

SOIL CRITTERS BINGO ACTIVITY - EDUCATOR INSTRUCTIONS

This is a great activity for children to engage with the centre's worm farms or compost bins to discover different creatures that live in and create our soils.

You will need:

- Handheld magnifying glasses if available
- **Compost Heaps & Worm Farms Are Living Things – Educator Notes**
- **Soil Critters Bingo Resource Card**
- Hand Forks
- Little clear tubs if you want to catch and observe creatures

What to do:

1. Head to the worm farm or compost bin with your group of children with all of the resources above.
2. Gather the children and have a look at the **Soil Critters Bingo Resource Card** together. Name each of the creatures that appear on the card. Explain that all of these creatures are needed for great soil health and that they might see some of them when you open the worm farm or compost bin. Also explain that they won't see Bacteria without a microscope – we are all covered in Bacteria and bacteria is life. Only 5% of bacteria is bad for us and that is why we wash our hands after touching the worm /compost bin and before we eat food, after the toilet etc.
3. Open the worm farm/compost bin lid and lift off the blanket and allow the children to look inside. They may also be able to use the hand fork or compost turner gently to move the material to discover more creatures.
4. If they spot any of the creatures on the **Soil Critters Bingo Resource Card** get one of the children to circle it or put a cross through it. You might decide to laminate some of these cards and use a white board pen or crayon to mark off the creatures, and then wipe off at the end of the activity.
5. Spend some time watching these creatures move, most will scurry away from the light as they like it dark. You could collect some of them in a small clear tub for the children to observe more closely and then return them to the worm farm/compost bin.
6. Talk to the children about the role these creatures play in breaking down all natural material in and on the earth to make soil. Also the importance of having a diversity of creatures and link to the diversity in their lives of people, activities, foods etc. for healthy life.
7. Once you feel the children have had enough time observing and recording, count up how many different creatures you saw and maybe visit again on a day with different weather or temperature to see if there is a difference and compare results.
8. Pack away resources and wash hands.
9. As a follow up activity you could ask the children which was their favourite creature and have a vote on which creature to explore more in a subsequent session.