

We Dig Worms



ACTIVITY MENU

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We Dig Worms

by Zach Ladin
(4:53)

(Hello, everybody! This is a little song I wrote about all the things in this big old world that I really dig. Here is how it goes...)

1 I dig worms
You dig worms
We dig worms
Who digs worms?
I said, we dig worms because they're wild!

6 (Now, can you dig what I'm talking about?)

7 I dig bugs
You dig bugs
We dig bugs
Who digs bugs?
I said, we dig bugs because they rule!

12 I dig fish
You dig fish
We dig fish
Who digs fish?
I said, we dig fish because they're slick!

Chorus 1:

17 I've never met a living thing I didn't like
No, nothing bothers me
In this whole, wide world, I dig
Just about everything I see
I dig frogs
You dig frogs
We dig frogs
Who digs frogs?
I said, we dig frogs because they're smooth

26 I dig snakes
You dig snakes
We dig snakes
Who digs snakes?
I said, we dig snakes, because they're sssss-super!

31 I dig birds
You dig birds
We dig birds
34 Who digs birds?
I said, we dig birds because they're fly!

CHORUS 1

36 (or smell. . .)

37 I dig skunks
You dig skunks
We dig skunks
Who digs skunks?
I said, we dig skunks because they're sweet!

42 I dig grubs
You dig grubs
We dig grubs
Who digs grubs?
I said, we dig grubs just like those skunks!

47 I dig plants
You dig plants
We dig plants
Who digs plants?
I said, we dig plants because they're great!

CHORUS 1

52 I dig mushrooms
You dig mushrooms
We dig mushrooms
Who digs mushrooms?
I said, we dig mushrooms because they're fun - gi!

57 I dig lichen
You dig lichen



We dig lichen
Who digs lichen?
I said, we dig lichen, we be liking!

62 I dig rocks
You dig rocks

64 We dig rocks
Who digs rocks?
I said, we dig rocks because they rock!

Chorus 2:

67 I haven't come across a thing I didn't like
No, nothing bothers me
In this whole, wide world I dig
Just about everything I see

71 I dig water
You dig water
We dig water
Who digs water?
I said, we dig water because it's cool!

I dig air
You dig air
We dig air

79 Who digs air?
I said, we dig air because it's fresh!

81 I dig the sun
You dig the sun
We dig the sun
Who digs the sun?
I said, we dig the sun because it's hot!

CHORUS 2

86 I dig Earth
You dig Earth
We dig Earth
Who digs Earth?
I said, we dig Earth because it's our
home!
(repeat until end)



Pre-listening Activities: Choose one or two of the activities below.

Four Corners

Purpose: To generate interest in the song; to express opinions and make choices about controversial ideas/statements.

Level: All **Time:** 20 – 25 minutes

Preparation and Materials: Prepare a copy of 4 – 6 of the pictures of the creatures in the song to show the students. Label four corners or areas of the classroom with posters or signs that say: *Really Like!*, *Like*, *Don't Like*, and *Yuck!*

Instructions: Show students each of the pictures you have chosen one at a time and have them walk to the emotion that the picture makes them feel. Have someone say one good thing about each creature.

One Title, Several Words – Many Possibilities

Purpose: To predict the content of the song; to generate interest in the song; to introduce vocabulary from the song.

Level: All **Time:** 15 – 20 minutes, plus the length of the song (4:53)

Preparation and Materials: Write the title of the song on the board.

Instructions: Have the students make predictions about the song based on the title; write ideas on board. After the initial round of predictions, write the following words on the board and have the students make new predictions: *Bugs, snakes, frogs, world, fresh, Earth, home*; write new ideas on board. Listen to the song and check if the predictions were correct.

Swat

Purpose: To introduce the vegetables and adjectives used in the song; to make print and sound connections.

Level: All **Time:** 15 – 20 minutes

Preparation and Materials: Prepare a flyswatter or rolled-up newspaper for each team. Hang the pictures for the following words/phrases on the board in random order: *worms, bugs, fish, frogs, snakes, birds, skunks, grubs, plants, mushrooms, lichen, rocks, and Earth*.

