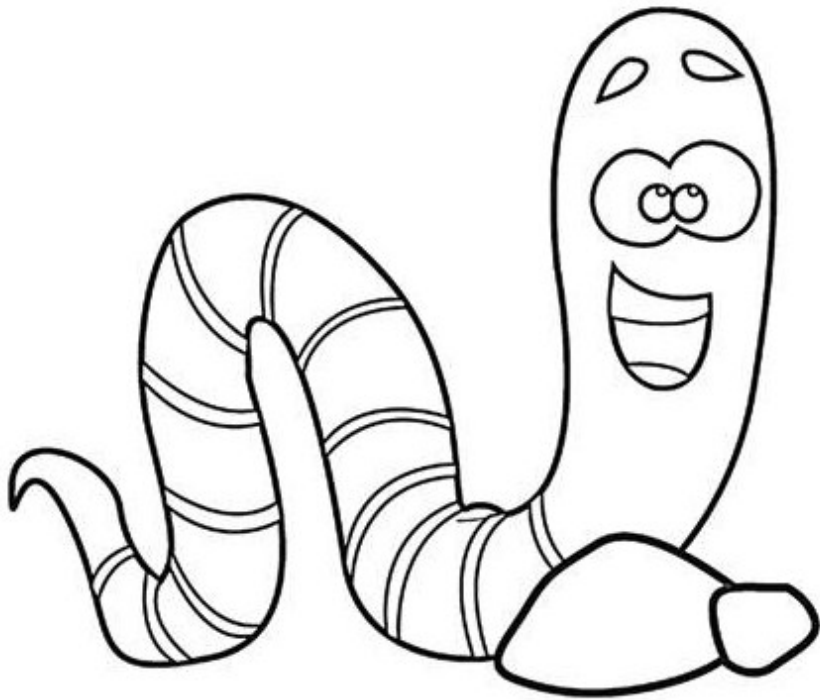


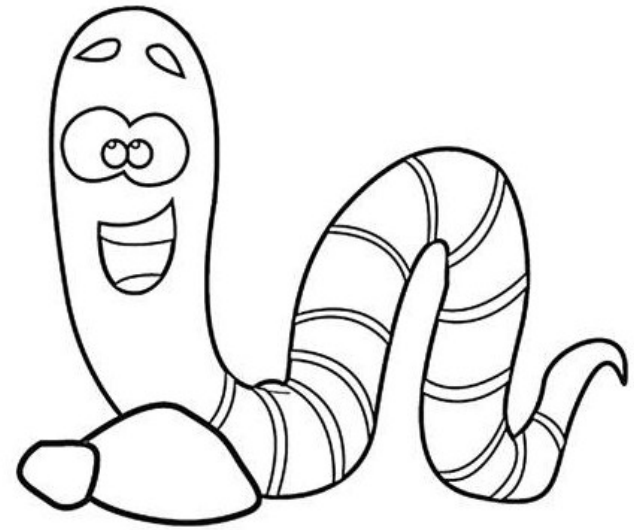
Flame the Red Wiggler

Hi! My name is Flame.
I am a Red Wiggler earthworm.
Red Wigglers are used for
vermicomposting,
because we are
great decomposers.



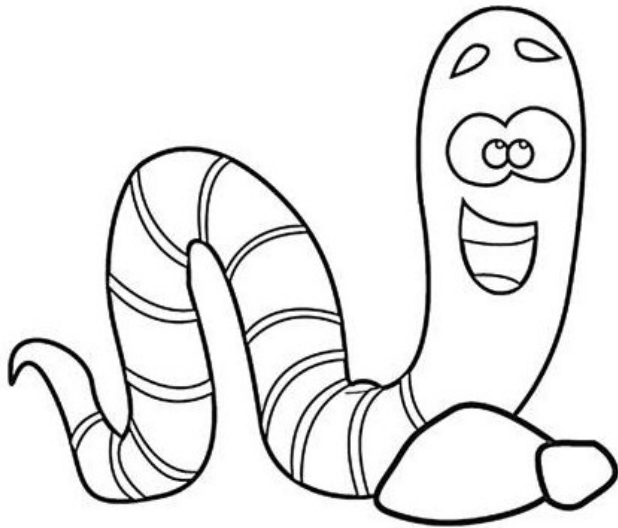


Vermicomposting is the use of earthworms like myself to recycle organic matter and food waste, turning it into nutrient-rich soil.





