Lesson Plan for 5th Grade Ecology Club, 1/31/03

**Enduring Understanding:**
Experience and increased confidence working in groups, oral presentations, and teaching peers. Awareness that solid waste is a problem and that composting is part of a solution.

**Lesson Focus:**
Skills and experience in oral presentations and teaching, including effective preparation and use of visual aids.
Learning to select main ideas and important information.
Working effectively in groups.
Solid waste problem, how composting helps, and how a worm box in the classroom fits in.
How compost works, how worms turn food into soil.

**Maine State Learning Result:**
Give oral presentations “appropriate to audience and purpose,” that “achieve distinct purpose” (in this case to inform and teach), “that use a variety of strategies” (loud clear voice, eye contact, visual aid).
Evaluate individual and group communication for clarity, and work to improve communication
Identify and perform roles necessary to accomplish group tasks.

**Question:**
What helps make an oral presentation effective? What do you know now about solid waste, worms, composting, and how to take care of a worm box? How is having a worm box in this classroom related to the problem of solid waste?

**Evaluation:**
We will watch presentations to evaluate both content and delivery. Students will self-assess using a rubric with four items: speaking in a loud, clear voice, everyone in the groups must say something substantive in the oral presentation, making eye contact with the class, and including the important information. (We will discuss students’ presentations before they give them to make sure they’ve included appropriate information.) We will take notes and write comments on the students’ self-assessments after class.

**Method:** The students will have as much of the period as they need to continue preparing their presentations.
1. Teacher Input: We will discuss effective presentations with the students before beginning. Since they have some experience with this, we will ask for their input, recording (or maybe having a student write?) their responses on the board.
   We will then hand out the rubric and explain that when they feel they are ready, they should come and speak to us.
2. Teacher Input & Guided Practice: The students will have some input in the above process, telling us what they know about oral presentations. We will add information as needed.
We will talk with each group about their presentation as they go, making sure that they are ready to address the items on the rubric, and that they feel prepared.

3. Independent Practice: The groups will work on preparing their visual aids and deciding what and how to present to the class.
If there’s enough time, we’ll start presentations this week, but want to make sure everyone is ready to do a good presentation. We’re going to wait on the worm box until next week so that we have enough time to do this.

**Materials:**  
Last week’s materials (posters and info)  
Copy of rubric for each student

**Words to define:** Students will define words as needed in their presentations. (eg compost, worm anatomy, microorganism).

**Engagement & Sustained Inquiry:**
This gives the students a chance to learn how to learn – several have been to the library seeking additional information on their topics. This is an important life skill.
In addition, they will gain experience and confidence speaking and teaching their peers. Finally, they will understand that they are identifying an environmental problem and contributing to its solution.