

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

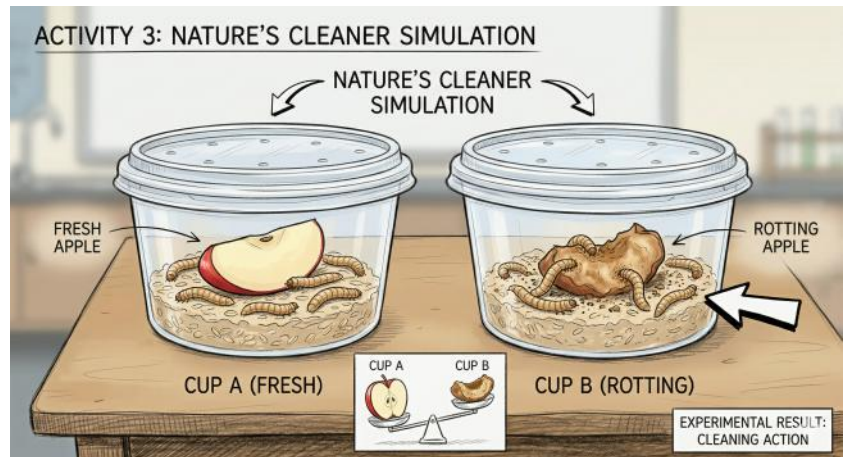
## Nature's Cleaner Simulation

**Scientific Question:** Which type of food do mealworms "recycle" faster: fresh food or rotting food?

**Passage Connection:** Directly illustrates the "scavenger" concept in Nature's Recyclers, showing how they eat "decaying leaves, rotting plants."

### Materials Needed:

- Two small, clear plastic cups with lids (poke air holes in lids)
- Oatmeal (bedding/basic food)
- A small slice of fresh apple
- A small slice of brown, mushy (rotting) apple
- Mealworms (10 per cup)
- A scale or ruler (optional)



### Procedure:

**Habitat Setup:** Put a layer of oatmeal in both cups.

**Variable setup:** Put the fresh apple piece in Cup A. Put the rotting apple piece in Cup B.

**Add the Scavengers:** Add 10 mealworms to each cup.

**Hypothesis:** Which cup will have the least amount of apple left after 3 days?

**Long-Term Observation:** Check the cups daily for 3-5 days. Important: Observe the apples, not just the worms.

**Data Collection:** At the end of the experiment, gently remove the apples and compare their size or weight.

**Discussion:** Which cup showed more "recycling" action? Why do mealworms prefer the decaying food? What is the effect of them eating the decaying food on the overall "environment" of the cup?