Humans recycle food waste
from their kitchen, in a
compost bin. A compost bin is
where I live and work.
Compost bins come in
different shapes, sizes
and colors.

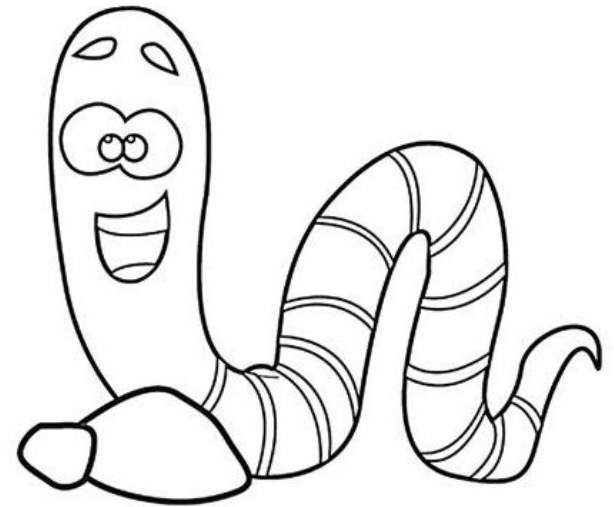




Different Types of Compost Bins

Inside my home &
workplace are
bedding materials.

These materials are
found mostly in nature,
and help me feel like I am in my natural
habitat.





Shredded
Newspaper



Mulched Leaves



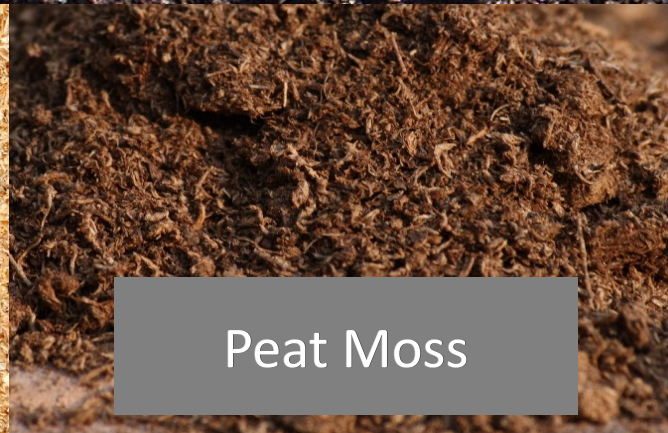
Straw



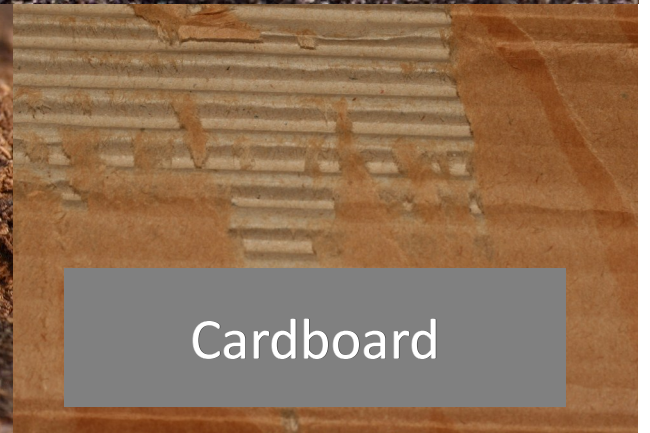
Soil



Saw Dust



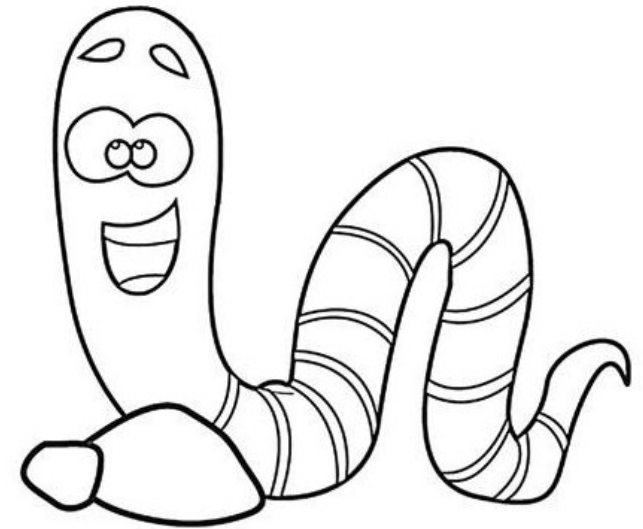
Peat Moss



Cardboard

Other organisms live
and work in the
compost bin with me.

