



Compost Sorting Activity

Materials:

4 sets of:

- 3 containers labeled “Compost”, “Recycling”, “Garbage”
- 28 laminated images

Description:

- Divide class into four groups, give each group a set.
- Ask students to work together to sort the images into “Compost”, “Recycling”, or “Garbage”.
- Explain that sometimes there is more than one good answer, so be prepared to answer why each item was placed where it was.
- Allow 5-10 minutes for group work.
- Take one container from each group (make sure you get at least one of “Compost”, “Recycling”, and “Garbage”).
- Go through each container and ask class if they agree with the selections.

Note: We do not compost meat and dairy at 7 Oaks. Technically our biovator can compost meat, but meat and dairy are broken down by bacteria that can be harmful to humans. If the compost does not heat up properly, these bacteria do not die and could make someone working in the garden sick. Meat and dairy are not recommended in home composting for this reason and because they attract animals.



Key:

Item	Garbage	Recycling	Compost	Worm Compost	Notes
Oranges			x		Oils in peel toxic to worms
Watermelon			x	x	Worms love watermelon
Coffee grounds			x	x	Make sure filter is paper
Onions			x		Worms dislike onions
Leaves			x	x	"brown"
Apple			x	x	Worms like apples
Bread			x		Comes from a plant! Worms dislike
Stick			x		"brown", cut into small pieces
Paper airplane		x	x	x	"brown", shred for worms
Paper		x	x	x	"brown", shred for worms, non-glossy
Cardboard box		x	x	x	"brown", shred
Paper towel	x		x	x	"brown", no oil or blood for compost
Christmas Tree (live)			x		"brown", cut into small pieces
Pop can		x			
Corn can		x	x	x	Eat/compost corn, recycle can
Milk carton		x			Drink milk, recycle carton
Pop bottle		x			
Kleenex	x				Too many germs for compost
Yogurt	x	x			Yogurt in garbage, container recycle
Pizza	x				Eat, no dairy or meat in compost
Cheese	x				No dairy in compost
Crayon	X				Wax = garbage
Fork	x		x		Compost if biodegradable fork
Sock	x		x		Compost if 100% wool or cotton (comes from animal and plant)
Hair			x		Biodegradable
Pencil Crayons	x		x		Some say lead may not be ok for compost
Turkey	x				No meat in compost
Dog poop	x				Poop is biodegradable, but dog poop has many pathogens that are harmful to people