Instructions: Review phrases and definitions as needed. Divide the class into groups, line each group up equal distance from the board, and give the first person a flyswatter/newspaper. Once the teacher calls out a word from the board, the first person of each group will race to the board to swat the word; whoever reaches the correct word first, wins a point. The next person in line will be given the flyswatter/newspaper and the game continues until every student has at least one chance to swat a word. The team with the most points wins.





worms





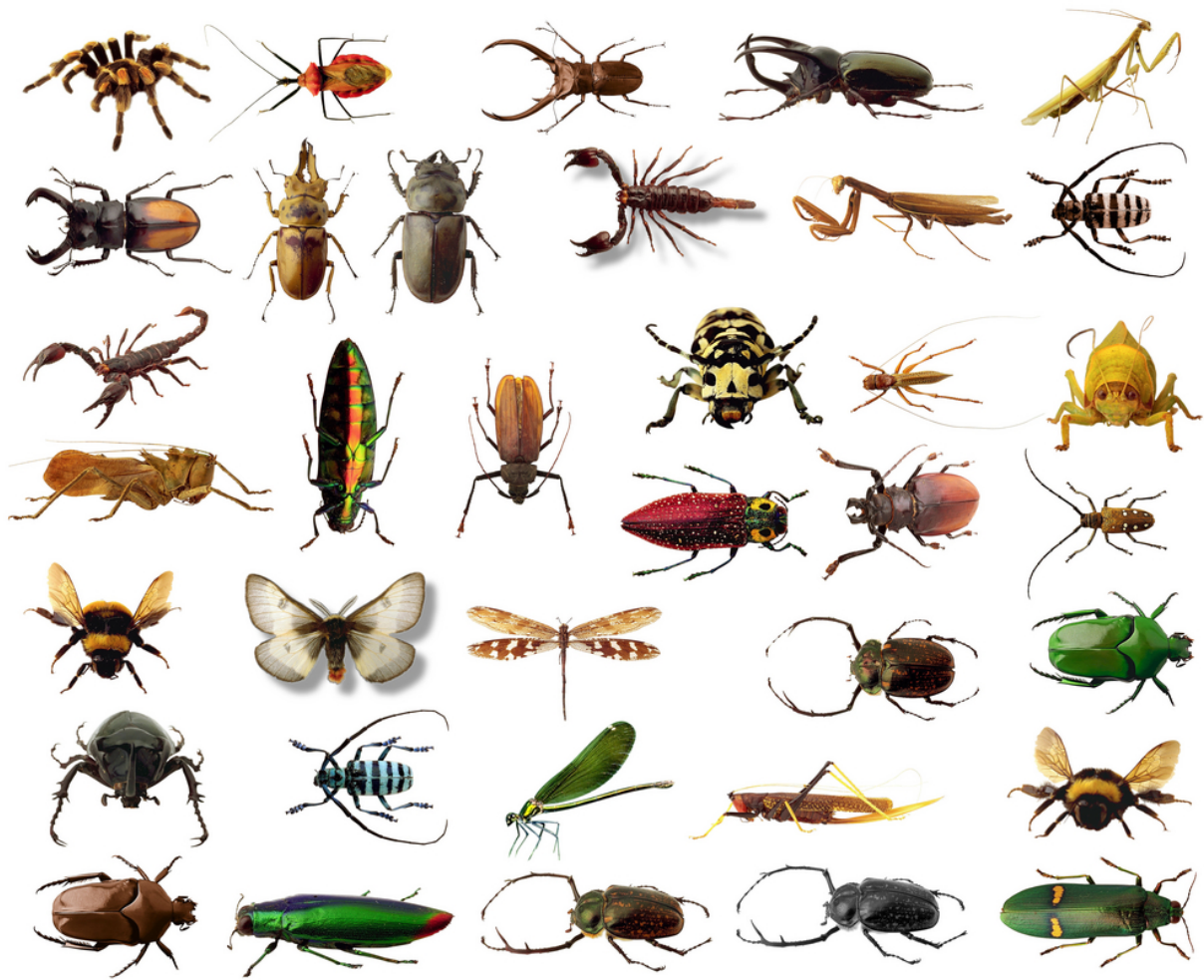
snakes





frogs





bugs





skunks





plants





grubs





lichen





birds





Earth





mushrooms





rocks





fish



Listening Activities: Choose one of the listening activities below.