They are part of my
ecosystem. Some are microorganisms
and others are macro organisms.





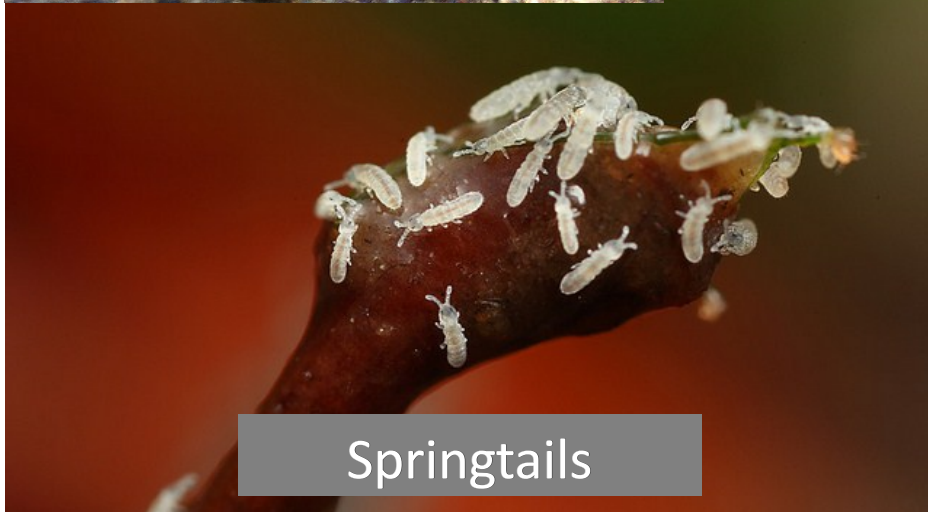
Millipede



Isopods



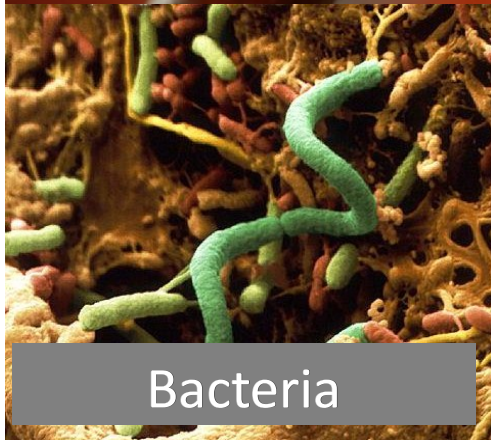
Enchytraeids



Springtails



Centipede



Bacteria



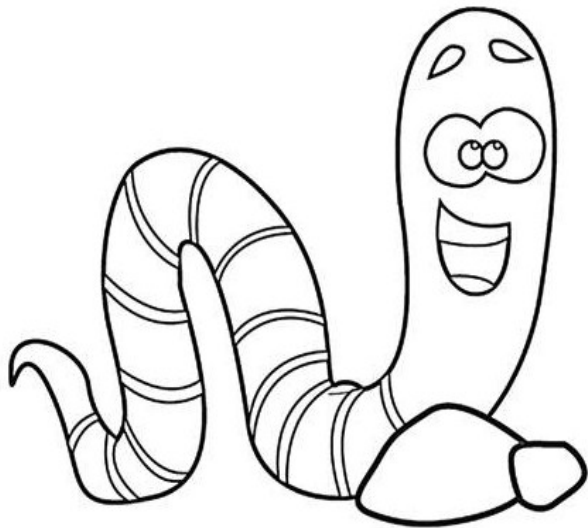
Mites



Fungi

Some organisms in my ecosystem are my friends. They help me break down decaying food waste. Other organisms like centipedes are predators and they want to eat me for

dinner! Predatory mites are harmful to me as well.



