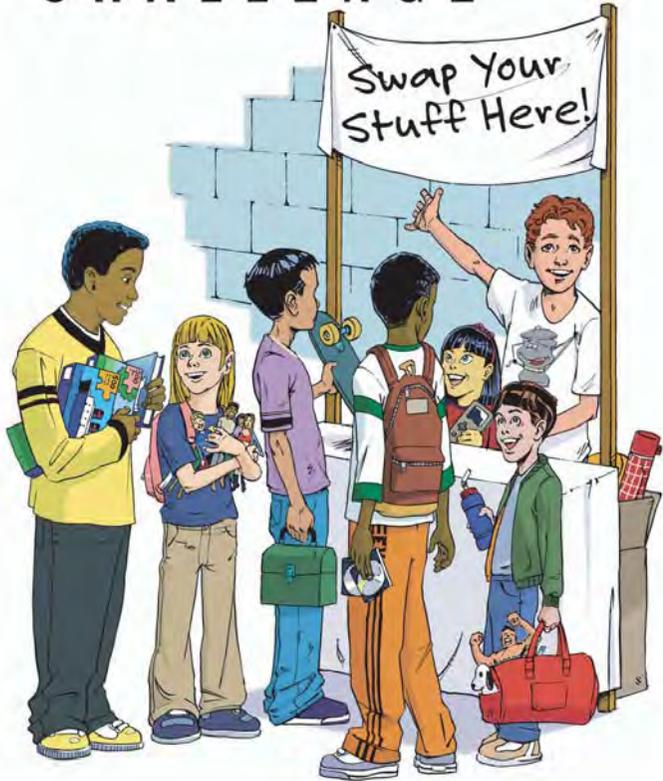


TrashMasters!™  
**REDUCE & REUSE**  
CHALLENGE



Elementary Division  
Manhattan Borough  
Runner-Up

**PS 199**  
**Jessie Isador Straus**

# 2012 GOLDEN APPLE AWARDS

This certificate is awarded with the sincere appreciation and esteem of a grateful Department and City in recognition of your school's efforts to help make New York City shine.



City of New York  
Department of Sanitation  
Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling  
[nyc.gov/wasteless](http://nyc.gov/wasteless)



# 2012 Golden Apple Awards Contest Entry Judging Info

(This sheet prepared for judges' use by DSNY BWPRR)



**ID Info:** 12022  
**School:** PS 199 Jessie Isador Straus  
**Grade Division:** LM  
**Borough:** M

**Golden Shovel Award contestant**  
(for borough Master School Composter)

## 2012 Project Entries received for:

**School Population: total #** 794

**Core Group:** **Total Participating:**

**TrashMasters! Super Recyclers**

Received:

**TrashMasters! Reduce & Reuse Challenge**

Received: 5/1/2012

25

794

A Smaller Footprint Is Making A Bigger Impact!

We are very proud of the strides we have made reducing the amount of waste going into the landfill while increasing the awareness in our community about the excessive amount of garbage a school can generate. We have also worked together to further educate the children and our community with our efforts culminating in a Saturday Earth Day Fair. Our hope is that we have reduced the PS 199 garbage footprint on our planet and will continue to do so.

**TrashMasters! Team Up to Clean Up**

Received:

## Prior Year Entries:

10:RR-boro

## School Contact Information:

**Phone:** 212-799-1033 x1020  
**Address:** 270 WEST 70 ST  
New York 10023

**Block&Lot:** 1011580040  
**DOE Location:** M199  
**DOE Bldg:** M199

## REQUIRED for Super Recyclers only:

**Custodian:** THERESA DI CRISTI  
**Custodian's Phone:** 212-721-3868  
**Custodian's Email:** cm199@schools.nyc.gov

**Sustainability Coord:** Diane Cione, Teacher  
**Contest Coordinator:** KATY ROSEN, Principal  
**Coord Phone (if different):**  
**Coordinator Email:** krosen2@schools.nyc.gov

**Principal:** KATY ROSEN  
**Principal Email:** krosen2@schools.nyc.gov

## Comments (may not be relevant to judging)

[\*food waste composting, bagasse trays] Submitted by: Lauri Landry Scharankov, Co Chair Healthy Child, Healthy Planet Committee of the PTA; 212-721-3061; Lauri\_Landry@yahoo.com

**Info Confirmed:**



# Reduce & Reuse Challenge

## SCHOOL INFO

- **PS 199**
- **Jessie Isador Straus Elementary School**
- **270 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10023**
- **Phone – 212-799-1033/ Fax – 212-799-1179**
- **Katy Rosen, Principal – 212-799-1033, ext. 1020**  
[KRosen2@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:KRosen2@schools.nyc.gov)
- **Contest Coordinator – Lauri Landry Scharankov**  
**Co-Chair Healthy Child, Healthy Planet Committee – 212-721-3061**  
[Lauri\\_Landry@Yahoo.com](mailto:Lauri_Landry@Yahoo.com)
- **PS 199 is a catchment school in District 3 on the Upper West Side (Lincoln Center Area). We currently have an enrollment of approximately 794 children. Our school motto is “Work Hard. Be Kind”.**
- **Custodian Information – Theresa DiCristi – 212-721-3868**

## CONTEST ENTRY INFO

- **Borough – MANHATTAN**
- **Grade Division – ELEMENTARY**
- **Contest Entry Title – A Smaller Foot Print Is Making A Bigger Impact!**
- **Contest Entry Summary -** *We are very proud of the strides we have made reducing the amount of waste going into the landfill while increasing the awareness in our community about the excessive amount of garbage a school can generate. We have also worked together to further educate the children and our community with our efforts culminating in a Saturday Earth Day Fair. Our hope is that we have reduced the PS 199 garbage footprint on our planet and will continue to do so.*

## STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

- **Student Participation: Core Group # 25 Ms. Chung’s 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Class**
- **Student Participation: Total # 794**

- **School Population: Total # 794**

## **SALAD BAR COMPOSTING**

The Healthy Child, Healthy Planet and the Garden Committees, in partnership with our kitchen staff, started a daily composting effort by collecting salad bar prep scraps. A parent takes the scraps and adds them to a composting ball we have placed in our school garden. It has been very successful and will continuously yield a rich supply of humus for our new garden area!





