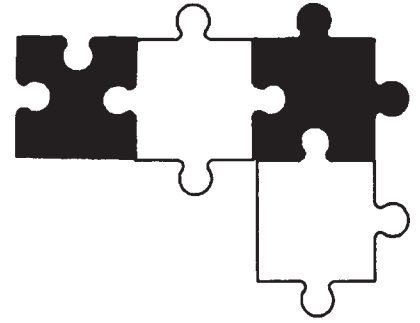




# Activity 2

## WASTE NOT, WANT NOT



**STUDY QUESTION:**

How can we recycle and re-use valuable waste products that have taken so much to produce? What happens to the food and water we feed the rabbit? Do rabbits pee? Can we use the little brown feces the rabbit makes?

**THE ACTIVITY:**

Children are encouraged to recycle waste products by using a compost bin.

**CURRICULUM FIT:**

**DIVISION ONE - SCIENCE**

- Environment plays an important role in our lives
- Humans can change the environment in many ways

**AGRICULTURE CONCEPTS:**

Put back what you take out.

**PURPOSE:**

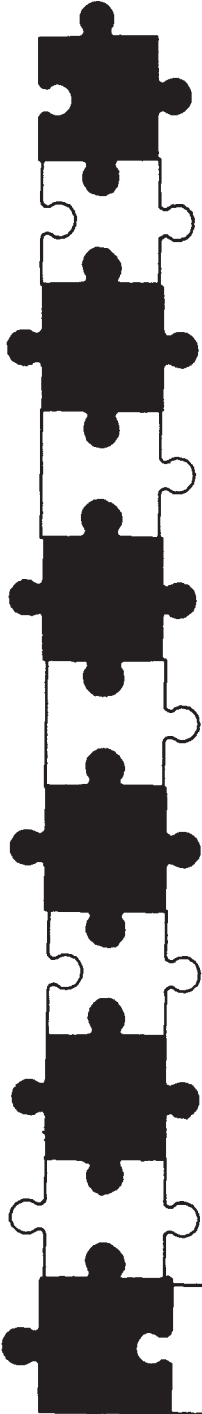
- To give children a practical chance to see waste material turned back into valuable, rich soil. Let them participate all winter, then experience the joy of finding rich soil at the bottom of the compost bin. Let it become a way of life for them.

**MATERIALS REQUIRED:**

Homemade wire bin placed in a location safe from vandals and also preferably away from school windows, waste materials.

**TIME REQUIRED:**

One hour to set up wire compost bin, a few minutes per day for the rest of your natural life.



# BACKGROUND - For the Teacher

Environmental issues affect all of us. We, in the First World, generate a lot of waste in relative terms. But there is only so much space in landfills, only so much waste that can be absorbed by Mother Earth. Pollution of all kinds is a definite threat to the future of our planet. That is why conservation and recycling are so important. Today's younger generation is growing up with more awareness of our responsibility to help keep the environment in good shape. The children in your classroom will be the future decision makers in this country, so it is important that they be made aware of how the environment can be helped through the recycling of waste products. The activity is a simple one, but it helps children (and adults, too) to realize they have an obligation to put back what they take out.

## A NOTE TO THE TEACHER:

Typically, compost and animal manure are two completely different things. Compost consists of plant, vegetable and other green matter whereas manure consists solely of animal feces. Manure should not be used with compost, rather each should be used separately as fertilizer. Please carry out this activity as you see fit.

## PROCEDURE

### Part 1

#### Introduction

1. Introduce the topic by talking of the importance of the environment to all of us.

### Part 2

#### Activity

2. Create a wire compost bin to dump rabbit feces and wood chips from litter pan. Encourage children to also put in fruit cores, peels, etc. Encourage staff members to do the same (I put 2 ice cream buckets in staff room - with signs on them - asking them to put in old tea bags, coffee grounds and filters, etc. Then I walk the waste material out to the compost bin each day after school so no one can say it was more convenient to put it in the garbage).

### Part 3

#### Conclusion

3. Rotate the honour of cleaning the rabbit's litter pan. Talk all the time about the valuable material we're returning to the earth so the children realize how important it is.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did you know that rabbits re-use their feces? (The first time through the rabbit, the feces are wet and oily, but the next time through they come out dry, after the rabbit's body has absorbed nutrients not taken the first time). How often should we clean the rabbit's litter pan to keep the animal clean, yet not prevent total use of this food?
2. Can farmers re-use their animals' waste when they clean out their stalls and barns? What about sheep and cattle? Do they enrich the soil — or "put something back in" — when they wander around the pasture grazing?

*By Ann Marshall*