

What can we compost?



Background Information

Putting the correct items in the compost bin is key to producing good quality compost and it is important that children know what to put in their compost bin. This requires the ability to recognise, group and name the items we throw away. In general, anything that originates from a plant and has not been cooked can be composted.

Therefore, fruit and vegetable scraps, leaves, paper and cardboard are all ideal things for the compost bin.

This is a fun and tactile activity that engages children in exploring the materials often discarded without a second thought. The cross-curricular learning combines Science with Art and Design and encourages the use of language through promoting thoughtful discussion.

Science & Art: Sci 3 1a) & Art 2c) QCA links Unit 1B

Learning objectives. Children should learn-

- To use their senses to explore different materials
- To recognise which materials can be composted.
- To represent observations and ideas as an image.

Learning Outcomes. Children –

- identify and group items according to whether they can be composted or not.
- Compose a collage to communicate their findings.

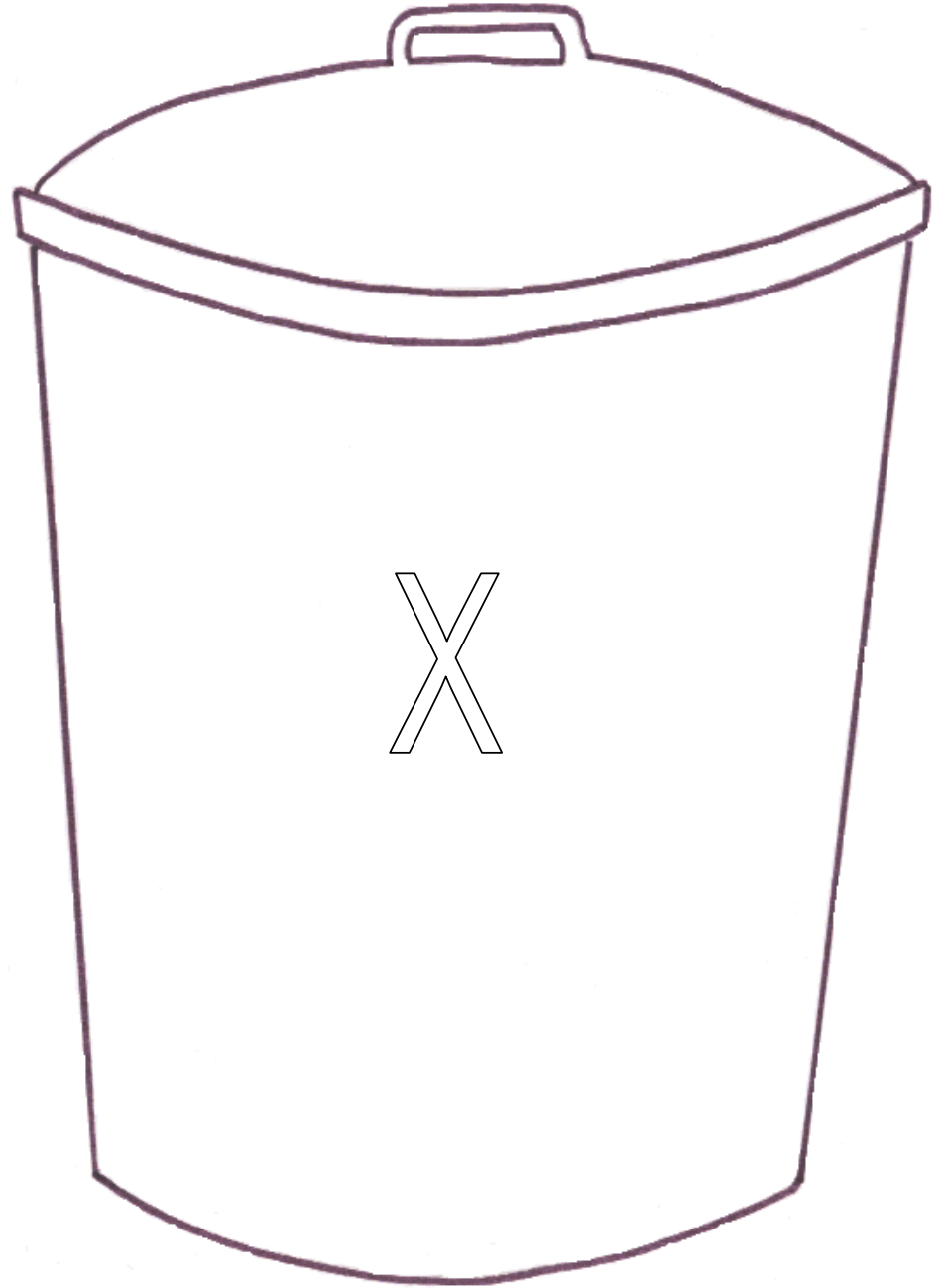
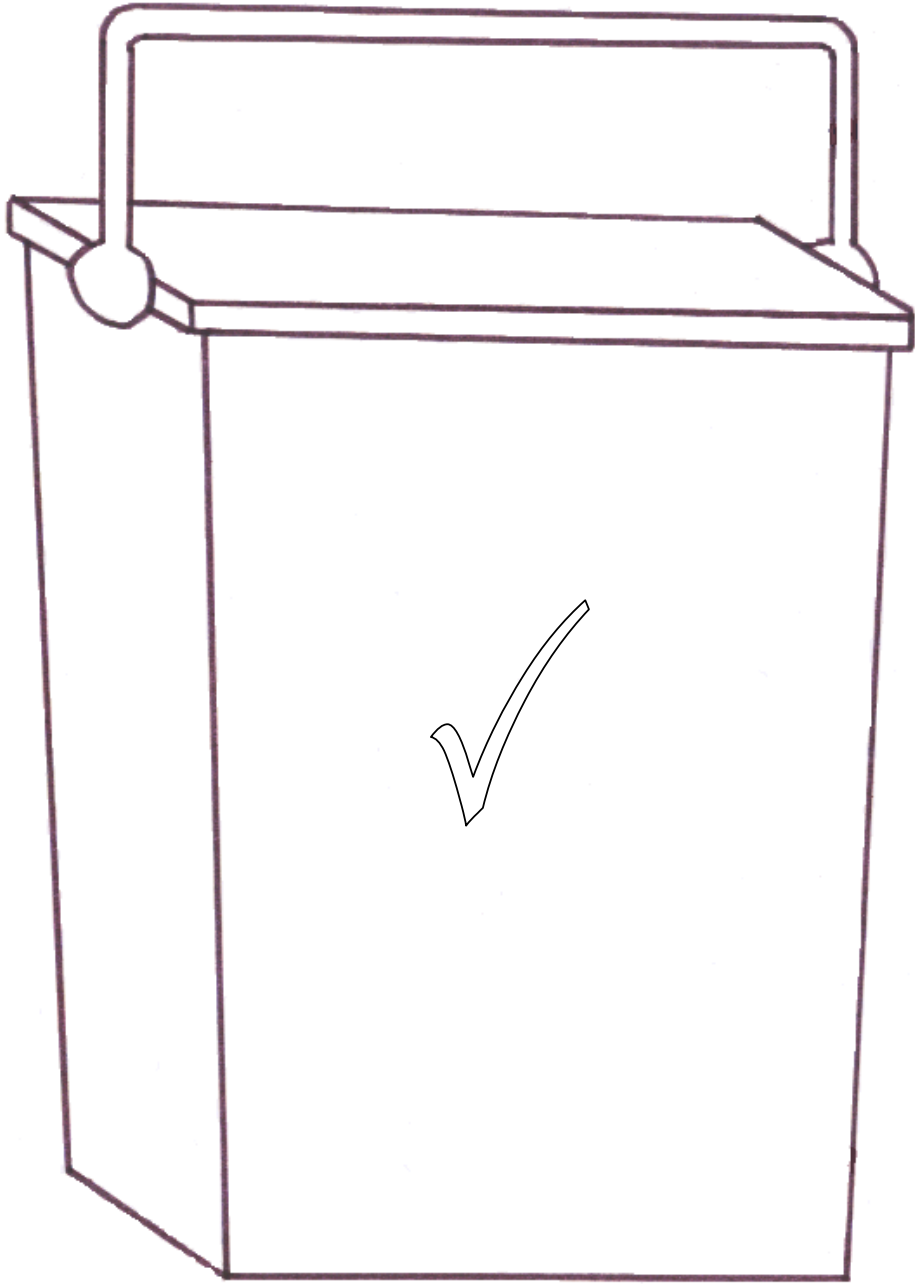
Put it in the compost bin	If in doubt keep it out.
fruit scraps uncooked vegetable scraps paper towels tea bags egg shells bits of cardboard potato peelings coffee grounds shredded newspaper dead flowers leaves	cooked food cheese writing paper – recycle meat scraps milk cartons plastic drink bottles - recycle bread crisp packets sweet wrappers fizzy drink cans – recycle yogurt cartons - reuse

Equipment

- ✓ A bin bag full of clean rubbish. See box below.
- ✓ A 'materials' bag with a selection of rubbish items inside.
- ✓ A selection of different rubbish items for each group.
- ✓ Photocopies of the 'Which bin' poster.
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Glue

Teaching Activity

1. Explain that the school is going to start composting. Tell the children that only certain things can be composted, so it is important to put the right things in the collection bins.
2. Pull items out of the 'materials' bag. Ask children what the different items are, what they are made from and whether they can be composted.
3. Using the photocopiable 'Which bin' picture, sort the items into two piles - what can be composted and what cannot.
4. Split the class into groups. Give each group a selection of waste items.
5. Ask the children to work through their items, deciding what can be composted and what cannot.
6. Some pieces of rubbish can then be stuck (either whole or in pieces) onto the 'Which bin' diagram to make a collage.



Which bin?