Our garden will be completed later this year. Volunteers collect household and cafeteria scraps as well as fallen leaves for our compost ball. Classes are taken to the garden and learn amid the natural environment. Incorporating composting and the composting ball, they learn how the school and community composting efforts help create the beautiful space in which they are currently learning.





## **CAFETERIA COMPOSTING**

Unfortunately, in most school cafeterias, it is hard to miss the large amount of waste generated on a daily basis.

We began our effort to reduce waste by switching over from the Styrofoam trays to sugar cane based trays -- funded by the PTA. Supplemented by DOE School Food, we had paper boats as often as possible for breakfast and Trayless Tuesday lunch. PS 199 was fortunate enough to be included in a school cafeteria composting pilot program that an independent garbage disposal company offered. They come nightly to the school to retrieve the compostable collected material. The recyclables and garbage for the landfill are still picked up by a DOS truck.

A series of bins with appropriate signage help the children identify what goes where. The children learned in an assembly line like process how to get rid of their waste. A committee of parents came into the cafeteria for one week to guide and encourage the children to sort their lunch refuse correctly. The children have been enthusiastic and committed to making the program work and have been articulate about how important they think it is. The school community is very excited about this new process and they have remained conscientious in their sorting efforts. The school janitorial staff has been very helpful setting up the separate bins and taking them out for collection at the end of the day.

We began a week of measuring and charting the sorted waste and we are all very surprised and proud about the amount of compostable material

that is no longer going into the garbage. We have reduced our contribution to the landfill by approximately 86%.



Trash Bin

Recycling Bin 




Lays  
Potato  
Chips




Recycling is not a joke






## EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

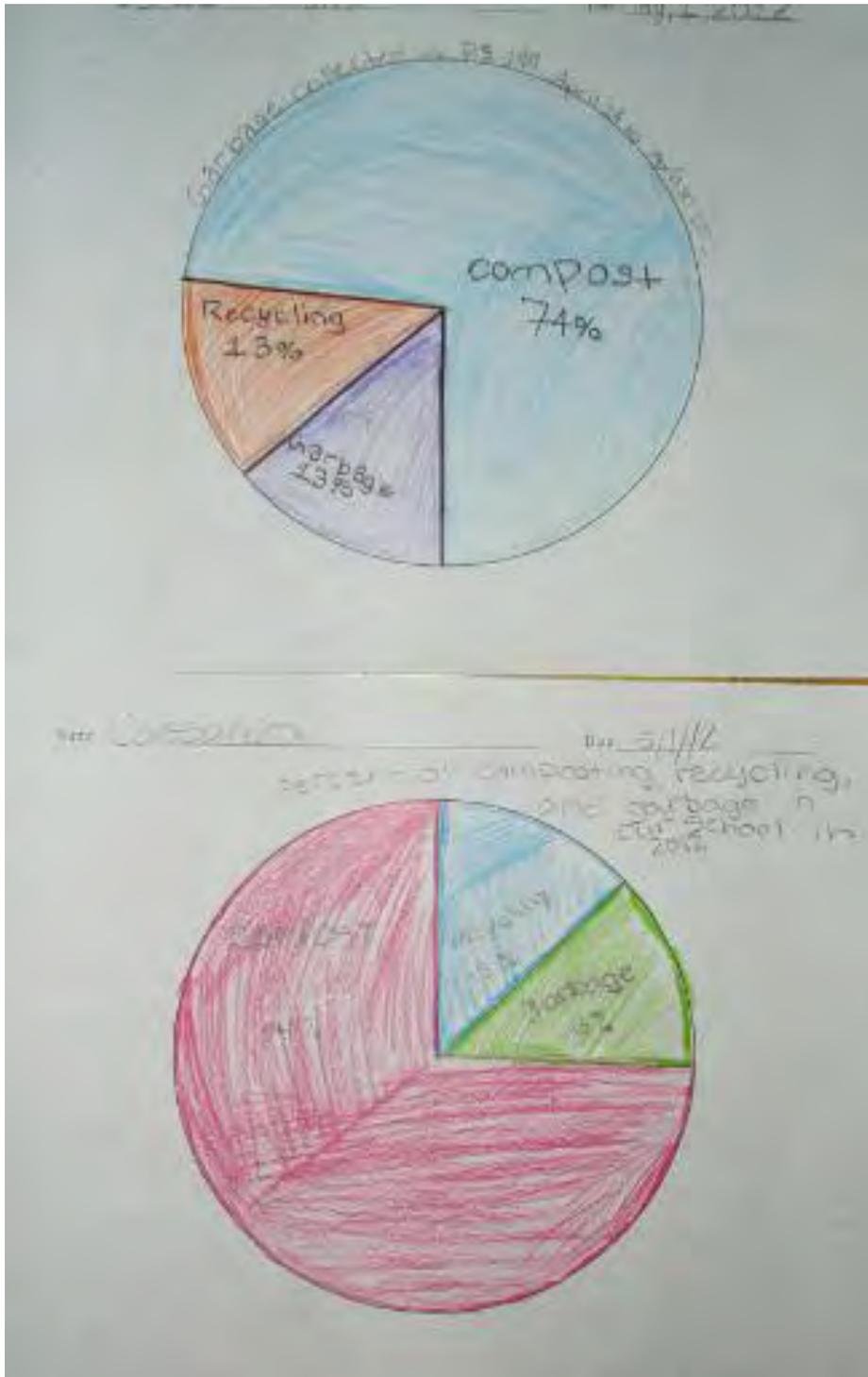
The educational opportunities presented thru the composting initiative were vast. A fourth class led by Ms. Chung and Ms. Huang (a student teacher)

explored the concepts of composting.

