

Aina Haina School Worm Recycling Project School Year 2009-10

We began in November 2009 working with these gentlemen (Lucas and Hunter) from Greenhouse Hawaii. They began by helping us to build awareness of being more sensitive about our environment and how we handle waste.



They took us outside and used an activity called the “Trash Timeline” to help us learn how long it takes for trash to decompose. We all realized after this activity that we really need to reuse, renew, and recycle.



The “Ecohunt” activity educated us about the “Circle of Life”. We were amazed at all the things that decompose along the path of a plant’s cycle. The students learned an awesome scientific term called, “biodegradable.”



The next day we learned about composting worms and the vermicast they excrete through their waste. We were amazed to learn how it is broken down into fertilizer. Greenhouse Hawaii gave us a starter worm bin made out of a half plastic barrel.

On the last session, we were trained on how to harvest the worms and start a brand new worm bin. We recycled paper from the office shredder to use as carbon filler. We also learned the importance of keeping the bin moist with water and what kinds of food scraps to use. It was interesting for us to learn how the worms eat the bacteria on the food and not so much the food itself.



Jeremai, from Greenhouse Hawaii joined us on the worm harvest training. He is a living example of someone who practices “sustainability” in his everyday life.

So now we were on our own to see if we could care for the worms ourselves. We created a feeding schedule and we were on our own. Students brought scraps from their lunch, added shredded paper, and watered the bin with a spray gun. Over the vacations, a student took the bin home to take care of it. Their family also learned a lot about our recycling project.

In mid-January we ran into a big problem! Our worm bin was invaded with field cockroaches and ants. We called Jeremai and he advised us to keep the bin very moist and the problem should subside. Unfortunately, we noticed our vermicast getting less and less. The insects were consuming the vermicast!

With the advice from staff members and our custodians (who have worm bins at home), they advised us to get a new bin. I bought one from Home Depot and we harvested whatever vermicast was left from the old bin and transferred the worms to its new home.



Here are the worms in their new home as of February 2010 below!



Although our hope was to harvest by the end of May, we will need a few more months over the summer. We hope to harvest the bin when we return in August. Thank you to everyone who made our learning project possible!

