Name: _____

Waste & Our World

Date: _____

How Are Plant and Animal Waste Recycled in Nature?

Explore: How Do Worms and Mould Help In Decomposition?

Question

How does mould help in decomposition?

Hypothesis

What do you think mould does to food? Which food will mould first? Which food will mould last?

Skill Builder

How to write a hypothesis.

If you need to use this Skill Builder, access it from the online course.

Resources

- large clear container with a tight fitting lid
- small dish of water
- permanent marker
- magnifying glass
- pieces of food such as bread, fruit, or vegetables
- digital camera

Instructions

1. Cut four or five pieces of food into cubes. These cubes should be about 2.5 cm.

2. Dip each piece of food into water.

3. Place the container on its side, and place each piece of food inside. Spread the food out so that the pieces are not in a pile. **Leave the container on its side!**

4. Put the lid on tightly.

5. Label the jar with the date.

6. Put the jar in a safe place where it will not be knocked over.

7. Check the jar every day to see evidence of mould. Use the magnifying glass for a closer look. Write your observations on the chart. Include observations such as when mould appeared, colour of mould, amount of mould, etc.

8. Every three days, take a picture with the digital camera. Try to take the picture in the same place each time.

9. Continue checking for at least **two weeks** and add your observations to the chart.

Safety Warning: Do **not** use meat, fish, or dairy in the container. Do not open or reuse the jar. Discard the container in the garbage after you are finished the investigation.

Observations

Predictions:	
Which food will start to mould first?	
Which food will start to mould last?	
Type of Food	**Observations of Mould**

Need a Hint?

When checking for mould and recording your observations, think about these questions:

- Which foods have mould on them?
- What colours of mould do you see?
- Does the mould look different on the various kinds of food, or is it all the same kind of mould?
- Is the mould changing over time?
- What texture is the mould?

Conclusion

Look back at your hypothesis (predictions) for the experiment.

1 Were you right?

2 Which food started to mould first? Which food started to mould last?

3 If you did the experiment again, what would you change?