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Introduction

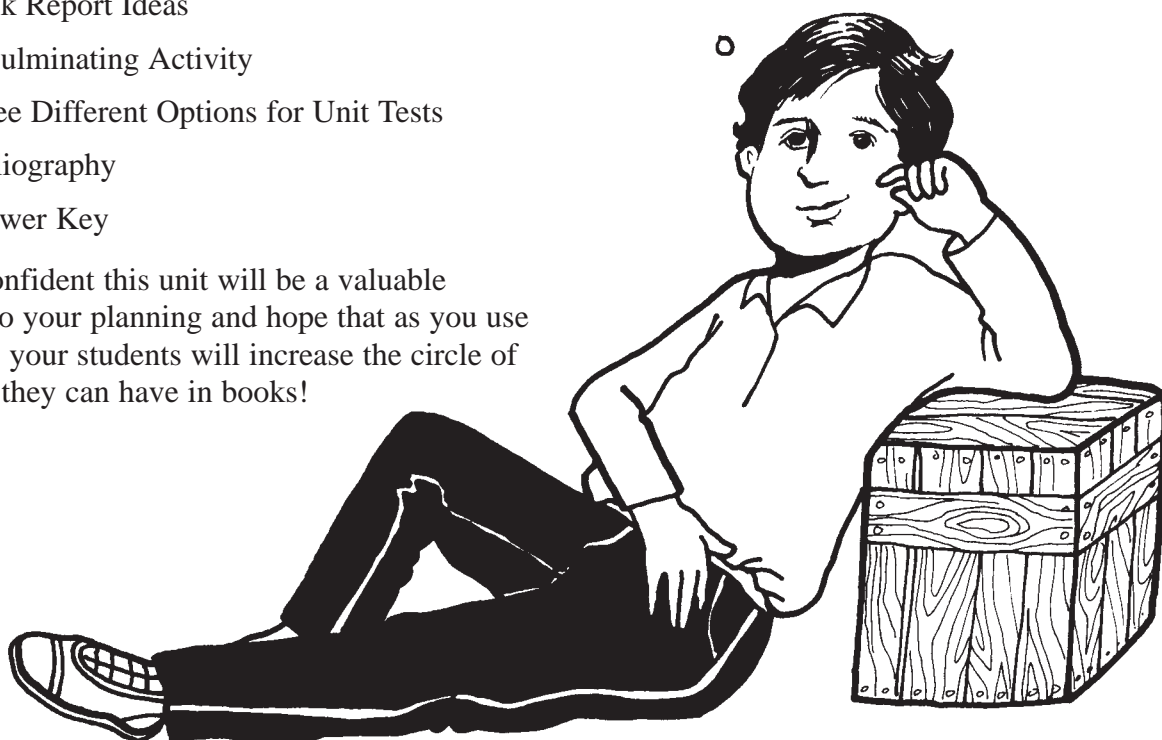
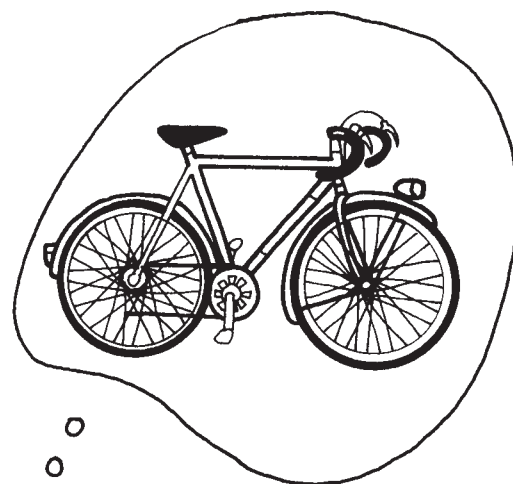
A good book can touch our lives like a good friend. Within its pages are words and characters that can inspire us to achieve our highest goals. We can turn to it for companionship, recreation, comfort, and guidance. It also gives us a cherished story to hold in our hearts forever.

In *Literature Units*, great care has been taken to select books that are sure to become good friends!

Teachers who use this literature unit will find the following features to supplement their own valuable ideas.

- A Sample Lesson Plan
- Pre-reading Activities
- A Biographical Sketch and Picture of the Author
- A Book Summary
- Vocabulary Lists and Suggested Vocabulary Activities
- Journal Activities
- Chapters grouped for study, with each section including
 - quizzes
 - hands-on projects
 - cooperative learning activities
 - cross-curriculum connections
 - extension activities to relate to the reader's own life
- Post-reading Activities
- Book Report Ideas
- A Culminating Activity
- Three Different Options for Unit Tests
- Bibliography
- Answer Key

We are confident this unit will be a valuable addition to your planning and hope that as you use our ideas, your students will increase the circle of “friends” they can have in books!