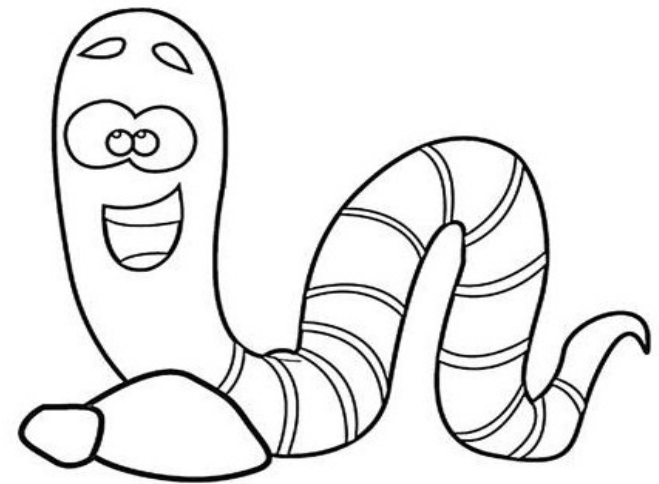


Centipede



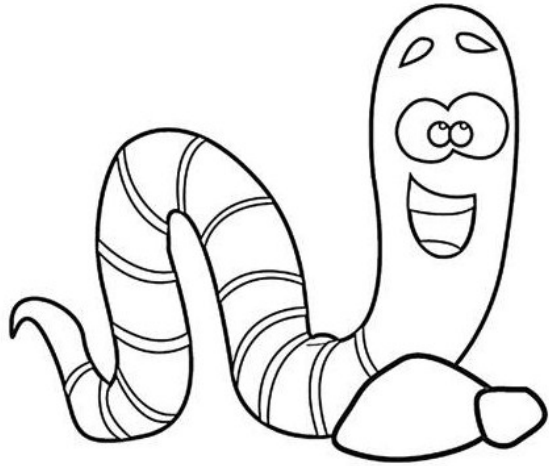
Mite

I like the inside of my bin to feel moist, like a wrung out sponge. It must not be too dry or too wet. I feel my best and do my best work when the temperature is between 55° and 77° Fahrenheit.





Wrung out Sponge



As a baby worm, I started out in a cocoon. I was called a hatchling when I came out of my cocoon. I was transparent in color.

Eight hours after hatching I gained hemoglobin, and changed from white, to pale pink, to brick red.

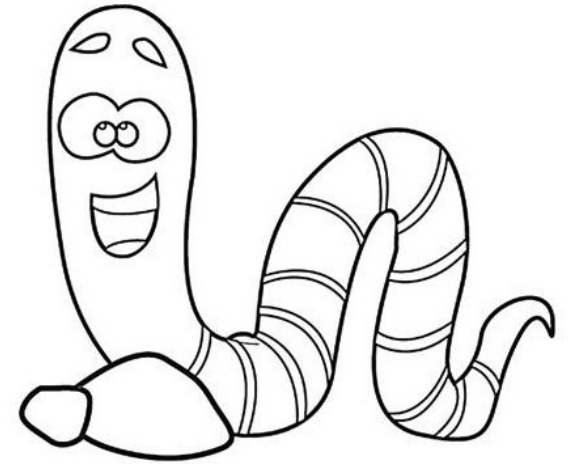


Cocoon

Now I am a juvenile worm.

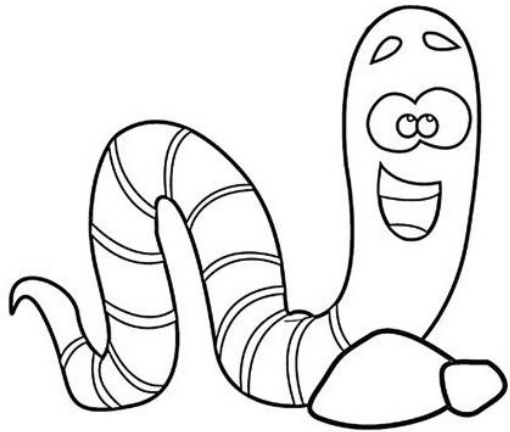
I don't have a clitellum.

Only adult worms have a clitellum, the wide band that surrounds the worm's neck. Adult worms can live for five years or more!

