

# Composting

Today you are going to hear a read aloud about another type of recycling; however, instead of learning about how to recycle cans, bottles or paper, as in the previous read alouds, you are going to learn how to recycle certain kinds of leftover food! This type of recycling of leftover foods is called composting. Like other recycling, the process of composting starts with sorting things into different groups.

# Composting

Instead of sorting bottles and cans into bins, people sort leftover food according to whether the food can or cannot be composted. In the read aloud, you will also hear about the other steps involved in composting and how the leftover food eventually changes into rich soil that can be used to grow more healthy plants.

# Composting

Composting is one way to pitch in and help Earth stay clean. Do your families compost leftover food scraps at home? What are other ways in which your family pitches in to keep Earth clean and healthy? Do you remember the three Rs? What are some good habits to have if you want to reduce, reuse and recycle things to conserve our Earth's natural resources?

# Composting

In this read aloud, you will hear about the Smith family, a family that composts. Listen carefully and try to remember each step in the composting process. Not all foods can be recycled and composted, so listen carefully to find out which foods people should and should not put in the compost pile. Listen to find out more about today's topic: composting.



# Composting



# Composting

*Describe this illustration. What do you already know about plants?*



# Composting

Earth here. Once again, I've asked an artist friend of mine to help teach you an important lesson. She drew a picture of me covered with all different kinds of plants and vegetables. Why? This will help remind you that you can get everything you need in order to thrive and survive from me, Good Old Earth.





# Composting

Even if you don't live on a farm, you can still make a little vegetable garden or grow a few potted plants, whether you want to grow flowers, vegetables, or both. You probably know that vegetables are very good for your body, and there's nothing healthier than a vegetable that you grow in your own garden.





# Composting

Plus, gardens are good for the earth-- they provide food for bees and other animals. Do you remember that when we talked about natural resources and trees, we talked about how trees take in the dirty air and then put out fresh, clean air afterward? Gardens also help keep the air a little cleaner and the earth a little prettier.



# Composting

Today I want to tell you about a special kind of recycling that is good for you, good for your garden, and good for the earth. Once again, my artist friend has made some pictures to go along with the story I'm about to tell.





# Composting

Meet the Smiths. As you can see, the Smiths prepared a dinner of spaghetti, bread and salad. After everyone has finished eating dinner, it will be time to clean up. They made a lot of spaghetti and salad, so they'll have some leftovers. Leftovers are the uneaten foods that remain after a meal.





# Composting

Mrs. Smith will put these leftovers in reusable containers and then in the refrigerator for lunch or a snack the next day.

But some of the leftovers can't be eaten. What will the Smiths do with these leftovers? They have a clean-up plan that is friendly to the earth and good for their garden!



# Composting

It's Mr. Smith's job to clear the table. He puts the trash into the garbage can, and he scrapes bits of spaghetti, tomato sauce, and salad into a small pail.

Then the youngest Smith child, Jamie, adds vegetable scraps left over from making the salad, such as carrot and cucumber peelings, or the skins peeled off the carrots and cucumber, celery leaves, and loose pieces of lettuce.



# Composting

Jamie could throw these in the garbage, but instead he puts them in the pail. This leftover food won't end up in a landfill. But do you have any idea what will happen to it?





# Composting

Jamie's brother, Chris, takes the container outside and dumps it into a large bin. What is going on here? Is Chris making leftover soup outside? Do the Smiths love their leftover food scraps so much that they keep a pile of it in their backyard?



# Composting

Actually, the answer is yes. The Smiths do love their leftover food scraps. You see, the Smiths know that if they put food scraps in a bin to make compost, they will be rewarded in at least two ways. First, they won't have to send as much garbage to the landfill. That is something they can feel good about; by composting, they are being friendly to the earth and not loading the planet up with trash.



# Composting

Second, if they keep adding to their compost pile and taking good care of it, then they'll end up with a pile of soil full of nutrients for the garden.

Nutrients, like vitamins and minerals, help make living things grow. What kinds of living things could grow in soil that is full of nutrients?





# Composting

The soil that comes from composting is called compost, and it is very good for plants. Putting compost on plants is like feeding them super vitamins. The compost is full of nutrients that make the plants grow stronger and healthier.



# Composting

The Smiths are careful to add only materials that make good compost. They don't add meats or oily foods like butter, as these kinds of foods can make the compost smell bad and attract rodents and other wild animals. So, what kinds of foods should you not put in the compost pile?



# Composting

Rotten fruits and vegetables--including leftover Halloween jack-o-lanterns--and eggshells and coffee grounds are perfect for composting. The Smiths also add leaves, grass clippings, and other stuff from the yard that they mix with the leftover foods.

What foods can go into a compost bin?





# Composting

Every week or so, the Smiths stir the compost around with a rake or pitchfork and, when it's particularly dry, they water the pile with a garden hose. Then the sun begins to shine, and the pile heats up. With the warm heat from the sun and the water, it's almost like "cooking" everything that is in the compost pile.



