



January 2025

Waste Education in Early Learning Teacher Pack



Waste Education in Early Learning

Welcome to the *Waste Education in Early Learning Teacher Pack*. This resource has been developed to support educators in Wyndham to develop environmentally conscious behaviours from the very beginning of a child's learning journey. Through play-based activities and hands-on learning this pack contains two different modules to encourage early childhood educators to introduce the concepts of waste, recycling, and composting in a developmentally appropriate way for our next generation.

Why Start Early?

Early childhood is a critical period in human development when lifelong attitudes, values, and habits are formed. Introducing waste awareness at this stage helps young children begin to understand their role in caring for the environment.

Research shows that children are very capable of grasping environmental concepts and thrive when given the opportunity to be active participants in solutions.

Some of the benefits of including environmental education in early childhood include:

- **Builds foundational understanding** of environmental responsibility.
- **Supports holistic development**, including cognitive, social, and emotional learning.
- **Encourages positive behaviours** such as reusing, recycling, and reducing waste.
- **Strengthens connections** between home, community, and the natural world.

This pack is designed to align with early learning frameworks and sustainability goals, offering practical tools and inspiration for including waste education into everyday activities.

Module 1 - Waste and Recycling

Step 1 – Video: [Which Bin? All about waste and recycling in Wyndham with Charlie Silly Pants](#)

Introduction to the concepts of why littering is bad for our environment, recycling, and reducing waste by reusing waste.



Step 2 - Follow up lesson:

Try these lesson plans designed by VISY and Cool+ in line with [Early Years Learning Framework Learning outcomes](#) to get children thinking about where materials come from, and the correct way to dispose of items by recycling or repurposing. It's FREE to sign up.

Lesson Plan 1 - [Visy Education - What Is recycling?](#)

Lesson Plan 2 - [Visy Education - What Is It Made From?](#)

Lesson Plan 3 - [Visy Education – What goes in that bin?](#)

EYLF Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- 2.4 Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Learning Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- 4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- 4.4 Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

Learning Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- 5.1 Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

5.3 Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

Step 3 - Bin Posters:

Wyndham City Council has posters which can be printed off and placed onto your bins as a visual aid when children are throwing out items and these can also be used to go through what can go in the recycling bins, and what cannot.

Please download and print these from our [Household Bin Services Page](#)

Step 4 - Other Further Learning Activities and Initiatives:

Waste Sorting Game - Download and print our rubbish sorting game (attached to email or at the end of this document) or utilise recycling to create a real-life waste sorting game with real materials. Use Wyndham's bin posters to discuss with children which items or materials were sorted correctly.



Toy, book or clothes swap – Run a swap with your kinder families to teach kids about the value of reusing items (have extra items on hand for those who may not be able to contribute bringing items to swap).

Upcycling - Use recycled materials, to create new items - For example using plastic bottles, or cans as plant pots to grow seedlings or as pencil holders.



Recycled Crafts – Get students to bring in recyclable materials and use this in art sessions like recycled robots or even cardboard cars or cubby houses. A quick google search for “recycled crafts” has lots of ideas.

Module 2 - Food waste, Composting and Worm Farming

Step 1 – Video: [Food Scraps and Compost – With Charlie Silly Pants](#)

Currently, the Food and Garden Organics bin (green bin) in Wyndham is optional so not all students will have been introduced to them, however in 2026 all Wyndham residents will receive Food and Garden Organics (green bins).

Introduction to our Food and Garden Organics bin, Food and Garden Waste, Compost, worm farming and the benefits of using compost in our gardens.



Step 2 – Activities: Explore kindergarten worm farms or compost bins

Use a worm farm or compost bin to compost fruit and vegetable scraps, shredded paper and cardboard at your kindergarten to teach your students about the benefits of recycling food scraps into compost for the garden.

Worm farming is very easy to set up, low maintenance, and many kindergartens in Wyndham successfully use them to introduce the concepts of composting to their students.



Wyndham Worm Farm and Compost Bin Subsidy

Wyndham City Council supports early learning centres who wish to start composting and worm farming with their students by offering Wyndham childcare centres a discount of up to 50% off a Worm farm or Compost bin.