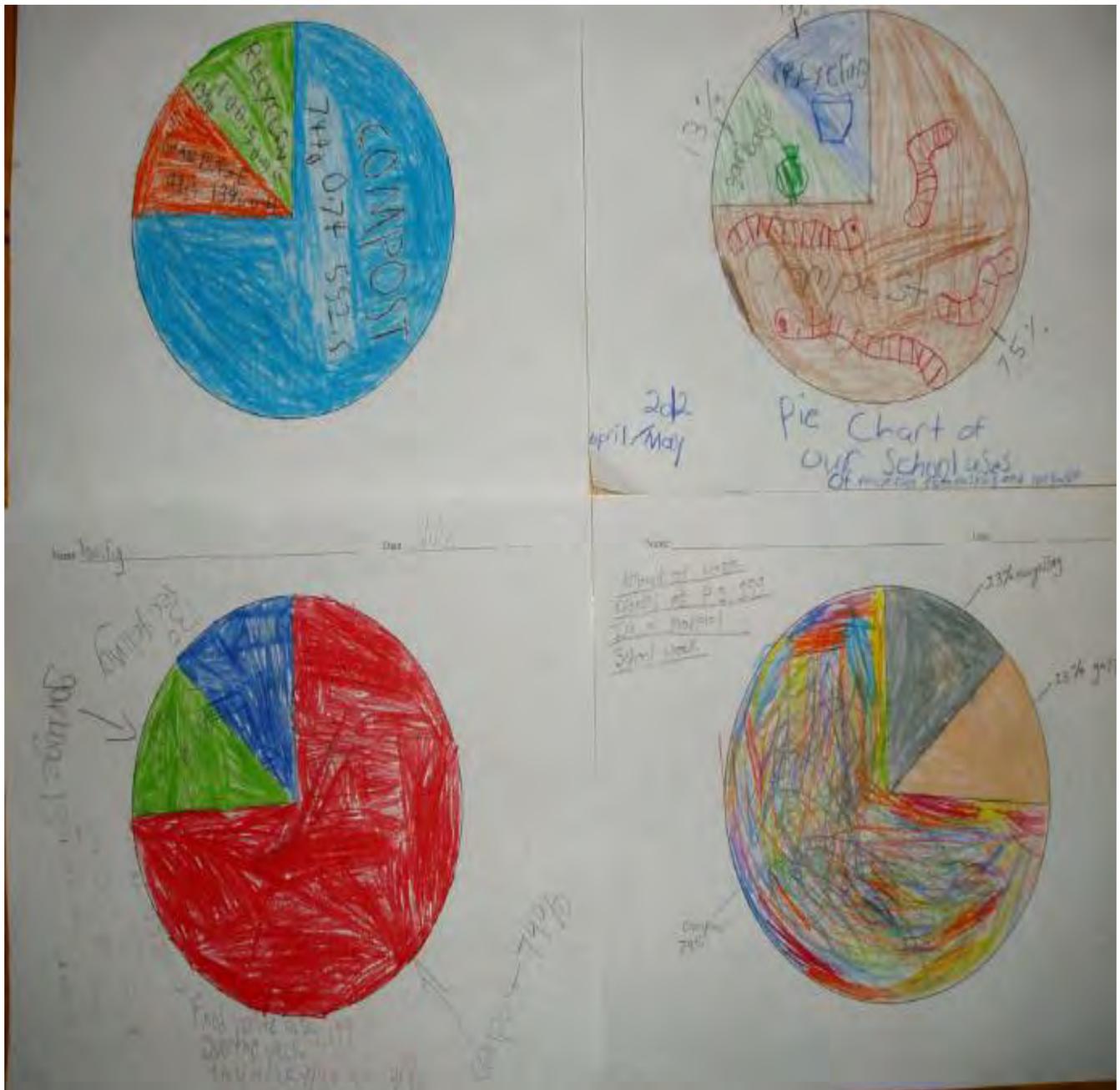
Taking the data collected by weighing, and measuring the volume of the compostable waste,

recyclables and garbage for the landfill for one week, the class contemplated graphing the results.

They were blown away by the amount of garbage that the school diverted from the landfill and had a great



time making the pie charts. Their math lesson will continue as they make bar graphs to quantify the daily results. We foresee the calculating continuing.

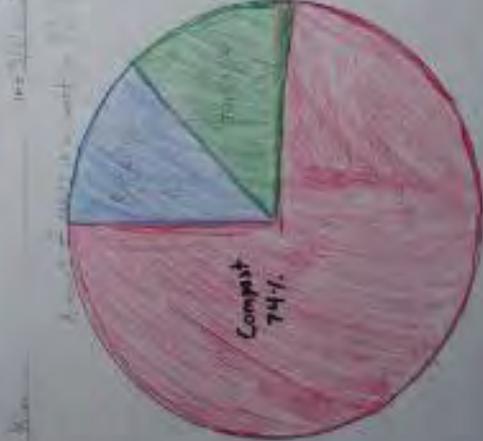




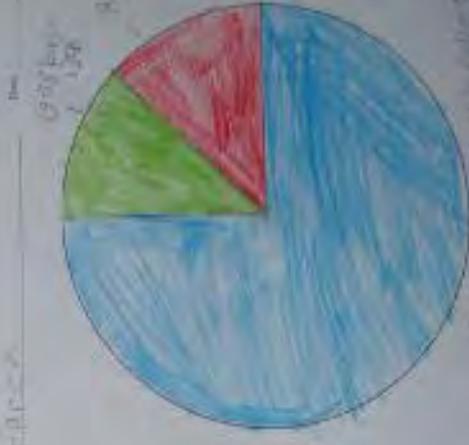
Waste 74% to compost 17% to landfill 7% to incineration 2% to other



The waste is split 74% to landfill, 17% to compost, 7% to incineration, and 2% to other.

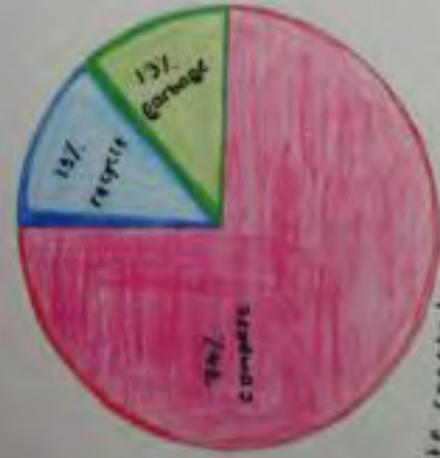


Waste 74% to compost 17% to landfill 7% to incineration 2% to other



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Waste Created  
at P.S. 199 2012, 4,34,436; 4,27; 4,28; 4,29;  
to 201

Jordan GHL

5/1/12



see "