# Composting

Heat and moisture make the materials in the compost bin break down even faster. Another way of saying that the materials break down is to say that the materials decay, rot or decompose. Some people even add worms to their compost bins to eat the old food and turn it into garden soil even faster-- worms are nature's own recyclers!



# Composting

*After a few weeks, the food in the compost bin won't look like food any more--it will look like nice, rich, dark soil.*





# Composting

When the compost is ready, Mrs. Smith scoops a shovelfull from the bin. She puts the compost around a new tomato plant she has planted in her garden. The roots of the tomato plant begin to take in water and food from the composted soil. Soon the plant will grow strong and healthy, thanks in part to the nutrients from the compost.



# Composting

A couple of months later, the tomato plant is big and healthy and full of nice red tomatoes. Jamie helps his mom pick some of the tomatoes on the plant. And what do you suppose happens next?

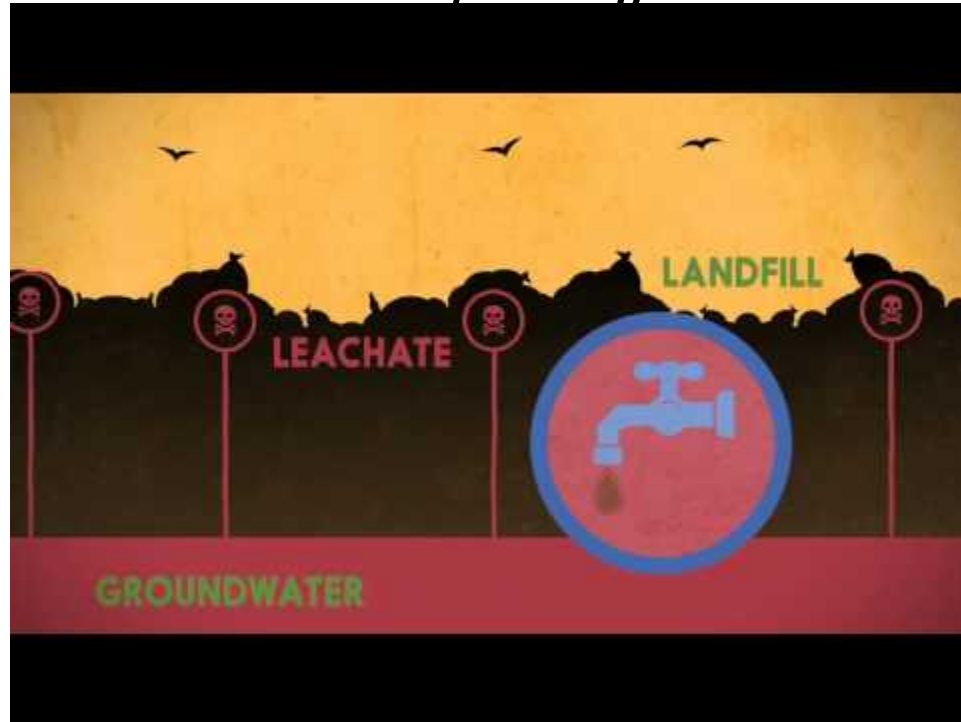
What happens next is that the Smiths use the tomatoes to make a salad. And what do you suppose they do with the leftovers from the salad? They toss them in the compost pile, of course, so the process can start all over again.

# *Composting*

We've got 3 R's  
we're going to talk  
about today.



# Composting



# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Literal**

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

What is the main topic of the read aloud?

# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Literal**

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

Why are plants important?



# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Literal**

What is composting?

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Literal**

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

Name a few things that you can compost.

# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Literal**

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

Name a few things that you should not compost.



# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Inferential**

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

Why shouldn't you compost meats and oils?

# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Inferential**

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

Why is compost good for gardens?

# Composting

Comprehension Questions:

**Evaluative**

PLEASE answer in  
COMPLETE sentences.

*Describe the process of composting.*



# Think Pair. Share.



I'm going to ask you a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

# Think Pair. Share

**Evaluative:**



How does composting leftovers help take care of the earth?

# **Word Work**

*Explicit Vocabulary Instruction*



# Composting

In the read aloud you heard, "The Smiths know that if they put food scraps in a bin to make **compost**, they will be rewarded in at least two ways."

Say the word **compost** with me.

Whisper compost to the ceiling.

Whisper compost to your neighbor.

Let's clap it out.

## *Compost*

**Compost** is decayed food that turns into soil.

*You can make compost out of scraps of food or even leaves and cut grass.*

## Compost

Tell about something you can turn into compost.  
Try to use the word compost when you tell about  
it.

“One thing I can turn into compost is...”



*Compost*

*What's the word we have been talking  
about?*

*Let's clap it out.*

## Compost

If something I say would make good compost, thumbs up. Thumbs down if it would not make good compost.

*Compost*

*steak*



*Compost*

*Shredded lettuce*

*Compost*

*Buttered toast*

*Compost*

*Spaghetti with meatless tomato sauce*



*Compost*

*Leftover salad without dressing*

*Compost*

*Hot dogs*

*Compost*

*The skins or peels from vegetables*