

LESSON  
1

# Reading Comprehension: "The Chicken and the Worm"

## Objectives

### The students will:

- Practice different decoding strategies for emergent readers.
- Apply steps in reading comprehension.
- Describe how worms help people and the planet.



## Procedure

1. **Introduce the topic of worms.** Ask your class the following question

- What do you know about worms?  
Take any answers the students provide and write them down. Some students may say they don't like worms, or are afraid of them. Ask the students what makes them feel this way.

### Move and Learn!

When talking about worms, children will say that worms wiggle. Encourage your students to move as a worm would move. Wiggle and squirm and try to move across the floor. This kinesthetic learning activity makes the lesson all the more memorable to children.

Now ask the students

- What would you like to know about worms? Do you have any questions about them and how they live?

Again, write down each response. You will use them in step four.

Tell the class that you will be reading a book called "The Chicken and the Worm."

2. **Apply a picture reading strategy.** Hold up "The Chicken and the Worm" for the class to see. Tell the students that first they will look only at the pictures in the book. Go through page by page, asking students to tell you what they think is happening.

Ask students what they can guess about the worm (e.g., Can you guess how large a worm is?, Can you guess where a worm lives?). The students will have many creative ideas about what is happening in the story based on the pictures alone.



## National Standards Addressed



### LANGUAGE ARTS

- Read texts to acquire new information.
- Apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend and interpret texts.
- Conduct research on interests by generating ideas and questions and gather, evaluate and synthesize data from a variety of sources.

## Procedure (continued)

After having gone through the book interpreting only the pictures, recap for the students what information they have discerned about worms so far.

- 3. Read the text aloud as the next step in comprehending the book.** Read the entire story to the children. Then go back to each page and re-read the text aloud. Pause between pages to ask students what information they have learned from the text. Ask them if what they guessed from the pictures matches the information the words provide.

If a page provides information they didn't know before, ask students to restate what the new information is (e.g., What things do worms eat? – Tea bags, watermelon, grapes, but not hamburgers; Do worms have babies? – Yes, they grow in cocoons; How do worms help plants grow? – When worms dig tunnels they loosen the soil which helps give plants room to grow.).

- 4. Ask students to recap what information they have learned about worms.** After you have finished reading the text, ask students what they liked about the book. Ask them to identify information they were surprised to learn about worms.

With your students, refer back to the list of comments made in step one. Were the students correct or incorrect about the things they previously thought about worms? Did they find out answers to any questions they previously had about worms?

## Links To Heifer International

### Worms Helping People

Did you ever consider how important worms are to people? Worms are some of the many animal gifts that Heifer International provides to families. Why? Because worms are treasures. Worms help provide inexpensive organic fertilizer to farmers. By using organic fertilizer (instead of chemical fertilizer), farmers can protect the health of the soil so that many future generations will be able to continue using the land to grow crops. The term for raising and using worm by-products as fertilizer is vermiculture. See [www.HeiferEducation.org](http://www.HeiferEducation.org) for more information about how Heifer International project partners use vermiculture.

