworms](#) by Claire Llewellyn
[An Earthworm's Life](#) by John Himmelman
[The Life Cycle of an Earthworm](#) by Bobbie Kalman
Christian-Parent.com
Worm Day!
FirstGradeBlueSkies.Blogspot.com
(clipart: Moffatt Girls, Little Red, KPM Doodles)
EPIC! Books.com
YouTube.com

Trace over these true facts about worms.

Worms do not have arms.

Worms do not have legs.

Worms do not have eyes.

Worms live underground.

Worms like rain.

Color in the images that show true facts about worms.
Cross out what is not true on the other images.