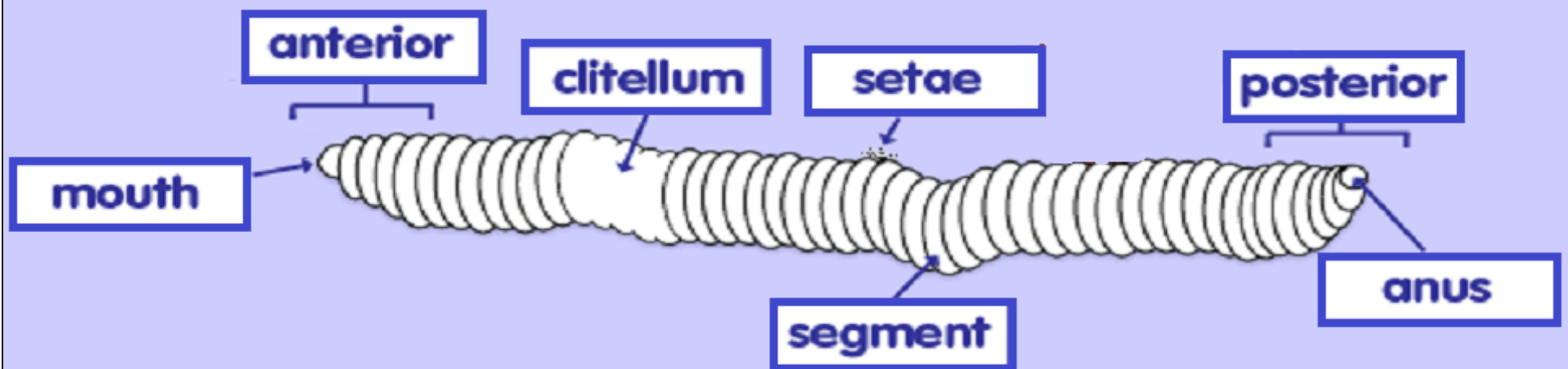




The front part of my body is called my anterior. That is where my mouth is located. I have hair called setae that help me move.



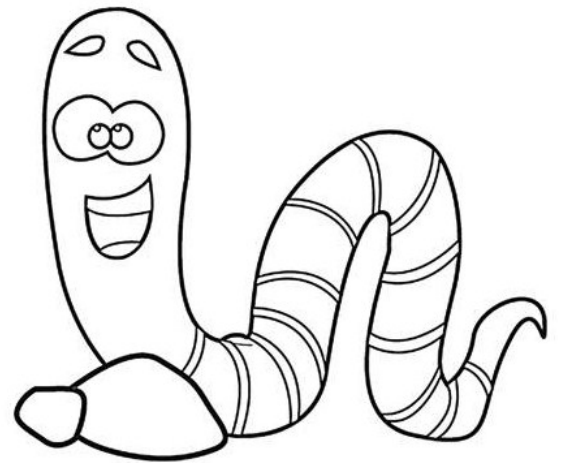
My body has many segments. The end part of my body is called my posterior, where my anus is located.

