



# THE WORMS ARE INVADING

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**TEXT TYPE:** Non-fiction: Description/Persuasive—Magazine Article  
**GUIDED READING LEVEL:** W/X

**SUMMARY:** Most people think earthworms are good for the soil and things that grow. This magazine article presents worms as ‘invaders’—most of which are not native to Canadian soil—destroying forest habitats and plant life not equipped to handle their presence. This article attempts to convince readers that the best way to deal with the ecological problem is prevention.

## TEXT FEATURES

- brief introductory text
- headings
- labels
- bolded words
- captions

## VISUAL LITERACY

- illustrations
- chart
- diagram
- photograph

## TEXT SUPPORTS

- chart
- text layout

## POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- sentence complexity
- challenging words and vocabulary, e.g., ‘sterile,’ ‘matted vegetation,’ ‘niche’
- scientific names of worms
- dense amount of information
- semi-colon use

## FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- synthesizing

## FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- inferring
- self-monitoring

## ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Ranking Ladder strategy
- discussing with a group
- sharing ideas
- answering questions
- TV interview (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

## WORKING WITH WORDS

- language predictability: using context to work out word meanings

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- find the main idea
- connect facts, events, and ideas into a cohesive whole
- identify and discuss features of a magazine article and persuasive text
- integrate information with prior knowledge to create new understanding
- infer solutions to problems

## ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Synthesizing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

## BEFORE READING

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### Predicting and Inferring

#### **Activate and build prior knowledge**

- Without letting students see any part of the magazine article, read the blurb (the first four sentences) at the beginning of the article to students. Ask, *What 'creature' do you think I just described?* Using a Ranking Ladder activity (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*) divide students into small groups and ask each group to brainstorm and record possible answers to this question. Have each group decide on a maximum of seven ideas and rank them from first to last choice. Each group shares the top two or three ideas generated by the group. Reveal earthworms as the answer once all groups have shared their lists.

### Text Features

- Say, *The selection you are about to read is a persuasive text. What are the features of a persuasive text?* On chart paper write the words 'Persuasive Text' as the title for an anchor chart. As students share their ideas on what constitutes a persuasive text, jot them down on the chart. A persuasive text usually includes: a main fact, idea or opinion; evidence to support the main statement; and an attempt to persuade the reader to take some kind of action.

### Text Features and Evaluating

#### **Introduce supports and challenges**

- Tell students this selection is presented as a magazine article. Ask students, *What are the features of a magazine article? How is the format of a magazine article different than other texts, such as a book or letter?* Preview the article, looking at the layout, and ask students what they notice. The article is divided into five separate sections. How will the layout help students in reading and understanding the text?

**ESL NOTE:** First, show students copies of a few familiar magazines. Ask if they ever read magazines, and which ones they like. Select one or two articles and talk about features such as headings, photographs, introductory blurb, and so on.

### Language Predictability and Inferring

- As a group, read the first sentence under the heading 'The Danger.' Identify the words 'aerate' and 'castings.' Say, *These are two words we do not see very often. How can we figure out their meanings by looking at the words that surround them in the sentence and considering the main topic of the sentence?* Students should discuss the fact that the sentence is referring to the helpful and important things earthworms do. Before the word 'aerate' there is a reference to the tunnels earthworms make that aerate the soil. The word 'castings' refers to what the earthworms leave behind. Given the context in which these words are used what can students infer about their meaning?

## Synthesizing

### **Set a purpose for reading**

- Explain to students that they will be using the RAN (Reading and Analyzing Non-fiction) strategy. Provide each student with a copy of a Reading and Analyzing Non-fiction BLM (see the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*). In the ‘What I think I know’ column have students write what they already know about earthworms. Ask students to read each section in the article. At the end of each section they can move any knowledge that was confirmed in the section into the ‘Confirmed’ column of the BLM, and any ideas they learned were incorrect can go into the ‘Misconceptions’ section. Students will complete the remaining two columns at the end of the session.

### **Provide for early finishers**

- Any students who finish early can discuss with a partner the information they placed in the first three columns of the BLM.

## **DURING READING**

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### **Monitor reading**

- Listen to individual students read aloud. Provide comprehension prompts that highlight the focus strategy, e.g., *What are the main things you found out about earthworms in this section? Does the information you just read reflect the knowledge you already had about earthworms? What do you think is the author’s message about earthworms in this section?*

### **Observe**

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Synthesizing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*.)

## **AFTER READING**

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### **Revisit the purpose for reading**

- Provide students with the opportunity to complete the last two columns of the RAN organizer BLM. Under the heading ‘New Learning,’ ask students to record any information they learned from reading the text. In the ‘Wonderings’ column, ask students to write any questions they may have about earthworms based on their reading. Students can try to locate the answers to their questions from other sources, e.g., other books, magazines, or the WormWatch Website mentioned on the card’s final page. Provide an opportunity for students to share their completed BLMs with other group members.

### **Check on outstanding challenges**

- Can students identify the main ideas? What is the main message the author is trying to tell us?

## Synthesizing

### **Note successful strategy use**

- Ask students to share with the group some of the challenges they encountered and the strategies they used to overcome them.

## **FOCUSED REREADING**

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Three options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or you might select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*.

### **Inferring and Self-monitoring**

#### **Written**

- Students write their own brief persuasive magazine article on an environmental topic they feel is important and wish to persuade people to take action on. Be sure students include the main idea, evidence to support their arguments, and suggestions to prompt readers into taking action. Ask students to keep a three-column journal throughout the writing process (before, during, and after writing) to track and reflect on what strategies they found helpful throughout the process, and what steps they think they could take to improve as writers moving forward.

### **Synthesizing and Sequencing**

#### **Artistic**

- Design a brochure to show the importance of prevention in stopping earthworms from destroying plant life and forested areas. Ask students to fold a piece of paper in thirds so there will be 6 sections (front and back) to put information on the brochure. The cover of the brochure should grab reader interest with colourful font and illustrations. A second portion of the brochure should contain bulleted information about the problems earthworms can cause. The remaining portions of the brochure should include solutions. The main ideas of the brochure should be depicted in the illustrations, with a few carefully selected words to help establish the main point.

### **Synthesizing**

#### **Oral/dramatic**

- Arrange students in pairs and have them hold a television interview with an environmentalist who is concerned about the problem with earthworms. Students will create their own questions for their role as interviewer. When the first interview is completed, the partners switch roles and do a second interview.