

WHAT IS SOIL ACTIVITY – TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS K-2

This is a great activity for students to explore and observe different soils and the living creatures that use soil as habitat.

CURRICULUM LINKS: **STe-1WS-S/ STe-3LW-ST**
ST1-4LW-S/ ST1-10ES-S

You will need:

- Trowels or small spades
- Trays or containers to collect soil in - reuse washed meat trays/metal trays/take-away containers etc
- Access to Compost Soil/ Vegie Garden Bed Soil/ Soil under mulch
- Magnifying glasses to share
- Sticks or old cutlery to move soil around and investigate with
- **What Is Soil Activity Sheet K-2**
- **Soil Critters Resource Sheet**

What to do:

1. As a class have a discussion about Soil and what the students think it might be made up of. You could also talk about different words that are used instead of Soil e.g. dirt, earth etc.
2. Discuss our different **senses** and what they can be used for. Relate using our senses to what might be discovered about soil.
3. Recap on tool safety and show students the containers and trowels that will be used to collect their soil samples. Distribute a **What is Soil Activity Sheet** to each group along with a magnifying glass.
4. Organise the students into groups to collect soil samples from the 3 different areas. Each group could collect all three samples, or they could collect one and then visit another group to use their soil sample collected from a different area. It may depend on the number of trays you have available.
 - Compost Bin
 - Vegie Garden bed
 - Under mulch in general garden beds
5. Once the students have collected their soil samples, ask them to have a good look in each of the soil samples – What do they **see**? What does it **feel** like? What does it **smell** like? They should try to note down or draw their observations in each of the columns.
6. Refer to the **Soil Critters Resource Sheet** and see they can find any of those creatures in their soil sample.
7. Ask students to return their soil samples to the areas that they collected them from and clean their tools and trays, wash their hands and regroup as a class.
8. As a class share observations about the different soils and see if there are some general trends. Ask students what they think might be in the soil to help plants grow.