Visit www.wyndham.wormlovers.com.au to access the subsidy to get a worm farm or compost bin for your kindergarten. If you wish to receive discounts on multiple items in one order, please email us at wastewise@wyndham.vic.gov.au for a Schools and Kinder discount code.

Free Kitchen caddy

Wyndham childcare centres and Kindergartens can pick up a FREE Kitchen caddy to help them collect fruit and vegetable scraps for their worm farms or compost bins.

Available for pick up from:

Wyndham City Council Civic Centre - 45 Princes Hwy, Werribee 3030

Manor Lakes Community Learning Centre - 86 Manor Lakes Blvd, Manor Lakes 3024

Tarneit Community Learning Centre - 150 Sunset Views Blvd, Tarneit 3029

Point Cook Community Learning Centre - 1/21 Cheetham St, Point Cook 3030

Step 3 - Other Further Learning Activities and Initiatives:

Gardening – Use compost and worm tea to feed your gardens or to grow seedlings in your kindergarten yard or classroom.



Worm Farm Resources – Use resources (attached to email) to see what fruits and vegetable scraps worms can (and can't) eat, as well as troubleshooting information if you need some advice on your worm farm.

Colouring Pages – Utilise the colouring pages (attached to email) for a fun follow up, to learn what worms eat!

RECYCLING



RECYCLING

These items belong in the Recycling Bin (Yellow Lid). Cut them out and use these for your waste sorting game. This game can be printed in A3 and laminated for optimal results and durability.



