

Focus on: Earthworm Identification

This lesson is meant to support the unit, Structures and Functions of Living Organisms. How you guide your students will depend on the information you have already taught and the information you want to introduce. Please remember that many gardens run on a yearly cycle and it will be easier to find earthworms during the peak or near the end of the growing season.

Clarifying Objectives:

K.L.1.1 Compare different types of the same animal to determine individual differences within a particular type of animal.

K.L.1.2 Compare characteristics of living and nonliving things in terms of their:

- Structure
- Growth
- Changes
- Movement
- Basic needs

K.P.1.1 Compare the relative position of various objects observed in the classroom and outside using position words such as in front of, behind, between, on top of, under, above, below, and beside.

K.P.1.2 Give examples of different ways objects and organisms move (to include falling to the ground when dropped): zigzag, round and round, back and forth, fast and slow.

Key Vocabulary:

Definitions can be found at <http://learnersdictionary.com>

- Compare
- Individual Differences
- Characteristics
- Living Things
- Nonliving Things
- Structure
- Growth
- Changes
- Movement
- Basic Needs
- Position Words – in front, behind, between, on top of, etc
- Zigzag
- Round and Round
- Back and Forth
- Fast and Slow

Focus Question(s):

How is the garden earthworm similar or different to the redworm and nightcrawler?

Materials:

School Garden

Science Notebooks

Garden Gloves to wear while exploring the garden especially if touching plants, digging in soil, etc.
Earthworms that were collected from the school garden.

Activities:

1. Discuss the characteristics of the garden earthworm with the students. Allow them to use their science notebooks to help them remember.
2. Have students once observe and explore the earthworm. It is helpful to put paper towels in the center of each table to place one worm at each table. Encourage students to observe their characteristics. Give students magnifying glasses to have a closer look. Using the Guiding Questions, encourage the students to share what they observe. They can add additional information to their science notebooks.
3. Ask students to think about the characteristics of the garden earthworm.
4. Have students review the characteristics of the redworm and the nightcrawler. They can use their science notebooks to help them remember.
5. Ask Guiding Questions while students continue to explore.
6. Have students attempt to identify their worm from the garden as either a redworm or nightcrawler or other type of worm.
7. When you are finished with the earthworms, please release them back into the garden. They are a very important member of the garden ecosystem.
8. Learn about these fun facts: How big is the world's largest earthworm? They can be over 3 feet long. Find the answer at the following link:
<http://www.coolweirdo.com/worldslongest-worm-giantgippsland-earthworm.html>
Check out numbers 5 and 6 as those giant worms are found in the United States.
Cool!!

Guiding Questions:

- What characteristics of the redworm is the same or different from the garden earthworm?
- What characteristics of the nightcrawler is the same or different from the garden earthworm?
- Do you think the earthworm that you found is a redworm or nightcrawler or something different?
- Why do you think that?
- Do all worms look the same? How are they different?
- Do you think they have the same number of segments?
- Do they move the same way?
- Are their bodies shaped the same way?
- Do you think they are all the same kind of worms? Why or why not?