

# STINKY STUFF

Over the centuries, we've tried lots of different ways to get rid of all the garbage we create. Can you tell which of these methods are real (and possibly disgusting) methods and which, if any, we made up?

## FIRING

Bored British soldiers in the Fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island invented this rather revolting idea. They crafted hollow wooden spheres the size of cannonballs and stuffed them full of trash. Then they — wait for it — *fired* them out of their cannons. The commanding officer soon shut them down, mainly because the garbage balls often blew apart and scattered their disgusting contents on the unlucky villagers below.



## VERMICULTURE

Are you eating right now? No? Okay, good. Because vermiculture isn't the prettiest picture, even if the results are kind of awesome. It involves putting a whole bunch of worms in with certain kitchen scraps. The worms eat through the apple cores and lettuce leaves. Their tunnels allow air in, which helps the compost break down faster. The poop they leave behind also makes the compost richer.

## INCINERATION

People have always thrown stuff into the fire to get rid of it. Incineration is the same thing, only in a huge building. Most incinerators also produce energy when they burn all that garbage. Incinerators have been popular in parts of the U.S. and Europe for decades. In Canada, hospitals often use them to burn medical waste. Many places are trying to reduce their garbage and recycle more instead. That's because incinerators can pollute the air and produce greenhouse gases.





## COMPACTING

Trash compactors were popular for a few decades after they were invented in the early 1940s. They crushed rubbish into small blocks. These were supposed to be easier to dispose of, but just ended up creating heavier bags of garbage. Huge compactors are still used to crush really big junk like old cars so they take up less space. Many landfill sites also compact garbage so they can fit in more stuff.

## MIDDENS

Before garbage collection, people burned or buried anything they couldn't reuse or mend. The burial spots are known as middens — small garbage dumps. In different parts of Canada they might contain shells, broken tools, arrowheads, shards of pots, animal bones or whatever else might have been thrown away there.



## GARBURATOR

This is a uniquely Canadian word for something you don't really see here anymore. (The proper name for this specific product is actually Garberator. No, we don't know why the spelling changed.) Known outside Canada as a garbage disposal, it's a machine inside a kitchen sink that grinds up food scraps. The bits are then washed into the town water system, or, in the country, your septic system.

Answer on page 34.