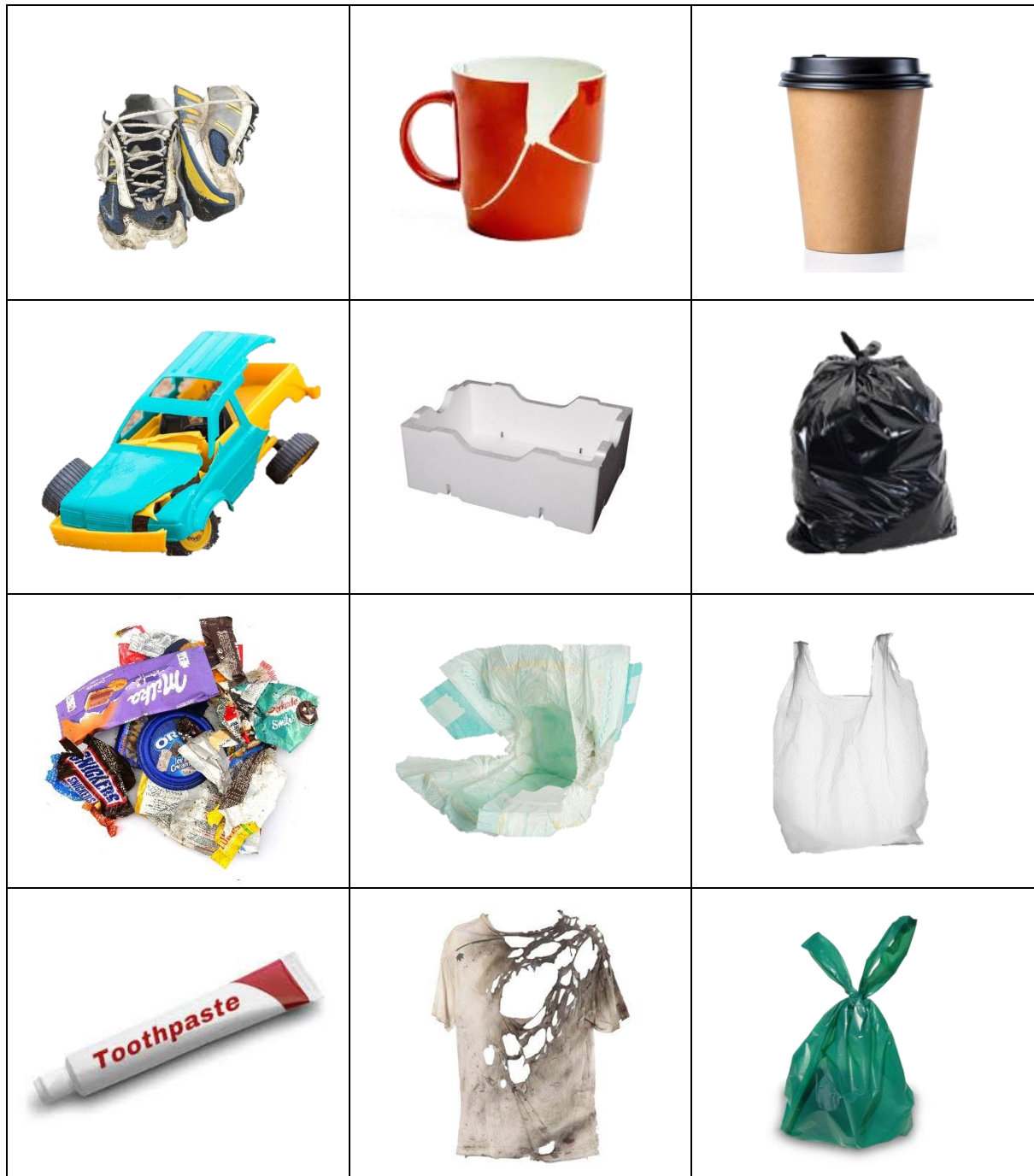
GARBAGE



GARBAGE



These items belong in the Garbage Bin (Red Lid). Cut them out and use these for your waste sorting game. This game can be printed in A3 and laminated for optimal results and durability.



FOOD & GARDEN ORGANICS



FOOD & GARDEN ORGANICS

These items belong in the Food and Garden Organics Bin (Green Lid) or Garbage bin if your house does not have a green bin. Cut them out and use these for your waste sorting game. This game can be printed in A3 and laminated for optimal results and durability.

