**ACTIVITY: Wormface – social networking for earthworms**

**Activity idea**

In this activity, students research an earthworm of their choice before completing a social media profile for their earthworm. The activity fosters students’ literacy skills, and the profile can be used as formative or summative assessment.

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

* understand that not all earthworms are the same and that different species show differences in pigmentation, size and preferred habitat
* explain some features of their chosen earthworm including favourite foods, habitat and whether they are native or introduced
* describe the role their earthworm plays in the ecosystem
* correctly use common scientific terminology.

# For teachers

In New Zealand, we have over 200 known species of earthworm. Most of our earthworms are natives and found nowhere else on Earth. However, the earthworms we are most likely to encounter on rainy footpaths or in garden or pasture soils are introduced species.

To most of us, one earthworm resembles another. Although earthworms do have common characteristics, species differ widely in their size, skin colour and the roles they play in the soil ecosystem. This activity asks students to research one species of earthworm and then use the information they find to create a Wormface social media profile.

Completed social media profiles can be used as formative or summative assessments – consider the depth of information the students provide and use of specialist vocabulary.

At the time of writing (July 2018), the age restriction for most social media accounts is 13 (although it is possible to create an account at any age). If issues around this arise in your classroom, you might like to explore the safety pages for [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/safety), [Snapchat](https://www.snapchat.com/l/en-gb/safety), [Twitter](https://about.twitter.com/en_us/safety.html) and [Instagram](https://help.instagram.com/299484113584685?helpref=search&sr=7&query=safety).

**For students**

The earthworm community has decided that social media posts are much more engaging than the scientific reports produced by research institutes. Earthworms struggle to type as they do not have opposable thumbs. New Zealand’s earthworm species have requested help with developing their social media profiles.

Please give the lowly worms a hand by filling in the social media profile that follows. The form is a Word document, so you can write detailed responses.

Use these Hub resources to learn more about New Zealand earthworms:

Articles

[Niches within earthworms’ habitats](http://link.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/7-niches-within-earthworms-habitat)

[Earthworms’ role in the ecosystem](http://link.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/9-earthworms-role-in-the-ecosystem)

[Native and introduced earthworms](http://link.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/20-native-and-introduced-earthworms)

[Octochaetus multiporus](http://link.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/21-octochaetus-multiporus)

Video

[Not all the same](http://link.sciencelearn.org.nz/admin/videos/4-not-all-the-same)

[Physical adaptations for life underground](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/videos/3-physical-adaptations-for-life-underground)

[New Zealand native earthworm O. multiporus](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/videos/5-new-zealand-native-earthworm-o-multiporus)

Interactives

[Common New Zealand earthworms – interactive](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/image_maps/71-common-new-zealand-earthworms-interactive)

[Inside of an earthworm](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/image_maps/24-inside-of-an-earthworm) and [outside of an earthworm](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/image_maps/27-outside-of-an-earthworm).

This information will help you fill in some of the profile fields:

**Username:** Your choice

**Bio:** What do you do? Is there a special service you perform in your ecosystem?

**Profile picture:** Draw what you look like or insert an image.

**Native or introduced:** A native species is one that lives naturally in a country as opposed to species that has been introduced by the activity of humans.

**Age:** Look at your profile image. How can you tell if you’re a juvenile or an adult? Hint: look for a clitellum/saddle.

**Ecosystem friends:** Who or what might live in the same environment? Who or what might provide your food?

**Ecosystem enemies:** Any threats or predators?

**Favourite soil depth:** Are you an epigeic (compost and soil surface), endogeic (topsoil) or anecic (deep burrowing) worm?

**Burrow type:** Are your burrows shallow, deep, semi-permanent, permanent or a combination?

**Favourite habitat:** Do you live in a city garden, on the farm or in native bush?

**Likes or dislikes:** Are you affected by weather conditions? By land use?

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|  | | **Wormface social media profile** | |  | |
|  | | | | | |
| **Username** | **Profile picture** | | **Length** | |  |
|  |  | | **Age** | |  |
| **Bio** | **Favourite foods** | |  |
|  | **Ecosystem friends** | |  |
| **Ecosystem enemies** | |  |
| **Scientific name** |  | | **Favourite soil depth** | |  |
| **Common name** |  | | **Burrow type** | |  |
| **Native or introduced** |  | | **Favourite habitat** | |  |
| **Pigmentation** |  | | **Likes or dislikes** | |  |