How to Eat Fried Worms

by *Thomas Rockwell*

(Dell, 1973)

(Available in Australia from Transworld Publishers)

Billy, Tom, Alan, and Joe are very good friends even though they are very different. The boys have shared in many adventures together. During one friendly conversation, they discover Tom was in trouble the previous night because he would not eat his dinner. This leads to a discussion among the friends about what they would and would not eat. Billy, the daring one of the group, claims he would eat just about anything. Soon, a bet emerges. Alan bets Billy fifty dollars that Billy will not be able to eat fifteen worms in fifteen days. The boys agree to some specific rules, such as Billy will not have to eat the big green worms from tomatoes and that he can eat the worms prepared any way he wishes.

The first worm is a night crawler which has been boiled. Billy argues that it is much too large to be considered a regular worm. Tom encourages Billy to eat the first worm, enticing him with thoughts of buying a minibike with the prize money. After Billy has choked down three of the worms, Alan and Joe begin to become nervous.

By the fourth worm, Alan and Joe have come up with the first plot to try to discourage Billy from eating any other worms. When this plot fails, they come up with several other ideas to prevent Billy from winning the bet. Billy worries during this time that the worms may be making him ill, but each day he begrudgingly eats another worm.

By the tenth worm Billy's worries have been allayed. His parents have become involved in the bet and actually help him by coming up with new ways to cook worms. Billy actually begins to enjoy his daily worm meals.

Through many disagreements and physical fights, the boys' friendship endures. In the end, Billy successfully eats the fifteenth worm. Alan pays Billy the fifty dollars, and Billy agrees to share the minibike with all of his buddies. Billy finds that for some strange reason he cannot stop eating worms; he even takes a worm and egg sandwich to school for his lunch!



Vocabulary Activity Ideas

You can help your students learn and retain the vocabulary in *How to Eat Fried Worms* by providing them with interesting vocabulary activities. Here are some ideas to try.

- Challenge your students to a **Vocabulary Bee!** This is similar to a spelling bee, but in addition to spelling the word correctly, the game participants must also correctly define each word.
- As a group activity, have your students work together to create an **Illustrated Dictionary** of the vocabulary words.
- Play **20 Clues** with the entire class. In this game, one student selects a vocabulary word and gives clues about this word, one by one, until someone in the class can guess the word.
- Ask your students to make their own **Crossword Puzzles** or **Word Search Puzzles**, using the vocabulary words from the story. Have them exchange papers and solve the puzzles. When completed, the authors can correct the papers.
- Have the students form a **Word Bank**, using large pieces of chart paper. Students should work together to find and define the vocabulary words from the story. Each group may be assigned specific chapters or sections of the book. When the word banks have been completed, put them in order. The class bank can be used throughout the story as a study tool to complete various activities and to prepare for the test at the end of the book.
- Use the words and definitions to play **Bingo**. Fold 22 cm x 28 cm paper into 16 squares. Have your students randomly write the words chosen for this activity in each space. The caller will read a definition, and the players will mark the correct word. Markers can be pieces of cut-up index cards, beans, or sultanas. The first person to cover a row, column, or diagonal calls out, “Bingo” and is the winner. Students can swap cards and play again.
- Find the sentence in the book with the vocabulary word. Copy it. Rewrite the sentence by **Substituting a Synonym** which would make sense.
- Play **Vocabulary Charades**. In this game the words are acted out!
- Challenge your students to use a specific vocabulary word from the story at least **10 Times in One Day**. They must keep a record of when and how the word was used.
- Have the students use these words as their weekly **Spelling List**.
- Have the students create **Alphables** by listing the words in alphabetical order and dividing them into syllables.
- You probably have many more ideas to add to this list. Try them! See if experiencing vocabulary on a personal level increases your students’ vocabulary interest and retention.

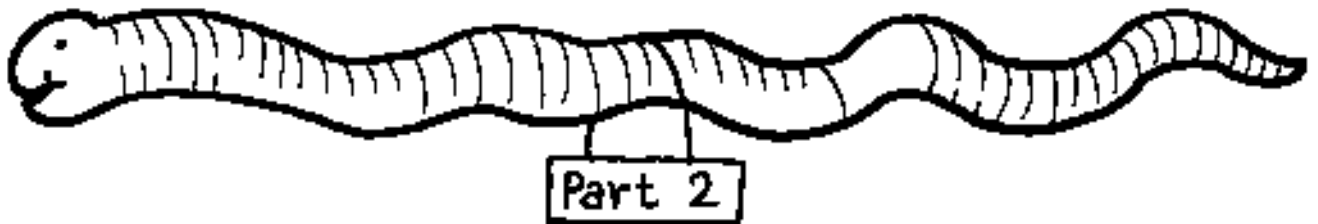
Worm Measurement

You will need one jelly worm or snake, a ruler, and a copy of this recording sheet.