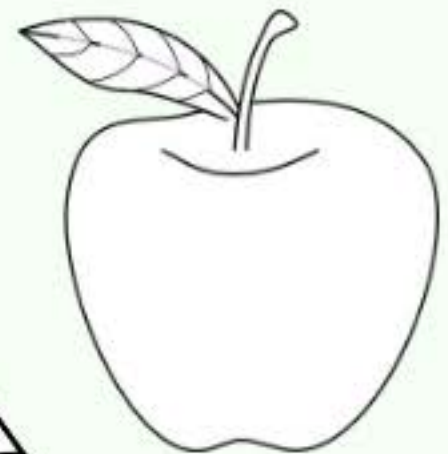
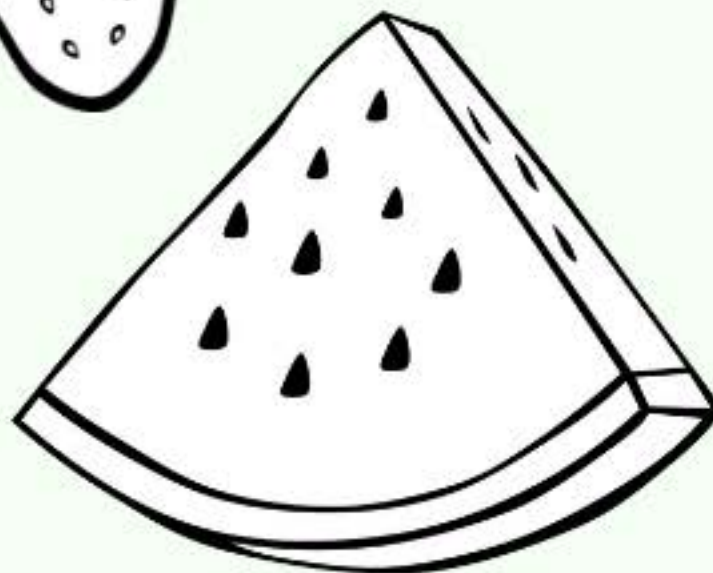
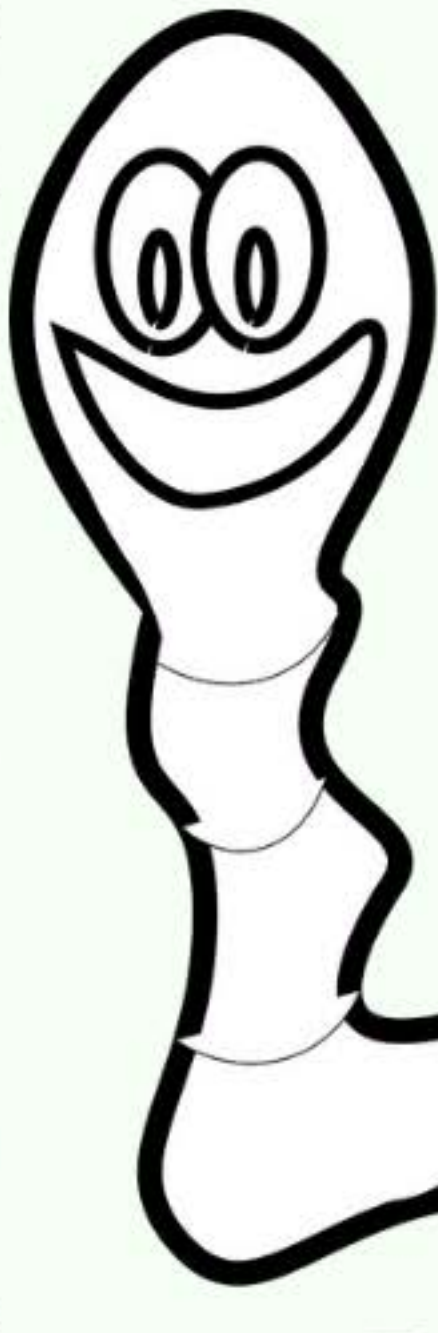
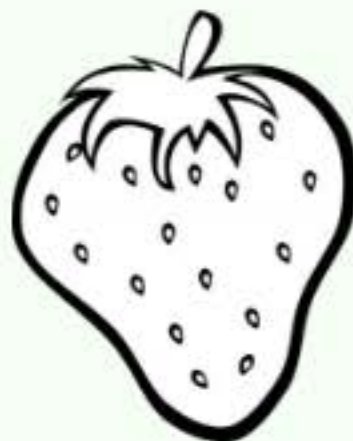
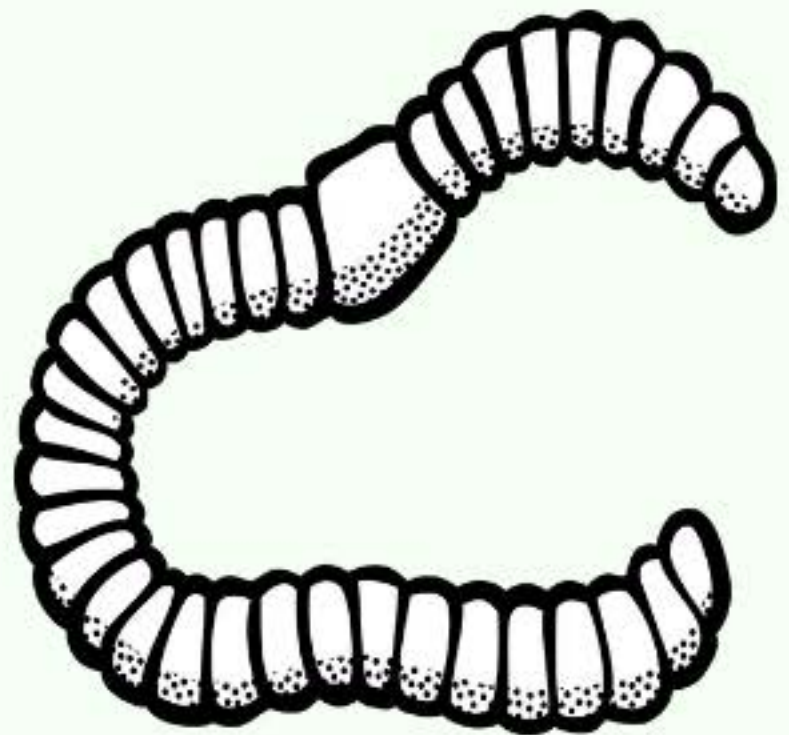
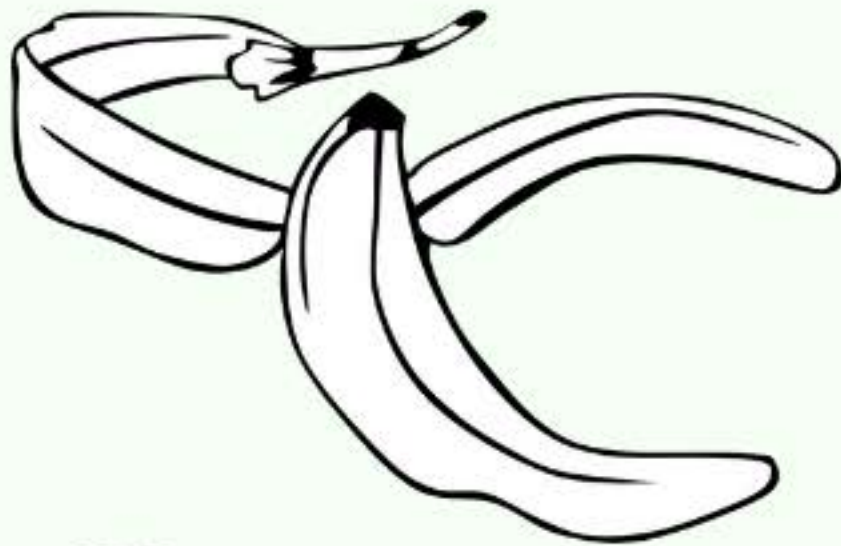