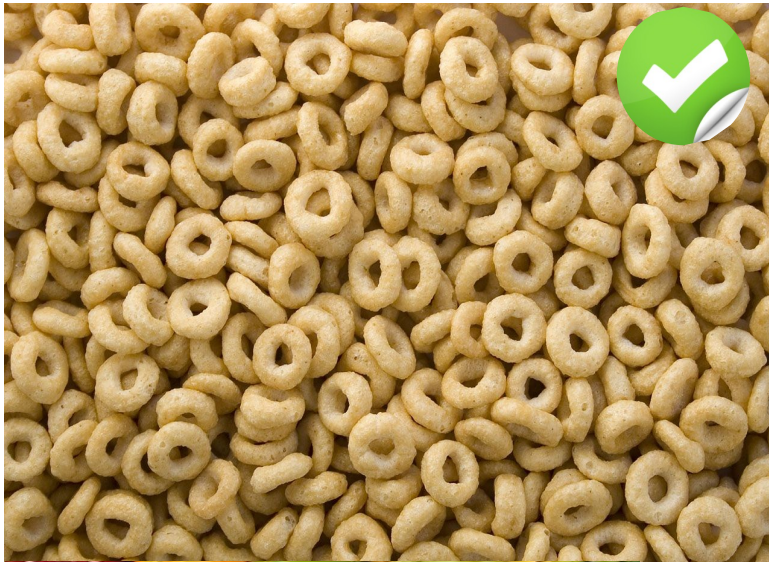


Earthworm Anatomy

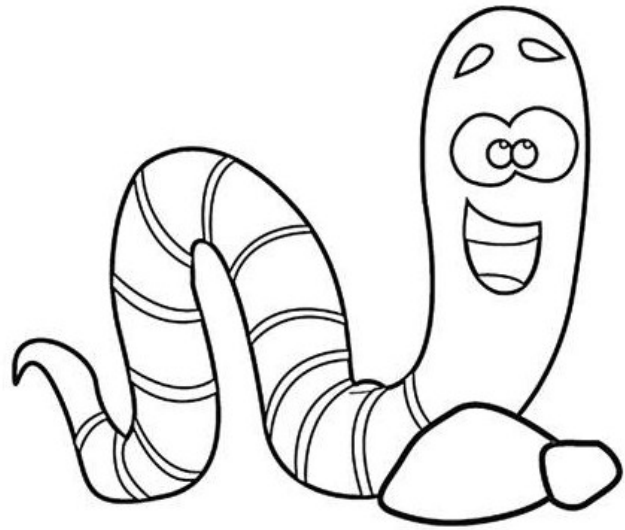
I love to eat fruit & vegetable peelings,
cereal, oatmeal, crushed eggshells, coffee
grounds, tea bags and even newspaper!

Some foods are not good for me and
humans should avoid adding
them to my bin. I don't like
meat, dairy, oils & candy.





Good & Bad Foods for Worms



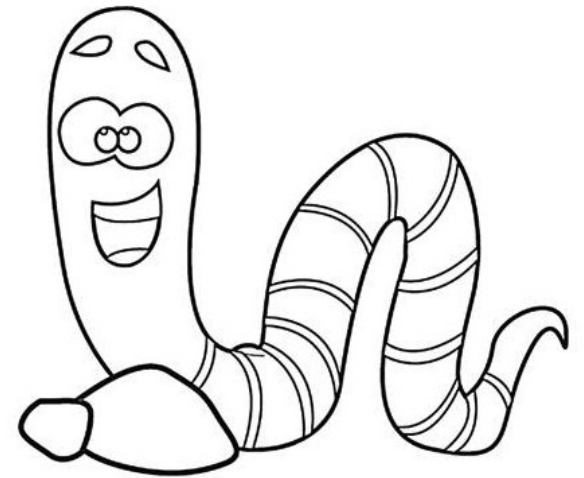
I ingest food waste through my mouth. Food goes to my stomach and then passes through my gizzard, where it is ground by grit. My intestines then digest the food. The undigested food passes through my anus, and is known as worm castings.



Worm Castings

Humans harvest worm castings from the bin and use it as a natural soil fertilizer.

Worm castings are crumbly, damp and high in nutrients that will help plants grow healthy and strong! I love to

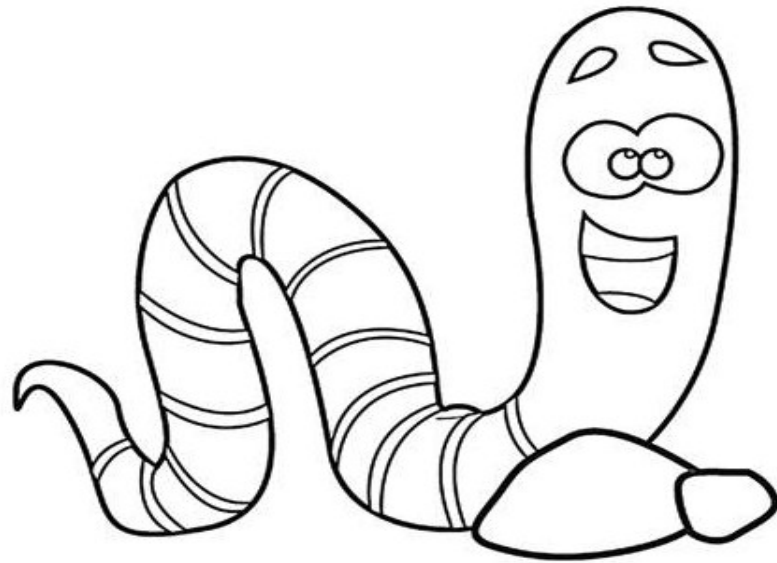


help you recycle your food waste so you can use it in your garden instead of putting it in a landfill.



Landfill

Thanks for listening about how to be
friendly to your environment by
vermicomposting.



The End.