



## Edible Teaching Garden Composting

### Note to Educator:

Use these materials to prepare for your classroom’s online virtual fieldtrip.

Students can follow along to the live workshop demonstration if workshop materials are prepared in advanced, or they can observe the demonstration and try the activity as a separate classroom activity or try at home as part of a homework assignment.

Prepare in advance by exploring the **Educator Resources** and connect themes explored in the virtual fieldtrip with **Student Resources** that students can read before or after to think about urban gardening, healthy eating, and nutrition.

### Garden Workshop: Composting

### Grades 7 – 8

<p><b>Materials for one classroom (40 or less students)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 40 poster sheet papers</li> <li>○ 40, 6-in. paper plates</li> <li>○ 40 plastic knives</li> <li>○ 1 gallon of water</li> <li>○ 40 small cups</li> <li>○ 40 Pencils</li> <li>○ markers or colored pencils</li> <li>○ garden trowels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ banana peels (or cucumber peels, carrot peels, apple cores, green leaves, an old flower, or tea bags)</li> <li>○ dried leaves (or twigs, wood chips, brown paper bags, shredded newspaper or small pieces of cardboard)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Materials for one student</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ cardboard box or brown paper bag</li> <li>○ 6-inch paper plate</li> <li>○ 1 small cup of water</li> <li>○ markers or colored pencils</li> <li>○ garden trowel or plastic spoon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ banana peel (or cucumber, carrot peel, apple core, green leaves, an old flower, or tea bags)</li> <li>○ dried leaves (or twigs, wood chips, brown paper bags, shredded newspaper or small pieces of cardboard)</li> </ul>

### Workshop Procedure – Building a Healthy Compost Pile

1. Take the plate and place it on the table.
  - Take the banana peel and cut it into small pieces.
  - Leave the pieces on the plate
2. Use the garden trowel to take a handful of brown leaves and break them down on the plate.
  - Make sure to add the same amount of green and brown materials.
3. Mix all the materials to add oxygen.
4. Dip your fingers in the cup with water and sprinkle water over the materials on the plate.
5. Continue adding food scraps to the compost pile.

### Workshop Procedure – Sample Compost Bin

1. Use markers to draw examples of nitrogen-green materials on one side of the box.
  - Label this side as “Nitrogen-Green Materials.”
2. On another side draw examples of carbon-brown materials.
  - Label this side as “Carbon-Brown Materials.”
3. On a third side of the box, draw a water drop to represent water.
  - Label this side as “Water.”
4. On the last side, make a drawing that represents air.
  - Label this side as “Oxygen.”
5. Draw your favorite decomposer on the bottom of the box.
  - A decomposer is an organism, such as fungi, bacteria, amoeba, worms, or beetles that help break down organic matter in a compost pile.
6. Write “The Compost Pile” on the top of the box.

### Reflection

Have students think about the following:

1. Why is composting good for our health and the environment?
2. How can you share what you have learned about composting with others? Ask others at home if they know about composting and share what you have learned with them.

Encourage students to share their responses with each other in small groups or as part of a large class discussion or presentation.

## Extended Learning

1. Help students become invested in building a healthy school community. Explore ways that students can start a school garden and start composting as a classroom.

## Resources for Educators

LA Compost. "Start Composting." [www.lacompost.org/compost-guide](http://www.lacompost.org/compost-guide).

United States Environmental Protection Agency. "Composting at Home." [www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home](http://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home).

## Resources for Students

California Academy of Sciences. "The Living Soil Beneath Our Feet." [www.calacademy.org/educators/the-living-soil-beneath-our-feet](http://www.calacademy.org/educators/the-living-soil-beneath-our-feet).

Kiss the Ground. "The Compost Story." May 2017. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqDQD8cvO5Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqDQD8cvO5Y).

LA Compost. "Compost Guide." [www.lacompost.org/compost-guide](http://www.lacompost.org/compost-guide).