Compost Adventures

COLOUR IN THE WORMS AND THEIR FOOD!

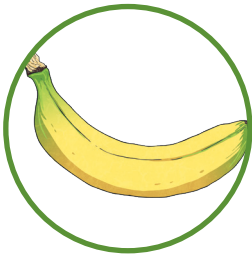


LEARN ABOUT COMPOSTING AT
WWW.COMPOSTCOMMUNITY.COM.AU

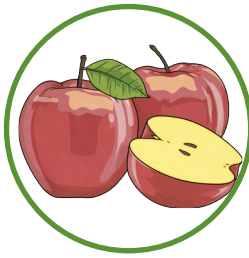


WWW.COMPOSTCOMMUNITY.COM.AU

Feed the worms...



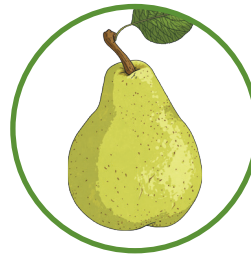
banana peel



apple core



strawberry tops



pear core



carrot



broccoli



peas



sweetcorn



teabags



coffee grounds



small amounts of garden waste, such as weeds and leaves



eggshells



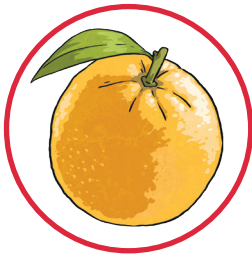
shredded newspaper or cardboard



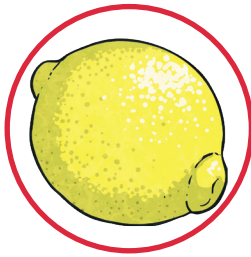
Remember to chop or break the food into small pieces to make it easier for the worms to eat and add just a little at a time. Also, remember to keep the wormery damp – spray in a little water, if necessary.



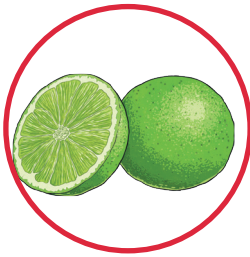
Do not feed the worms...



