

SCIENCE: HUMAN IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Key Vocabulary

Compare, litter, evaluate, variable, biodegradable, compost, decompose, environment, filter, fungi, micro-organism, organism and pollution

Working Scientifically

- Setting up simple practical enquiries, comparative and fair tests.
- Recording findings using simple scientific language, drawings, labelled diagrams, [keys, bar charts,] and tables.
- Using results to draw simple conclusions, [make predictions for new values, suggest improvements and raise further questions].
- Identifying differences, similarities [or changes] related to simple scientific ideas and processes.

Diagram:



Must – know knowledge

Litter are things that have been thrown away and that are lying on the ground. Some waste materials can be processed so that they can be reused. Littering is something that humans do, and litter can be harmful to wildlife.

Decomposition is when dead plants and animals break down into very small pieces that can be used to help other living things grow. Worms, bacteria and fungi help the remains of living things decompose. Materials made from things that never lived, including plastics and glass, cannot decompose; they are not biodegradable.

Pollution is the introduction of non-biodegradable materials into the environment. Microplastics are tiny pieces of non-biodegradable plastic waste which get into the soil through waste water and sewage. Worms accidentally eat microplastics and the microplastics then pass up the food chain.

Sea and oceans are polluted with plastics which are entering the food chain. Some microplastics could be prevented from entering the water system using filters. Scientists are developing ways to prevent microplastics from escaping into our sewage.

Oil from oil spills at sea damages birds' feathers. Wildlife vets use detergents to clean oil from bird feathers.

Diagram:



Experiments: Does all litter decompose?