Mixed-Up Pictures

Purpose: To listen for specific words.

Level: All **Time:** 15 – 20 minutes (to play the song 2 – 3 times)

Preparation and Materials: Hang the pictures on the board in random order. Put a letter under each picture: A, B, C and so on.

Instructions: Have students write numbers 1 – 13 on their papers. As the song plays, students will write the pictures' corresponding letter in order on their paper as it occurs in the song. Play the song through a few times before checking the students' work as a class.

Song Bingo

Purpose: To listen for specific words and phrases; to introduce vocabulary from the song; to make print and sound connections.

Level: All **Time:** 15 minutes (to play the song 2 times)

Preparation and Materials: Write the following words from the song on the board in random order:

*wild rule slick bothers whole wide smooth super fly
sweet great fungi liking thing cool fresh hot home*

Instructions: Have students draw a blank 3x3 grid on their paper (9 spots). The students should fill each spot with 9 different words from the board. As the song plays, the students should cross off each word they hear that appears on their grid. Once all 9 words are crossed off, the student can shout *Bingo!* Listen to the song again to check answers.

Did You Hear What I Heard?

Purpose: To listen for main ideas and specific details.

Level: Level 2 and above **Time:** 15 – 20 minutes (to play the song 1 – 2 times)

Preparation and Materials: Write the following questions on the board:

*Why does the singer "dig" worms?
Why does the singer "dig" skunks?
Why does the singer "dig" the sun?
Why does the singer "dig" water?
Why does the singer "dig" frogs?*

Instructions: Before beginning the activity, explain that *to dig something* also means that you like something very much (see the reading text for more information). As the song is played, students will try to answer each of the questions. After the song is finished, have the students compare answers with classmates. Review answers as a class and discuss any answers that are wrong.



Singing Activities: Choose one of the singing activities below.

Disappearing Song

Purpose: To practice pronunciation and intonation; to recall words and phrases.

Level: Level 2 and above **Time:** 25 – 30 minutes (to sing the song 4 times)

Preparation and Materials: Write the song lyrics on the board.

Instructions: Practice singing the song through once. Erase 10% of the lyrics, drawing a line under each missing word. Sing through the song again, filling in the missing words aloud. Continue erasing 10% each time until only 50% of the lyrics are left. Sing through one last time.

Old Song, New Song

Purpose: To explore the rhythm of words.

Level: Level 2 and above **Time:** 40 – 55 minutes (may be split up into several class sessions)

Preparation and Materials: Make a copy of the song lyrics for each group of students, or write the lyrics to two or three stanzas on the board.

Instructions: After listening to the song, have students write a new stanza about a part of nature that they “dig”. Remind students to come up with a final line that says why they like that part of nature.

Your Moves

Purpose: To learn vocabulary from the song; to represent word meanings with actions.

Level: All **Time:** 30 – 40 minutes (depending on how many groups will perform)

Preparation and Materials: Make a copy of the song lyrics for each student, or write the lyrics on the board. Circle the following words and phrases each time they appear in the lyrics:

*dig they're wild they rule they're slick see they're smooth they're super
they're fly they're sweet they're great they rock nothing bothers me
whole wide world it's cool it's fresh it's hot*

Instructions: Before singing, create a motion to correspond to each word and phrase circled. Practice each motion until the students have all of them memorized. Sing and move to each circled phrase as the class listens to the song.



Post-Listening Activities: Choose one or two of the activities below.

Speaking: Act the Part

Purpose: To ask and answer questions; to summarize and present information.

Level: Level 3 and above **Time:** 40 – 50 minutes (may be split up into several class sessions)

Preparation and Materials: Write the following scenario on the board, or read it out loud:

Choose a creature in nature that people usually dislike or are scared of. Your group is walking in the forest and sees this creature. One of you is scared of the creature, one of you is a scientist, and one of you is a nature lover. As a group, decide how you will treat the creature.

Instructions: Divide students into groups of three. Have students choose a role and then develop each role in their groups. Once they have acted the parts out, discuss as a class how each group worked through their scenario.

Reading: A Range of Questions

Purpose: To write questions; to read for factual details; to combine, infer, evaluate, and reflect on information in a reading text.