Waste & R.M. ON < week in 2012

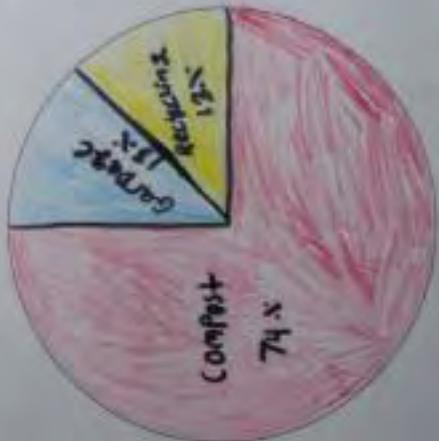


Waste collected in 1 week



Waste collected in 1 week

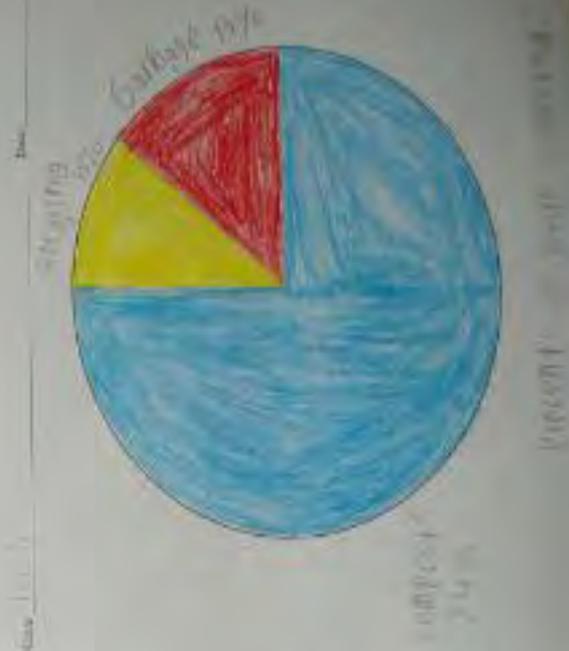
Waste collected in 1 week



Percentages of waste collection



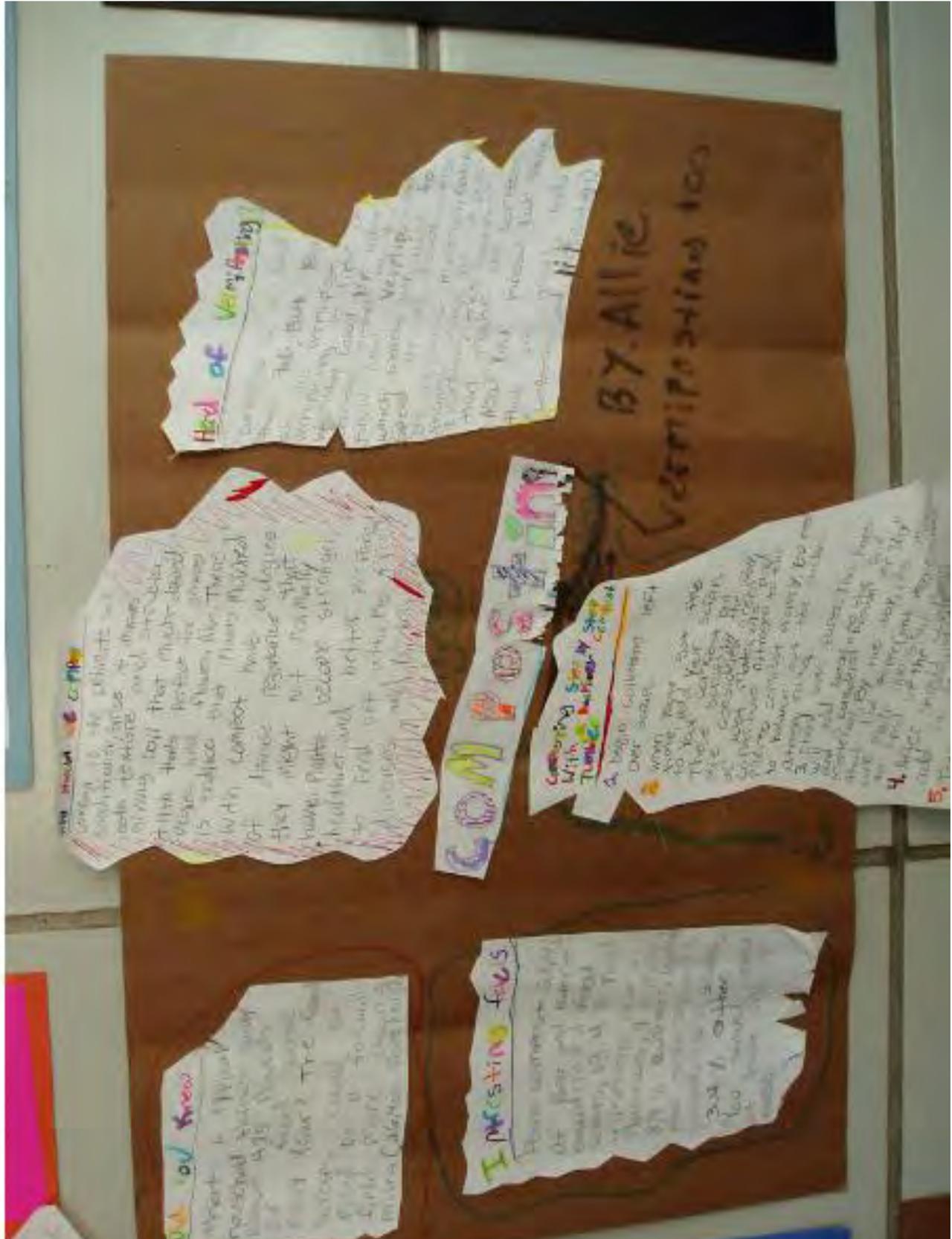
Waste collected in 1 week



The amount of waste that has been recycled is 13%.



A few weeks ago the class studied the specific use of worms within the composting process. As part of the educational unit the children made posters which were proudly displayed at the school's Earth Day Fair.



