

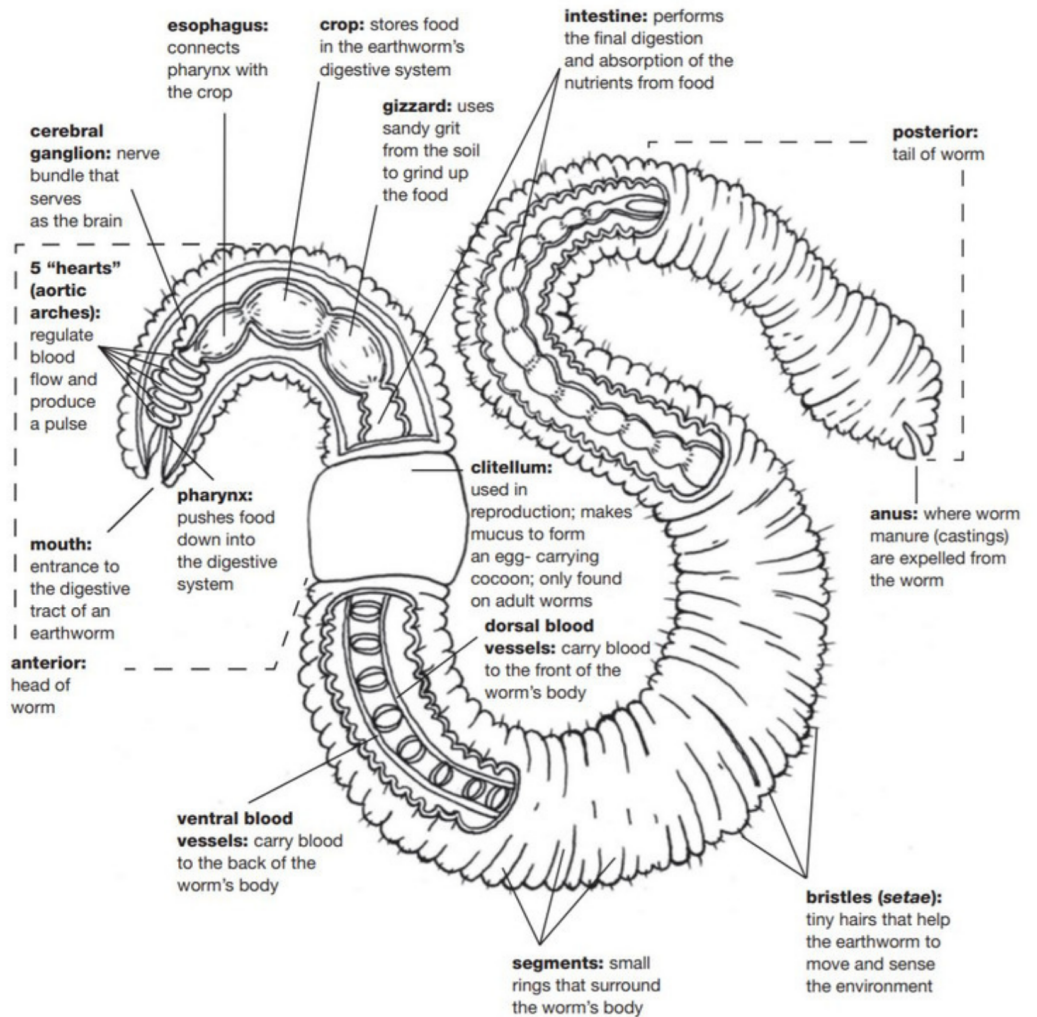
ANATOMY OF A WORM

HOW DO WORMS EAT?

Worms don't have teeth, so they can't just bite into their food. Instead, they wait until their food has partially decomposed so that they can use their highly muscular mouth and pharynx to suck down small pieces.

HOW DO THEY GRIND UP THEIR FOOD?

Because worms can't chew up their food, they have to grind their food in a special digestive organ called a gizzard. This may sound familiar - birds have one too! In the gizzard, tiny bits of sand and grit that the worm has consumed grinds up the food so that the worm can digest it and deposit fresh castings.



WHAT IS THE BEST TYPE OF WORM FOR VERMICOMPOSTING?

Our worms are composting worms called red wigglers, or redworms (*Eisenia fetida*). These red wigglers are a different species of earthworm from the ones that you might find in your backyard. Backyard earthworms, called "earthworkers," mainly eat soil and do not reproduce quickly. In contrast, red wigglers eat large amounts of organic matter and reproduce very quickly, which makes them the ideal worm for a vermicomposting system.