Level: Level 3 and above **Time:** 30 – 40 minutes

Preparation and Materials: Make a copy of the reading text for each student. Write the five question types and descriptions on the board.

Instructions: Divide students into 5 groups. Assign each group to write 2 – 3 questions for one of the five question types (for example, have group 1 write *focusing* question, have group 2 write *combining* questions, and so on). After groups have written their questions, have groups exchange and answer their classmates' questions. Review as a class when every group is finished.

Writing: Songwriter Histories

Purpose: To write short narratives about the future.

Level: Level 2 and above **Time:** 40 – 50 minutes (may be split up into several class sessions)

Preparation and Materials: None.

Instructions: After listening to the song, have students write a story about what will happen as a result of *We Dig Worms*, both in the world and to the songwriter.



Humans and Nature

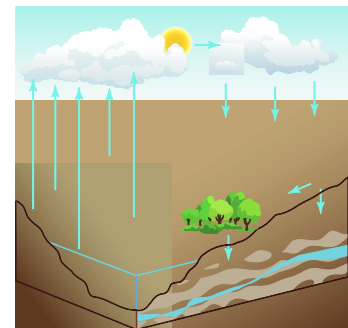
In “We Dig Worms”, musician Zach Ladin sings that “We dig Earth ‘cause¹ it’s our home”. But what does he mean by “we dig Earth”? The word ‘dig’ has two different meanings. You are probably familiar with the most common meaning of the word: to break up or move dirt, usually with a shovel or other tool. In this sense, the title of the song (“We Dig Worms”) could mean quite literally that we get worms from the earth by breaking up the ground to uncover them. However, the word ‘dig’ has another slang² meaning. It can mean to really like or appreciate something. In this second sense, the title of the song might mean that we *like* worms! Which meaning do you think Zach Ladin is using when he sings “We dig Earth ‘cause it’s our home”?



The theme of loving nature is common in many cultures. Many people enjoy getting close to nature by participating in various outdoor activities such as hiking, running, going on a picnic, playing outdoor sports, or just sitting under a tree and reading a book on a sunny day. Many people will even travel long distances just to experience the natural wonders in different parts of the world. There is such a great bond between human beings and nature that sometimes experiencing the very simple things such as the smell of a blooming tree in spring or watching an animal hunting for food makes people happy.

However, it is also true that human beings tend to take nature for granted³. We show little interest in the reason for the existence of small creatures such as worms, ants, snakes, mice, birds and so on. Indeed, we often overlook creatures in nature despite their important roles in providing the resources that human beings need in order to survive. How about that air that we breathe when we walk down the street? Although we know it comes from the trees and plants, we rarely think about it.

Despite this, each year millions of trees are cut down for construction, paper production, or other uses. As a result, soils that were once held in place by those trees are then washed away by rainfall, contributing to flooding. Excessive⁴ fishing activities have threatened the coastal ecosystem⁵ in some areas. Intensive pesticide⁶ use has killed off birds and insects, and polluted water supplies. In overlooking the importance of each component of nature and their connection to each other, too often we end up destroying natural habitats.



Some people have a passion for protecting the natural environment, and this may be one motivation behind the song “We Dig Worms.” What could a song like this one be trying to tell us about nature and the many small creatures that the singer “digs”?

¹ **cause** a shortened form of *because*

² **slang** a word that is not standard and is used in informal situations

³ **to take [something] for granted** to not notice or not appreciate

⁴ **excessive** more than is normal or necessary

⁵ **ecosystem** all things that exist together in a particular place or environment

⁶ **pesticide** chemicals applied to plants to kill insects or other animals that might damage the plants



We Dig Worms: Answer Keys

Mixed-Up Pictures: Answer Key

1. worms
2. bugs
3. fish
4. frogs
5. snakes
6. birds
7. skunks
8. grubs
9. plants
10. mushrooms
11. lichen
12. rocks
13. Earth

Did You Hear What I Heard? Answer Key

1. The singer “digs” worms because they’re wild.
2. The singer “digs” skunks because they’re sweet.
3. The singer “digs” the sun because it’s hot.
4. The singer “digs” water because it’s cool.
5. The singer “digs” frogs because they’re smooth.