**Hard of Vermifiling**

Composting is the process of breaking down organic matter into a rich soil amendment. It's a natural process that can be done in your backyard or even indoors. Worms are the best friends you can have in your compost bin. They eat the food scraps and turn them into nutrient-rich castings. This process is called vermicomposting. It's a great way to reduce waste and improve your soil. Worms are also called composting worms. They are small, pinkish-red creatures that live in the soil. They are very hardworking and can eat up to 10 times their body weight in food each day. They are also very resilient and can survive in a wide range of temperatures. So, if you're looking for a way to compost your food scraps, worms are the way to go. They're hardworking, resilient, and they'll help you create a healthy, fertile soil for your garden.

BY: Allie  
VERMIFILING 101

**COMPOSTING**

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**COMPOSTING**

**Composting 101**

1. Begin collecting your scraps.
2. Worms love your scraps.
3. They'll eat your scraps.
4. They'll turn your scraps into nutrient-rich castings.
5. You can use the castings in your garden.

**Interesting Facts**

Worms are the most important organisms in the soil. They help break down organic matter and create a rich, fertile soil. They also help aerate the soil, which allows air and water to reach the plant roots. Worms are also known as composting worms. They are small, pinkish-red creatures that live in the soil. They are very hardworking and can eat up to 10 times their body weight in food each day. They are also very resilient and can survive in a wide range of temperatures. So, if you're looking for a way to compost your food scraps, worms are the way to go. They're hardworking, resilient, and they'll help you create a healthy, fertile soil for your garden.

# COMPOST... NOW!

What is compost?  
It's the natural process by which organic materials decompose into a rich, dark soil amendment. It's the best way to improve your soil and reduce waste.

Why compost?  
It saves money on fertilizer, improves soil structure, and reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills.

How to start:  
1. Collect kitchen scraps like vegetable peels, coffee grounds, and eggshells.  
2. Add them to a compost bin or pile.  
3. Turn the pile regularly to aerate it.  
4. Wait 3-6 months for it to decompose.



# Save the Earth!!!

Recycling is important because it reduces the amount of waste that ends up in landfills and incinerators. It also saves energy and resources.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. These three R's are the key to a more sustainable future. We can all do our part to protect the planet.

Use reusable water bottles instead of plastic ones. It saves money and reduces plastic waste.

Turn off lights and unplug electronics when you're not using them. This helps save energy and reduce your carbon footprint.



**BUY 1, GET 1 FREE!**

composting bin



What is Composting?  
Composting is a natural process of recycling decomposed organic materials. With a 2000 year history, the Composting process has been used successfully for centuries. Composting is a natural process that breaks down organic materials into a rich, nutrient-rich soil.

Types of Composting:  
• Backyard Composting - A low cost, low maintenance method of composting that can be done in a backyard or on a balcony. It involves collecting organic materials in a bin or pile and turning them over regularly to speed up the process.  
• Hot Composting - A more intensive method of composting that involves turning the pile frequently to maintain a high temperature. This method is best for breaking down tough materials like woody stems and animal manure.

How to Compost:  
1. Choose a location - A well-drained area with partial shade is ideal. Avoid areas with foot traffic or where you will be mowing.  
2. Collect materials - Green materials (kitchen scraps, lawn clippings) and brown materials (leaves, twigs, paper) should be added in a 1:2 ratio.  
3. Turn the pile - Turn the pile every 2-3 weeks to aerate it and speed up the process.  
4. Monitor moisture - The pile should be as moist as a wrung-out sponge.  
5. Be patient - It can take 3-6 months for the compost to be ready to use.

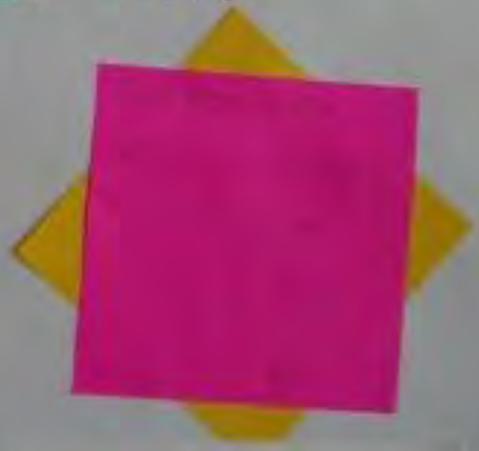
# Compost; save the earth, save the trash, save yourself

7 ways you should compost:  
1. Save and use food scraps like vegetable peels, coffee grounds, and tea bags.  
2. Use a compost bin to collect scraps and keep them separate from other trash.  
3. Turn the pile regularly to aerate it.  
4. Monitor moisture and add water if needed.  
5. Be patient - It takes time for compost to be ready.  
6. Use the compost in your garden or on lawns.  
7. Share your compost with neighbors.

How you can help:  
1. Reduce, reuse, recycle to minimize waste.  
2. Use a compost bin instead of a trash can for organic waste.  
3. Turn the pile regularly.  
4. Monitor moisture and add water if needed.  
5. Be patient - It takes time for compost to be ready.  
6. Use the compost in your garden or on lawns.  
7. Share your compost with neighbors.

Composting is a natural process that breaks down organic materials into a rich, nutrient-rich soil. It is a low cost, low maintenance method of recycling organic materials. With a 2000 year history, the Composting process has been used successfully for centuries. Composting is a natural process that breaks down organic materials into a rich, nutrient-rich soil.

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What you need:  
1. Compost bin - A well-drained area with partial shade is ideal. Avoid areas with foot traffic or where you will be mowing.  
2. Collect materials - Green materials (kitchen scraps, lawn clippings) and brown materials (leaves, twigs, paper) should be added in a 1:2 ratio.  
3. Turn the pile - Turn the pile every 2-3 weeks to aerate it and speed up the process.  
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5. Be patient - It can take 3-6 months for the compost to be ready to use.

# Easy and Fun...

## Compost

How to compost in 6 easy steps  
1. Get a big bag or bucket, or a bin.  
2. Put food scraps in it every day.  
3. Seal it up to keep smells out.  
4. Put it in a shady place.  
5. Turn it every 2 weeks.  
6. Use it!

6.1% of the world's population  
is living in the world's  
most polluted cities.  
The world's most polluted cities  
are in the world's most  
polluted countries.

Recycling is as good as compost because they both save the earth but in a different way. Recycling saves resources but the earth is already full of things that are not being used.