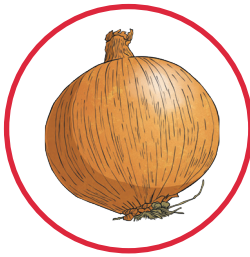
orange



lemon



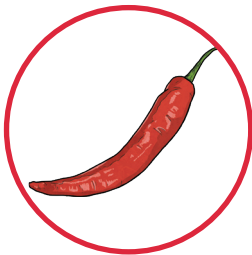
lime



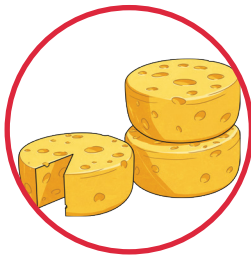
onion



garlic



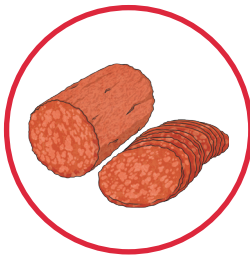
chilli



dairy products
such as cheese



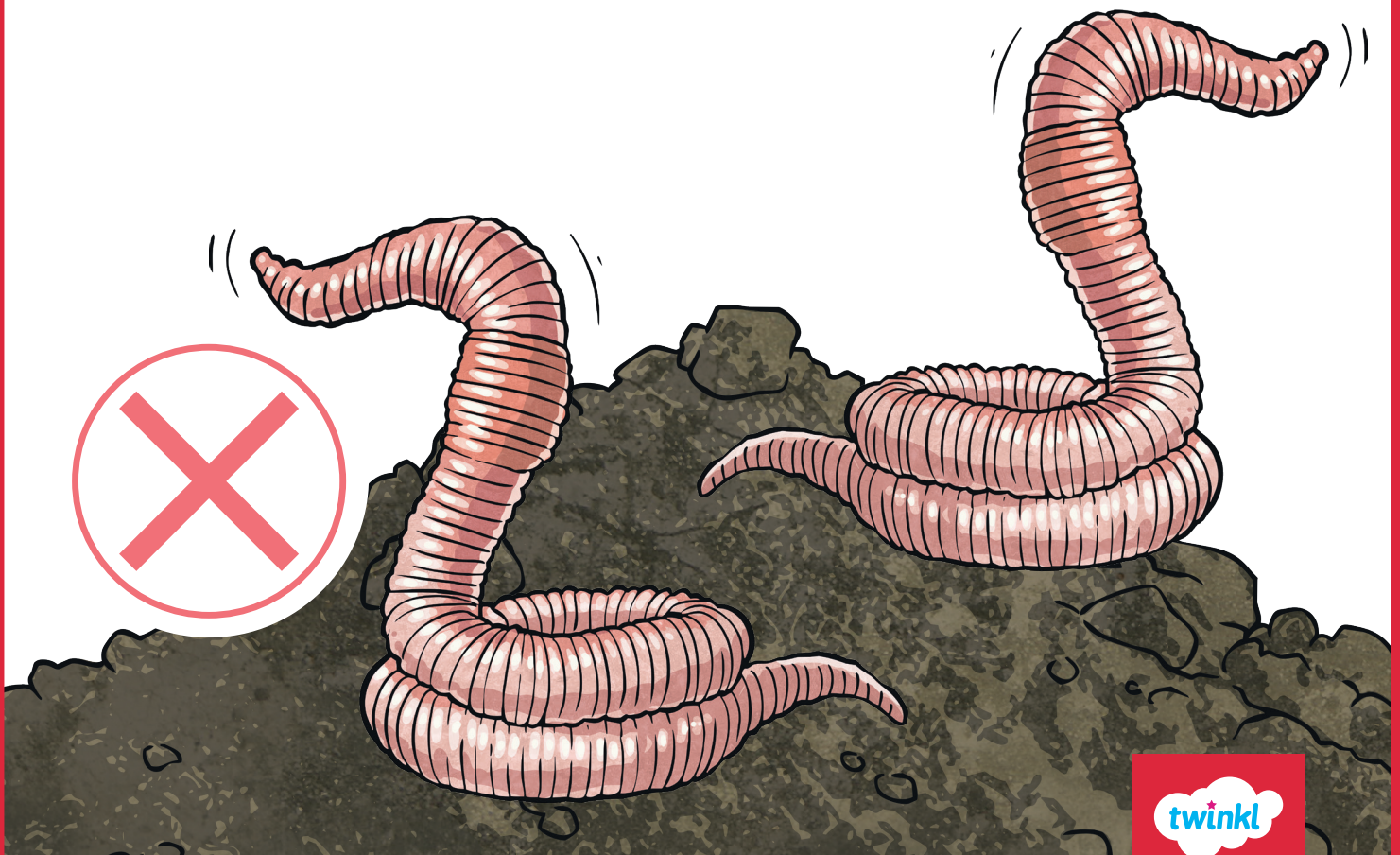
fish



meat



bread



What Foods Should You Feed Your Worms?



