



Super Soils Activity

Have you ever played in a sand box or dug a hole in the yard? Planted a seed? Made a mud pie? If so, you have touched soil!

1. Start with a soil “recipe”

Create a list of what you think might be found in soil. Write it down or draw the things you expect to find. Later you can compare your recipe with what you find outside.



2. Go outside and see what you can find in the soil

Find a spot in your backyard where you can dig with a hand trowel or spoon.

Materials:

- gardening hand trowel or sturdy metal spoon
- water
- top of a plastic container, paper plate, paper towel
- pencil and paper

Directions:

1. Dig and examine the soil on your spoon or trowel:
 - What colors do you see in the soil?
 - Rub a little soil on your plate or paper towel, does the color change?
 - Does your soil have a smell?
 - What does it feel like? Rub the soil between your fingers.
 - There are 3 basic types of soil: **SAND**, **SILT** and **CLAY**.
 - If the soil feels gritty, like there are tiny little hard pieces in it, it has a lot of **SAND** in it.
 - If the soil feels slippery and smooth, it has a lot of **SILT** in it.
 - If the soil feels sticky and it forms a ball, it has a lot of **CLAY** in it.
 - Does your soil stick together if you add a few drops of water to it?
2. Are there any animals moving around in the soil or in the hole you dug?
 - Carefully place any animals on the paper plate or container top and watch how they move.
 - Be sure to put the soil back in the holes and return the animals to their home when you are done.
3. Remember the soil "recipe" you created of what might be in the soil?
Compare what you found outside with that list. How many things did you find?
4. Draw one of the animals you found. How many legs did it have, if any? Does it remind you of other animals you have seen?
5. You can create art with soil! Put some soil on your plate, wet your finger and dip it in the soil, and try drawing on some paper. If you have a sponge or paintbrush, you could use that too. Try this with different types of soil to see what happens!

