



Suggestions for School Incursions for Composting Awareness with Mindarie Regional Council (MRC)

Option 1: What is compost and how do we make it?

20-30 minute single class discussion on what is compost, how do we make it, how does nature do it, etc. The class will pick out items from a 'rubbish' bin suitable or not for compost. Talk about compost bins and worm farms and how they are used. What we use compost for and why. We then make small compost in a clear plastic bottle. They can watch the process over the next 6 weeks and plant a seed or plant in the matured compost and take home.

EACH STUDENT NEEDS A PLASTIC BOTTLE, PREFERABLY CLEAR, AT LEAST 1 LITRE SIZE AND CUT DOWN TO ABOUT 30CM.

(Learning areas: Science: nature of soil, water, what plants need to grow. Society and Environment: Seeing waste as a resource, where waste goes)

Option 2: What is compost and how do we make it? Make compost.

60 minutes with single class with discussion as above and then making compost. This will require some prior preparation and collection of materials.

- an area to make the compost with a 3 sided structure made from pallets or some other materials to hold the compost.
- one bag of concentrated manure such as Dynamic Lifter, several bales of straw, trailer of grass clippings (either saved from the school clippings or MRC can provide), quantity of newspaper, leaves and prunings (if available from school), coffee ground waste from coffee shops (MRC will provide). *If obtaining these materials is difficult please indicate to MRC staff and we will assist. Garden gloves if needed and some garden forks and spades if available form gardener.
- access to water with a hose.

Also set up a closed compost system (in a bin) which will take food scraps and other materials not suitable for a big 'open' system as described above. School to provide compost bin. This system will be suitable for canteen and lunch scrap waste.

(Learning areas: Science: nature of soil, bacteria and other organisms essential in the soil to compost, water retention properties, what plants need to grow. Society and Environment: Seeing waste as a resource, where waste goes, working together and in a team, performing set tasks, sharing set tasks. Health and Physical Education: learning to use tools safely)

Option 3: What is compost and using the compost to make a small garden - best option

Two visits to the school:

Visit 1: 60 minutes - Initial visit to learn about compost and making it (see above Option 2) in preparation for making small portable gardens in a month.

Visit 2: 30mins – After one month we look at the compost and mix it with soil from school grounds and make small gardens in foam boxes, either in groups or individuals. Plant a variety of veges and/or herbs in the box and either keep at school for a period or take home and maintain.

Preparation required for 2nd visit: Obtaining foam boxes, seedlings and seeds suitable for foam box (MRC staff can advise). Students can decorate, paint, write on etc prior to planting.

This option shows the final use of the materials and demonstrates how the compost is useful. Also good to have a control garden box with just school sand and compare the difference in growth, water capacity etc.

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Option 4: What is compost, making compost. Setting up a school garden.

Two visits as above, making compost then making garden beds. Need discussion with MRC staff for school requirements. Worm farm fridges are also available with set-up an incursion.

ALL VISITS ARE FREE AND EMPHASIS IS TO USE WASTE PRODUCTS

Contact Peg Davies 0422 941 492 for further details of any of the session above