Fruits



Vegetables



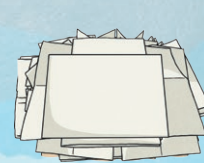
Coffee grounds



Tea bags



Egg shells



Shredded paper



Citrus fruits



Onions, capsicums, leeks and garlic



Meat



Dairy products



Pasta and cereals



Shiny, coated paper



LOVE YOUR WORMS

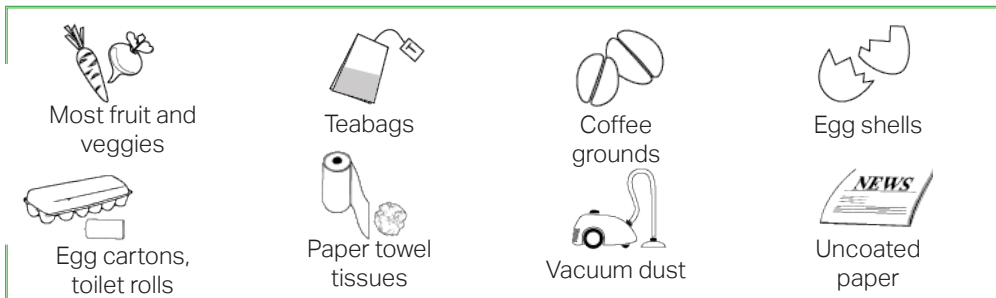


Worms are hard workers, processing your food 'waste' into nutrient rich plant food and soil conditioner. Here are a few tips on how to keep them happy!

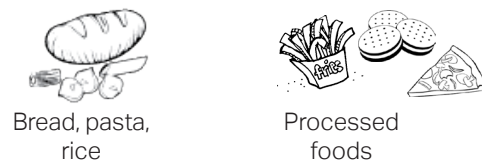
WORM FARM INPUTS

40 - 50%	50 - 60%	AS NEEDED
Nitrogen	Carbon	Water
Food scraps Green waste	Paper, cardboard hay	Sprinkle water when adding carbon to moisten
Spread feed layer evenly : keep less than 50mm thick		

YES PLEASE!



SMALL AMOUNTS



NO THANKS!



TOP TIPS FOR HAPPY WORMS

We regularly update the education area on our website, which includes answers to frequently asked questions, troubleshooting tips and videos. Check it out and join the conversation!

KEEP IT COOL

Heat is the number one enemy of worms. Keep your worm farm out of the sun, somewhere that stays cool.

In very hot weather take action - keep a frozen bottle of water buried in the top of the farm until the weather cools.

NOT TOO MUCH

Overfeeding can lead to an unbalanced, air-starved environment, with food rotting before the worms can eat it.

Spread the food out and keep the feed layer no more than 50mm thick.

BALANCE IS KEY

Keeping a balance between nitrogen [food scraps] and carbon [paper and cardboard] will ensure a happy worm farm.

Whenever you add nitrogen, add as much [or more] carbon - easy!

FLUFF IT!

Worms need to breathe, so let the oxygen flow. Give the top 2-3 inches a fluff up every now and then with a fork to let the air in.

Adding paper and cardboard also keeps the feed layer open and airy.

PESTS

A worm farm is a natural environment and will attract other living beings. Some insects may be a sign of imbalance - ants can mean too dry, flies can mean too much food waste and not enough carbon.

Check our FAQs page for details of pest management.

SMELLS

A healthy worm farm will only smell like rich soil. If you have acrid or rotting smells then too much food waste and not enough carbon has been added.

Add a lot of carbon, give it a good mix and fluff it up to let the air in.