



Rot On!


Essential Question: Why do some things rot and others not?


Expectation: Set up an experiment to test the rate of decomposition for three different items: food, paper, and plastic.

	<h2>Engage (10 minutes)</h2>
	<p>Think about it: Why does food rot?</p> <p>Read (or Listen) to this Wonderopolis article: click here.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Then, connect with your teammate (a family member or friend) to share your thinking about why food rots. (I think ____)</p>

	<h2>Experiment (20 minutes)</h2>
	<p>Make a prediction: What objects will rot the most over 3 weeks? (I predict ____ because____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pick three items to test: one food item, one paper item, and one plastic item. ● Gather three containers and add an equal amount of soil and one item to each jar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear containers will be best so you can see the decomposition happening inside. ○ Consider using glass or plastic containers from your recycling bin. ● Cover your items with soil ● Add a little bit of water to moisten the soil. ● Place your containers in a sunny location. ● Seal your containers and observe over the next three weeks - make sure to leave room for air in your jar.

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Observe (10 minutes)</h2>
	<p>Observation Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take notes once per week for 3 weeks ● Take photos to track the decomposition process ● Draw a diagram of what is happening ● Use your senses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Smell ○ Touch ○ Sigt <p>Observation Discussion Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are the items decomposing at the same or different speed? Why do you think that is? ● What factors are affecting the rotting of your items?

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Reflect (10 minutes)</h2>
	<p>With a teammate, ask...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why do you think decomposition is important? ● What will happen to the materials that do not rot? What impact does this have on our environment? ● What was your favorite part of this experiment?

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Share (15 minutes)</h2>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Submit by Thursday 5/7</u> ● Email your experiment setup and initial observation to zerowastechallenge@seiinc.org to be entered into our weekly gift card raffle and to compete for our pizza party winner of the week. ● The subject of your email should read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Week 1 Submission - Name of Your School ● We would love to see... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Photos ○ Videos ○ Written observations and reflections ○ Anything else you are excited to share ● Send us your child's photo release form if you would like your photos to be eligible for our weekly challenge letter.

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Extensions</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why do we need rot? Check out this article about why 	



rotting is important for us all!

- Curious about other material decomposition rates? Check out [this website](#) comparing material decomposition to other familiar processes in our lives.
- Do things break down in landfills? Check out what happens inside landfills [here](#).