**Concept**
Organic waste can be recycled to enrich soil.

**Objective**
Students will understand the cycles of a compost pile and how it is beneficial.

**Method**
Students will sing a song and analyze its meaning.

**Materials**
Chart with words of song on it, compost cycle poster, carbon and nitrogen sorting activity, blank cycle template

**Subjects**
Language Arts, Science, Music

**Skills**
Communicating, explaining, researching, synthesizing

**Time**
20 minutes a day for several days

**Vocabulary**
Compost, cycles, microbes, humus

**Resources**

**3R's of the Common Core**
Parallel Activities
4-6, Mini Compost
7-8, Making Good Compost
9-12, Microorganisms
9-12, Effective Fertilizers

**Information**
Composting

**Evaluation**
When you believe the students know the song, they can unscramble the sentences on the worksheet so that they are in order. Have the students write the answers to the questions regarding composting, that have been discussed.

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**Leading Question**
How does composting work?

**Procedure**
Show the poster about the cycle of compost. Ask students to try to find the connections as they sing the song. Sing “Take Me Out To The Compost” to the tune of “Take Me Out To The Ballgame.” Discuss the sequence of events in the song and how they work to produce humus. Practice the song once a day at a convenient time. Each time the class sings it, they may address a different question about composting. Review the vocabulary in the song (microbes, compost, food grinder, humus). List synonyms for the words. Younger students may draw or illustrate their synonyms and vocabulary words.

1. How does the production of humus start the cycle over again?
2. Why is a food grinder beneficial?
3. Why would it be a shame if microbes didn’t live?
4. How can we make sure they will thrive?
5. What kinds of things can you compost? (Make a list on the board.)

**“Take Me Out To The Compost”**

Take me out to the compost;
Take me out to the heap.
Grind me up in a food grinder;
I don’t care if I’m chopped into bits,
‘Cause it’s root root root for the microbes;
If they don’t live it’s a shame.
For it’s 2, 4, 6 months I’m out to the old garden!
Classroom Activities

A. Read the list of compostable items in the sorting activity. Decide which category the item belongs in: carbon or nitrogen. Talk about the importance of layering these two ingredients, plus adding water to build a successful compost.

B. Paste the blank cycle template (at the end of this lesson) onto a poster-sized paper. Ask students to paste the pictures of the missing steps to the cycle of compost. Have them label the diagram using the words from the word bank.

C. (Challenge activity) Cut and paste the mixed-up words to the song near the picture that illustrates that step.

D. Make a compost pile for the classroom.

E. Read and research about worms or another compost creatures. Write an informative narrative about it. Draw a picture of your compost creature. Use technology to publish a class book about your compost creatures.

F. Watch “Rotting Watermelon Decomposition Time Lapse Footage” on YouTube, link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S12zZhdOqkc.

G. Look at a copy of the school lunch menu. Highlight all the items that could be composted (fruits, vegetables and bread; no meat, cheese or dairy). Create awareness posters for the cafeteria.

H. Have students work in small groups to design a plan that would work in the cafeteria. Where would the compost be collected? How would you make sure the students put the proper foods into the compost bucket? Who will take the compost bin outside? Who will turn the compost?

I. Have students write letters or create a PowerPoint to the Principal or the school’s Food Service Director about starting a composting program in the lunchroom. Encourage them to apply all the knowledge they’ve acquired in this lesson to convince their audience. Use technology to produce and publish.

Common Core Alignments

KINDERGARTEN

CC.L.K.4
Language:
Vocabulary Acquisition & Use

CC.RI.K.1
Reading Informational Text:
Key Ideas & Details

CC.W.K.2
Writing:
Text Types & Purposes

GRADE 1

CC.L.1.5
Language:
Vocabulary Acquisition & Use

CC.RI.1.2
Reading Informational Text:
Key Ideas & Details

CC.W.1.8
Writing:
Research to Build & Present Knowledge

GRADE 2

CC.L.2.5
Language:
Vocabulary Acquisition & Use

CC.RI.2.4
Reading Informational Text:
Craft & Structure

CC.W.2.8
Writing:
Research to Build & Present Knowledge

GRADE 3

CC.L.3.5
Language:
Vocabulary Acquisition & Use

CC.RI.3.2
Reading Informational Text:
Key Ideas & Details

CC.W.3.3
Writing:
Text Type and Purpose

CC.W.3.6
Writing:
Text Type and Purpose

CC.W.3.7
Writing:
Research to Build & Present Knowledge
Compost Cycle Poster
Take Me Out To The Compost

Write the words from the text box onto your compost cycle poster. Cut out the pictures below and glue them to your poster in the proper order.

Text box:
- HEAT
- PLANTING
- AIR SUPPLY
- WASTE
- BREAKING DOWN
- FERTILIZER