13.9% of water in New York City are food scraps



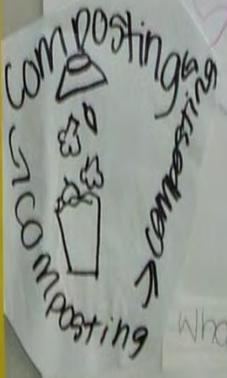
B. E.A.

What is composting?  
Composting is the breaking down of food scraps, yard waste, and other organic materials into a rich soil amendment.

Composting is the best way to reduce food waste and improve soil health.

Composting makes the world a better place.

Composting is a natural process that breaks down food scraps and yard waste into a rich soil amendment.



What can go in compost?

eggshell

Fruit skins

compost



# COMPOSTING OF THE WORLD

## HOW COMPOSTING HELPS THE WORLD

### THE FASTEST WAY TO COMPOST

The fastest way to compost is to compost with worms. First, you get a bin with breathing holes in it and then you put food waste in the bin. Then you put damp newspaper scraps on top of the food. After that you put the worms in the bin and put a cap on the bin and close it tightly. Then you put it in a very dark place and wait a few months and your food waste will be very, very good soil.

Composting helps the world by reducing food scraps in landfills and it makes amazing soil. It makes your plants grow a lot better and it helps poor people because if they cannot afford to buy regular soil, they can make their own compost soil and compost soil is much better than regular soil.

### A SLOWER WAY TO COMPOST

The way you compost the slowest way is by putting food scraps in a bin and waiting a few months. In a few months it will decompose and turn into compost soil. You should only compost fruits and vegetables.

### WHY COMPOSTING IS EASY

Composting is easy because it is very fast to do if you know how to do it. It is just as easy to dump your food scraps into the composting bin as it is to dump your food scraps into a garbage can and most of the work is done for you.



By: LUNA  
Vermipost from coast to coast!

### Vermiposting

Vermiposting is a great way of keeping food waste out of landfills. It involves worms taking biodegradable food scraps and simply making it into manure. Landfills on the other hand tightly pack food scraps making it hard to biodegrade.

Vermiposting uses worms so that it breaks down faster. Not using worms is called composting which takes longer but it still the same thing. I think every one should compost because it's good for the earth.

### Why Vermipost?

The vermipost is made by using worms and the earth to turn your food scraps into soil. It's a great way to keep your food scraps out of the landfill.

### What to compost?

- Egg and cut up
- Coffee and tea grounds
- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Plant grass, leaves and twigs
- Shredded paper and newspaper

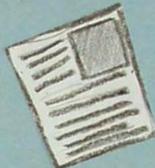
### How-to Vermipost

First get a bin with breathing holes. Then fill it with damp newspaper, straw and some food. Now add Red wigglers and tada your done!

Find out more info here

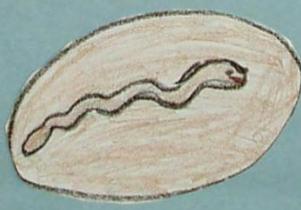
What is Vermiposting?  
Vermiposting is with worms,  
newspaper, and food waste.  
You combine them and you get  
a great compost. It's great for  
the garden.

Why do we  
Vermipost?  
We vermipost  
because it is  
easy for the  
environment  
friendly.



# Wormy Vermiposting

by Jordan Hank



- Steps
- 1) The newspaper  
and worms and worms  
the soil.
  - 2) ...
  - 3) make sure you  
have holes in the  
bin so the worms  
can breathe.

Fun Facts

- Happy worms  
eat about half their  
body weight in a day.
- Worms will eat  
all food waste.

# VERMIPROST

**1. Materials you need to vermicompost**  
 Worms, Box with lid, Soil, Newspapers, Carrots and lettuce, Bowl with water in it.

**2. Steps to vermicompost at home**

- Take the box lid off, and punch SMALL holes so that later the worms can breathe.
- Then take the newspapers and shred them into thin strips. Then slip the newspaper into the water ONLY (TTTTT!! If you put in too much, your worms later will die.) Put all the newspaper that you wet, in the box.
- Also that, use the carrots (sliced), lettuce (1) and cut them into small pieces so the worms can eat it.
- Now put the carrots and lettuce in the box too.
- Finally put the worms inside the box! There should be soil with the worms, so dump that in too.

**3. What is VERMIPROST?**  
 Definition: Vermicomposting is when you compost, but only with worms. Normally, if you compost, nature such as bacteria, fungus and so on, instead, for vermicomposting, you ONLY use worms.

**4. Why you should vermicompost**  
 We all should vermicompost because it saves the earth, by reducing pollution energy and raw materials and less garbage is used like. Another reason why you should vermicompost, is because it saves time, then just waiting for nature to break it down for nutrients about.

By: Lauren Kim

**Fun Fact**

Other names for the worm:

- Red Wigglers
- Tiger Worms
- Manure Worms
- Black Worms
- Fish Worms
- Long Worms
- Field Worms
- Stumpy Worms
- Appleworms
- Redworms

**What you need to Vermicompost**

- Worms
- Food to be composted
- a bin with air holes
- ripped up paper
- Dark space

Vermicomposting is easy to do at home and helps the earth. So you should do it. All most half of garbage that goes to landfills can be composted and vermicomposted. This makes less landfills and that helps ALOT.

By: Natalie Nieuwenhuizen

COMPOSTING IS FUN! ❤️

What can be  
compost.

Food scraps like  
fruit and vegetable and  
also scraps papers.

What do you  
need to compost?

1 plastic bin

2 worms

3 Food scraps

to compost

4 soil

# Garbage composting

1. Collect garbage from  
kitchen to put the waste  
in the bin.  
2. Throw some water  
and soil in the bin  
3. Add some worms  
and soil to the bin.

4. Cover the bin with  
soil.  
5. Wait for the worms to  
eat the waste and  
turn it into soil.  
6. Use the soil for  
gardening.



THE WORMS SAY...  
COMPOST IS NOT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT!

Why is Composting Important?  
Compost reduces the percentage of landfills. It also helps the percentage of land for agriculture. If you can reduce it, fertilizer is used instead of compost system!

# Composting



When you Compost this is the result:



What Should I Compost? and What Shouldn't I Compost?

- Brown waste
- Any rotten or spoiled meat
- Egg shells (crustaceans)
- Soap suds
- (Etc.) You should avoid...



