

As the Worm Turns

Materials:

Foil pan, 9" x 12" black construction paper, plastic gloves, pencils, earthworms, paper towels, Q-tip, and spray bottle with water

Data sheets

Books about earthworms

A chart showing the anatomy of an earthworm

Procedures:

Part 1:

Observe an earthworm. Carefully draw a picture of it. Notice the shape, size, and texture of the earthworm. Write qualitative and quantitative observations.

Part 2:

Make a hypothesis or prediction and write it on your sheet. Do you think the earthworms will like a wet or dry environment? Why do you think so?

Use the spray bottle to spray only one of the paper towels. Leave the other one dry. Place the earthworms in the center of the pan (between the wet and dry towels). Where do they go?

Allow no more than 5 minutes.

Record earthworm behaviors on your chart. Record "additional observations" and write a conclusion.

Part 3:

Make a hypothesis and write it on your sheet. Do earthworms like a dark or light environment? Why do you think so?

Spray water on both paper towels in a pan. Cover one half of the pan with black paper and leave the other half open to light. Place the earthworms in the center. Where do the earthworms go? Allow no more than 5 minutes.

Record earthworm behaviors on your chart. Record "additional observations" and write conclusions.

Part 4:

Write a hypothesis. Do you think earthworms are sensitive to touch or ticklish? Which part do you think will be most sensitive? Why do you think so?

Put a worm on moist paper towel. Touch it **gently** (not a hard poke) on its tail, in the middle, and then on its head. Touch the worm with your finger or a Q-tip. Record results on the chart.

Repeat the experiment with different worms. Which areas were most ticklish? How could these areas of sensitivity help the earthworm survive?

How do earthworms help our gardens?

Draw the anatomy of an earthworm.

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