Use your jelly worm or snake to measure the following things in the room. Record your measurements on the lines provided.

1. What is the length of the teacher's desk? _____ jelly worms or snakes long
2. What is the width of the door? _____ jelly worms or snakes wide
3. What is the length of the whiteboard? _____ jelly worms or snakes long
4. How many worms high is your desk? _____ jelly worms or snakes high
5. Choose two other things in the room to measure. Write down what you measured and their measurements.



Use a standard ruler to measure how long your jelly worm or snake actually is. Record your measurement below.

My jelly worm or snake is _____ centimetres long.

Compare your results with the rest of the class. You may want to record your findings on the whiteboard, making a graph to show your results.



On a separate piece of paper, write any conclusions you reached about using the jelly worms or snakes as a measuring tool. Consider the following questions. Would the jelly worm or snake make a good standard measuring tool? If your jelly worms or snakes are the same length, did you all get the same measurements for the items in Part 1 of this activity? Is there anything you could do to the worm to make it a better measuring tool?

Worm Terrariums

Each group will need the following materials to create a terrarium: one medium-sized jar, one plastic sandwich bag of dirt, one plastic sandwich bag of sand, black paper, and three or four earthworms.

Directions:

Layer the dirt and the sand in the jar. Be careful not to mix the dirt and the sand. Moisten the layers with a few drops of water. Add the worms to the jar and loosely cover it with the lid. Be sure that there are holes punched in the lid!

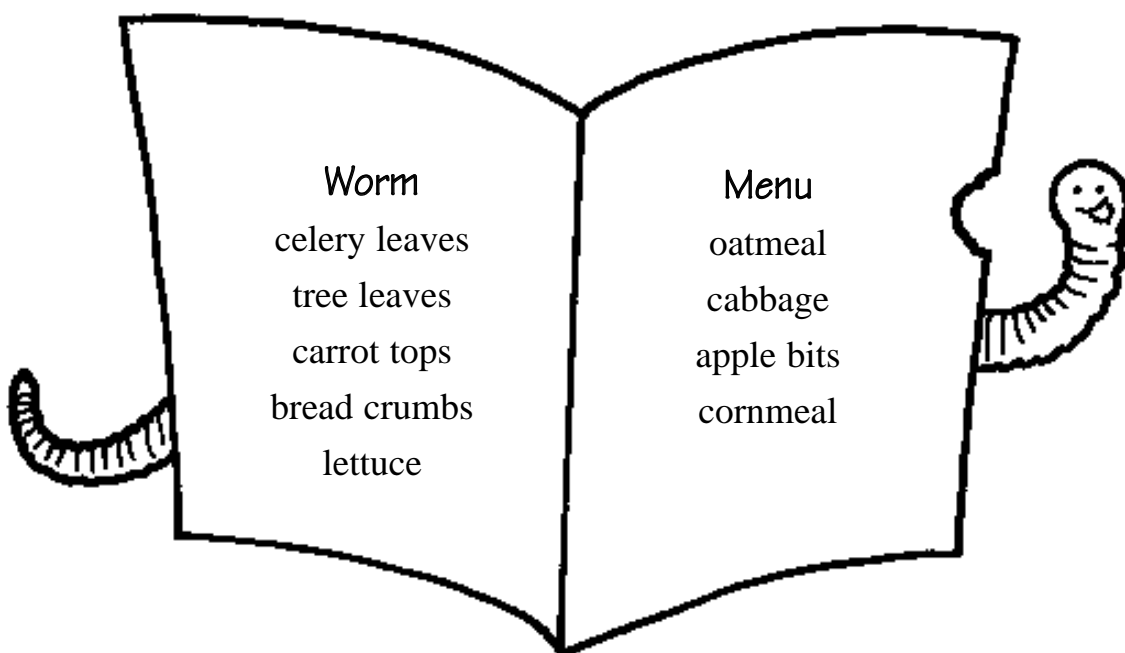
Cover the jar with black paper.

Observe the jar each day by removing the black paper only.

Moisten the soil every second day and be sure to feed your worms!



Foods Worms Love



After you have made your terrarium, do the following activities in your Worm Journal.

1. Draw a picture of your terrarium after five days.
2. Draw a picture of your terrarium after ten days.
3. What conclusions can you make about worms and the effect they have on soil?