Curriculum Objectives
In this lesson, students are able to feel the heat generated by the composting process, learning how heat can cause changes in solids and liquids. They are also taught the importance of decomposers in breaking down and recycling nutrients required by producers by identifying bird food sources. The lesson concludes by talking about sources of nitrogen, phosphorus, and carbon for soil health, where those elements can be found naturally, and how they are often supplemented in garden soils.

Details
Location: Stono Preserve
Lesson: Outdoors
Activity: Outdoors
Time of year: Anytime
Age: Elementary school

Materials
- “Fake trash” such as cardboard, paper, leaves, Styrofoam, banana peels, etc.
- Velcro

Activity
For this activity, students will create their own composting pile using “fake trash” items such as cardboard, paper, leaves, Styrofoam, banana peels, etc. Students will use Velcro to stack their items together so that students can see the layers in the composting pile, teaching them the different components of a compost pile. For items that cannot go in the compost pile, students will be taught how to properly dispose of them, such as through recycling them.

Additional Resources
- What To Use (website)
- Composting for Kids (video)
A COMPOST RECIPE TO FEED YOUR SOIL.

Mix up all the ingredients maintaining the BROWN to GREEN recipe.

Always cover with a BROWN layer.

Next: GREEN

Next: BROWN

Third Layer: GREEN (max 2' - 4')

Second Layer: BROWN (Dried leaves)

First Layer: Sticks 4' - 6' in the bottom of the composter.

KEEP MOIST: As wet as a wrung out sponge.

AERATE: Air helps to speed up decomposition. Aeration should be done throughout the entire composting process.

KEEP COVERED: Use a compost lid, cardboard or canvas over top of your pile.