

LEVELED BOOK • G

wiggly worms

**Multi
level
G•J•M**

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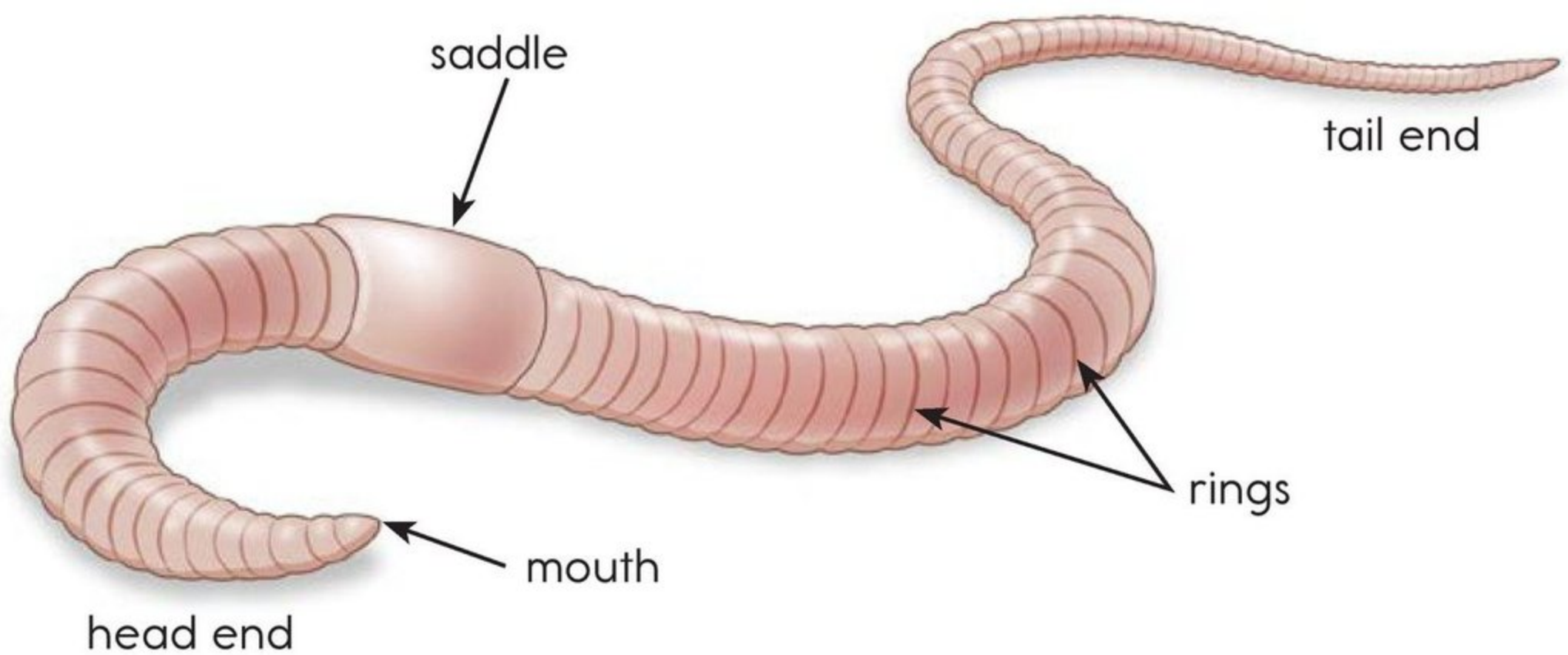
Small Animals, Big Changes

Do you know about
earthworms?

These small animals change
the **soil** in big ways.

Earthworm Bodies

The body of an earthworm is made up of many parts. Each part is shaped like a ring. Each part can bend and stretch. Earthworms move by stretching and pulling their bodies.



before stretching out to move



after stretching out to move





slime on a worm's skin



slime trail on a log

Slimy Worms!

Earthworms are **slimy**.

The slime helps keep earthworms cool and wet.

It also helps earthworms slide through soil.

After worms **mate**, a ball of slime forms.

The slime dries into a **cocoon**.

Baby worms come out of the cocoon.



A bird has to work to pull a strong worm out of its hole.

Earthworm Behavior

Earthworms build long **tunnels** underground.

The tunnels keep worms away from heat and sunlight.

They also help earthworms hide from hungry animals.



A worm pulls a leaf into its hole.

Earthworms come out at night
to look for food.

Some people call them night
crawlers.

Earthworms eat dead leaves
and plants.



Earthworm tunnels help water and air reach plant roots.

Earthworms Are Good for the Soil

Farmers love earthworms!

Earthworms make space
in the soil.

The space helps plants get
what they need to grow.

Earthworm **waste** helps plants
grow big and strong.



A mole (top left), a shrew (top right), and a toad (bottom) all make meals of worms.

Wanted: Earthworms!

Many animals love to eat earthworms.



An earthworm pokes its head out of its hole.

Earthworms are small, but they
have a big job.

Earthworms help plants grow!

Glossary

cocoon (*n.*) a covering that protects something (p. 6)

mate (*v.*) to come together to reproduce, or make babies (p. 6)

slimy (*adj.*) covered by or feeling like something wet and slippery (p. 6)

soil (*n.*) the top layer of the ground in which plants grow; dirt (p. 4)

tunnels (*n.*) underground passages (p. 7)

waste (*n.*) solid matter passed out of the body of an animal (p. 9)

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Title page: An earthworm crawls away after being dug out of the ground by a gardener.

Page 3: A worm sticks its head out of its tunnel near some mushrooms.

Wiggly Worms
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