Did You Know? worm  
Composting comes from the word vermicomposting. The Latin word vermi means worm. aka, worms. Vermicomposting is actually a subset of the same idea as composting, except the decomposers are called the Earthworms.

[www.worms/vermi.com\(posting\)](http://www.worms/vermi.com(posting))

Richard Ly

# COMPOST

Why should we compost? Because the nutrients that are left in the soil are not used by the plants. If we compost, we can use the nutrients that are left in the soil.

What is composting? Vegetables, meat, fruit skins, and trimmings and other organic materials.

What is a compost bin? A container for collecting and storing organic materials that will decompose into soil.

What are the benefits of compost? Compost is a natural fertilizer that can help plants grow. It also helps the soil retain water and nutrients.

What can be composted?  
Food scraps like bread, fruit and vegetable scraps, etc.

What do you need to compost?  
1. Plastic bin  
2. Worms  
3. Food

wwworms.vermi.com (posting)

Vermicomposting, I know you think is hard work, but really, all you need is love. No, scratch that, all you need is a 16 1/2 inch wide, 1 foot tall receptacle with punctated breathing holes, where squashed, ripped newspaper punches atop "green trash", such as shredded carrots and celery bits - well, for vermicomposting, at least.

Vermicomposting is the cycle where segmented worms - or annelids - quicken the decomposing process and gobble up food scraps, which they eventually defecate to produce compost.

Yes, this is all the gospel truth, not some bigarre information cooked up by some equally bigarre person.  
Trust me.

In 2002, about 13% out of 200 million tons of food scraps went through composting and stopped off to worms. When we will have simply composted those scraps that would have 70% of the 13% of the waste that...

Vermicomposting is a way of recycling all our waste and turning it into something real - nutritious for our earth's soil. Well that's the magic of vermicomposting.

When you see the worms at all, well, you might not get a worm or two. Such is the nature of the composting cycle and the worms are very, which means that they're very...

A really great worm job

Wormy Solutions

4 easy steps to a vermicompost

Step 1: get a container and put small food scraps at the bottom

Step 2: put worms inside the container

Step 3: put small damp pieces of newspaper on top of the worms

Step 4: pour the worms in a dark place. Now wait until the food is gone!



# vermiposting

Why should you do it? you should do it because it helps the environment by giving nutrients to plants

Where should you do it! you should do it in a dark place because

Worms can die in the light.

Vermiposting is fun... Because everyday you can see less

and less food in the container but more and more so,!!

Food scraps  
to do it  
in Food  
to do it  
to do it

# COM

What is Vermiposting?  
Vermiposting is the process of putting worms in a bin of soil to eat your food scraps.

13.9% of the population

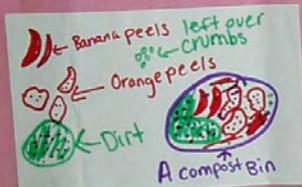
Post

Food scraps  
to do it  
in Food  
to do it  
to do it

# COMPOSTING IS FUN! ♡

Stading compost  
is a Fun and  
Smart Science  
Project.

# COMPOST



What is composting?  
Composting is when you  
like put food waste and  
food scraps mixed with  
soil in a bin.  
You can make compost  
everywhere.

You should  
compost!

- Step-by-step to  
compost:
- 1) Get any type of bin and  
add soil and dirt to it.
  - 2) Fill the bin with food  
scraps.
  - 3) Then let it settle down  
for 4 days.
  - 4) Now you have  
very rich compost!

Save the  
Compost!



Save the  
World!



ompost

Compost is important  
to the world. Reusing things  
is good. Food waste, food scraps  
that we don't eat, and things  
that we don't want to eat  
help the world. So, you  
don't eat the food.

Brody Vankeuren

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## **RECYCLING COLLECTION**

The Department of Sanitation has not yet implemented the collection of #5 plastics for recycling. The Healthy Child, Healthy Planet Committee decided to collect them. Our program is called “5 On Fridays”.

An announcement went out in our weekly e-mail requesting parents to drop off #5 plastics in a designated area. A small group of parents took turns collecting the #5s at morning drop off. After a few weeks we found putting a collection box out once a week (Fridays) worked well. We take turns walking the collected items to our local Whole Food Store, which is part of a program to reuse these plastics. We are now collecting between 7 and 15 lbs. each Friday.



## **EARTH DAY FAIR**

Earth Day is to be the perfect opportunity to introduce, educate and reinforce ideas about reducing, reusing, recycling, composting, and healing and protecting our planet.

Our Second Annual Earth Day Fair was held on Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012 in the school cafeteria. The children and their families brought in items for various recycling collections, participated in games and arts and crafts, bought bright farm fresh produce, cooked and learned about nutrition, tried Tai Kwan Do and Yoga, and planted in the school garden. There was a great deal of educational information available as well.

## **COLLECTIONS**

A list of collectables was sent out in the school e-mail a week prior to the fair. We also made posters for the school playground with all of the important information.

At our Earth Day Fair PS 199 collected a wider array of electronics than it normally would. Counselwomen Gail Brewer created a partnership with Sims Recycling Solutions and the Upper West Side Recycling Center. We transported our collected items, along with used sneakers and batteries to the PS 87's Earth Day Fair where they were attempting to break a Guinness Book of World Records record for the largest amount of electronics recycled in a day.



