

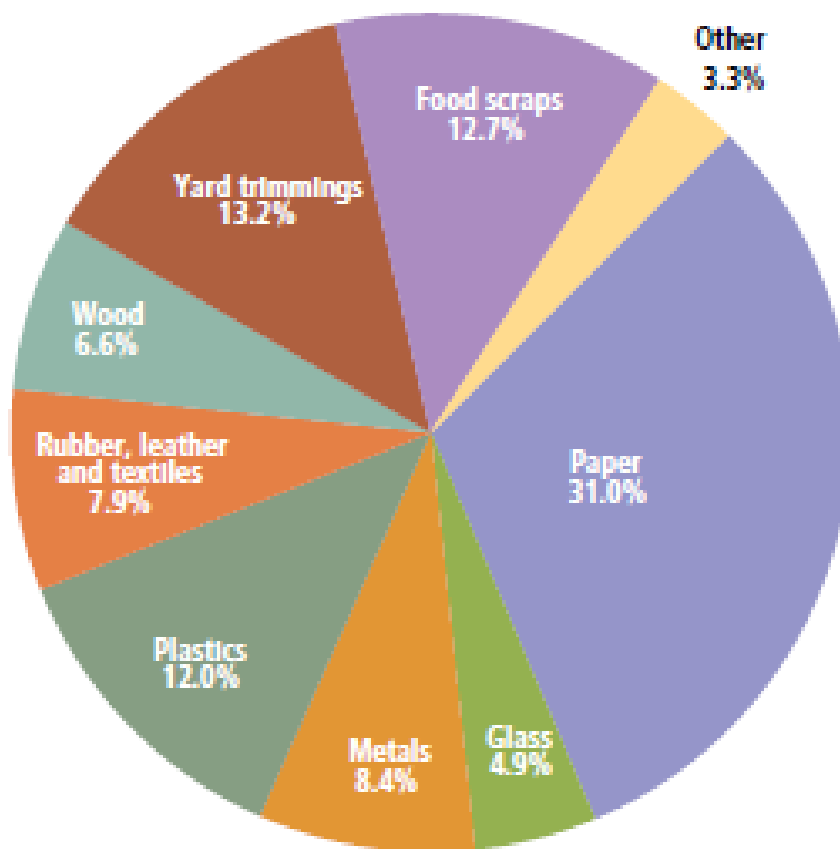
U.S. Trash Data



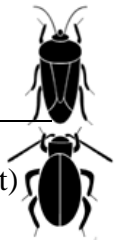
2003 Trash Data The graph below show the net waste disposal for the United States during 2008

Data source: Characterization of MSW in the US:
<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/municipal/msw99.htm#links>

Figure 5. Total MSW Generation (by material), 2008
250 Million Tons (before recycling)



Student Sheet – Composting



Objective

Your job is to find out what is has to be present for things to decompose (rot) in nature.

Materials

- Clipboard with this data sheet
- Sturdy Spoon
- Container for collecting decomposers
- Diagram of Compost Pile Food Web

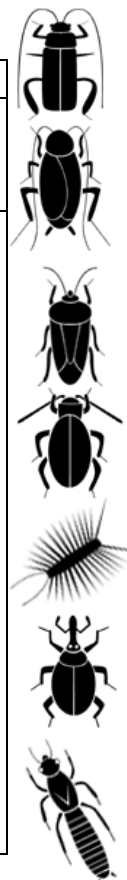


How Does It Happen?

1. Find a place in the natural world where you can see decomposition (rotting) happening. Check off everything you find on the list below. Write in anything you find that is not on the list.

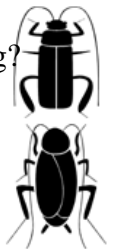


Things Needed for Decomposition		
Soil Organisms	Food Source (Organic Matter – Nitrogen & Carbon)	Conditions
<input type="checkbox"/> Earthworms	<input type="checkbox"/> Leaves	<input type="checkbox"/> Water (moisture)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sow bug	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood	<input type="checkbox"/> Air (spaces, small particles)
<input type="checkbox"/> Millipede	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal parts	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Beetle or Beetle Grub	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Droppings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fly or Fly Larva	<input type="checkbox"/> Dead Insects	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bacteria (slime)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fungus (mushrooms or white threads)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		



What is Missing?

2. Find a place where little or no decomposition is happening. What is missing?



Food Web of the Compost Pile

The diagram below shows the food web of the compost pile. Source: The Fertrell Company Catalog.

