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Organic and Inorganic Recycling

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Humans played a major role in environmental pollution for years. People became accustomed to throwing things away, never realizing where “away” was. When we began to see the damage, the nation began its clean up process. The communities began to make its citizens aware of the severity of the problem. At the same time legislators started to enact laws and regulations to protect the environment. The need to teach about changing our wasteful actions into ones of re-use was apparent and many recycling programs started to develop. Recycling is an individual responsibility and to be successful the practice must be enforced in every aspect of our lives, i.e., home, industry, and school.

This unit, “Organic and Inorganic Recycling,” is divided into several sections. The introduction provides background information concerning the solid waste disposal dilemma. The next section presents an overview of recycling. It includes information about garbage disposal in our country and the importance of instituting workable recycling programs. The third section of the unit discusses composting as a method of recycling. The types of compost, benefits of composting, how-to’s, materials and uses of compost are included. Recycling organic wastes through the use of a worm bin is introduced in the last section. It contains background and instructions for setting up a worm bin, composting with worms and studying food webs within the worm bin. The student activities include lessons which create an awareness of the existing environmental problems, lessons which demonstrate the actual process of recycling and those which allow students to study and observe the behavior and biology of earthworms.

Learning to apply the basic principles of recycling is one of the major goals of the unit. With practice and reinforcement we will be on our way to gaining an appreciation and understanding of the complex balance in nature and its need for preservation.

(Recommended for General Science, grades 5-8)

Key Words

Ecosystems Ecology Environmental Science Recycling

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