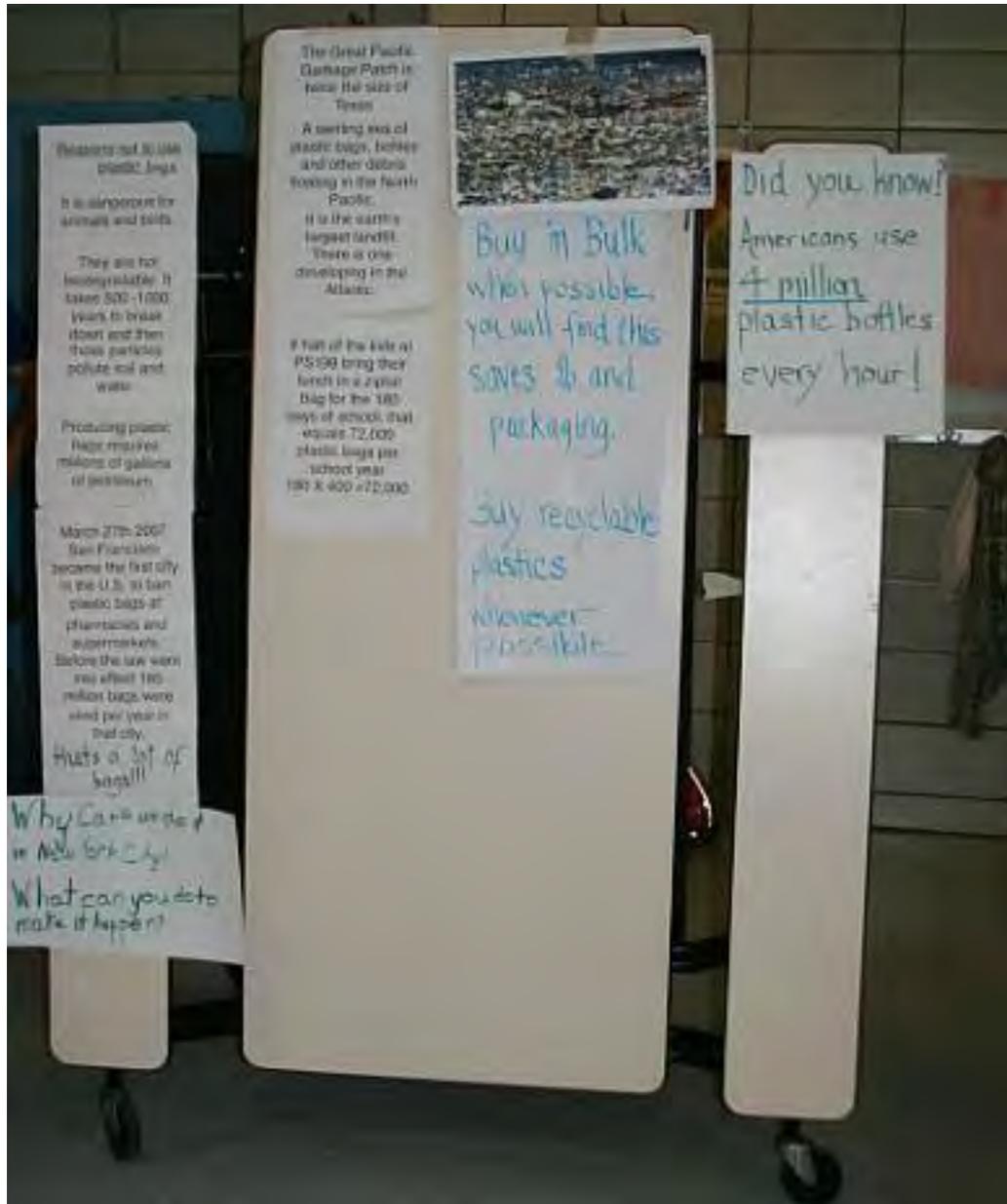
## PAPER SHEDDER

As we were close to ‘tax time’ we invited the PS 199 families to bring their papers to the fair for shredding. A truck from “A Shred Away”, a commercial and residential on-site shredding organization sent a truck that shreds the paper on site and transports the refuse to a facility that makes cups and plates from it. The children loved watching it “eat the paper” and what a good lesson about reusing! We were particularly pleased to have such a good turnout of interested families. This removed a good deal of potential paper waste, protected important personal information and gave us all the satisfaction to know that our papers would be part of a recycling effort.



## GAMES, ARTS AND CRAFTS AND EDUCATION

There were many opportunities for the children to have fun and learn.



We had sorting games where the children testing their skills and knowledge of the different forms of waste and recyclables.



A contest questionnaire was passed out to each family as they arrived. The questions were about different concepts introduced at the fair. They were collected when the children were finished. Three contest winners were drawn from the questionnaires that where 100% correct! The prizes included reusable water bottles and sandwich and snack bags.



A craft area where children could make bookmarks from old cereal boxes was very popular! The origami table, where the children made lovely creations out of used paper bags, was as well!



David Goldberg from the New York Botanical Gardens brought worms from his worm bin to our Earth Day Fair to show the children the specific process of vermiposting.





On their way out, attendees were given paper leaves to add their thoughts, hopes and promises for the future to our special 'green' tree which still stands in the cafeteria!

“ I will not waste stuff”

“ I will make stuff with stuff I don't want”

“Plant flowers and recikle and clean up litter”

“use less paper”

“when I am not using lights, I will turn them off”

“take the bus”

## **REPLICATING OUR EFFORTS AT OTHER SCHOOLS**

To start the school must have the principal and the PTA supporting any green project, the parents are involved in. One needs to nurture a relationship with custodial and kitchen staff that allows a collaboration.

Ideally, an interest teacher will step up and bring the lesson into the classroom and pass on this vital information to the children. In addition there are many math and science teachable moments implementing the data collected from the green initiatives.

Our method for composting is simple and replicable by other schools. Our experience continues to be that the children are interested, committed and conscientious.

Attempting to make an Earth Day Fair fun and age appropriate helps to bring in many people so that they can be educated about ways to reduce and reuse. We incorporated activities and local businesses such as Tae Kwon Do and Yoga classes, an expert in Vermiposting, a shredding truck, outdoor composting and gardening, an educational video, recycling and reusable crafts, a questionnaire contests, a farmer's market, a healthy cooking lesson, a multiple recycling item drop-off point, and much information about reducing and reusing to help our planet.

Positive reinforcement showing favorable results for our environment should be disseminated regularly in school and at PTA meetings so that children, staff and parents feel and see the value of their efforts.

## **LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

A number of factors can be used to determine the success of our efforts:

Composting is recognized, understood and practically done-even in Manhattan! Families having been educated through our efforts and are now composting on their balconies, lobbying their companies and residential buildings to start composting efforts and local Farmer's Markets who are accepting compost materials from locals are becoming more prevalent.

Recycling and Reusing has become rote among children and families. Our efforts are paying off! Parents and children consistently bring in their used ink cartridges, old cellphones and laptops, batteries, # 5 plastics, bottle caps etc. The children are recycling properly in the cafeteria and have knowledge of what it is to compost. More and more children are coming to school with reusable food containers at lunch as the families become more aware of what it means to reduce and reuse. This is the way it should be at all schools and we hope that our efforts will help other schools move towards smaller footprints.



