

# Soil Identification Guide

## Materials Needed:

- soil samples (fresh, not stored)
- magiscopes
- copies of the “soil identification book” page – at least one per student

## Time:

approximately 50 minutes

## Skills:

science (soil)

language arts (writing, researching)

## Procedure:

Before the activity, obtain a fresh soil sample. Only about 1 gallon is needed, although more can be gathered.

Set-up a station with soil samples, magiscopes, hand lenses, paper, crayons or markers, and pencils.

Explain to students that they are now soil scientists and have the important job of investigating the soil sample before them. It is important that they document everything in the sample that they can find.

Some of the living creatures in the sample are large enough to see with their own eyes, some will require hand-lenses, and some are so small they will require the magiscopes to see.

Remind students that nothing in the soil samples will harm or hurt them and that it is ok to touch the sample (touch, not taste!).

continued



Allow students time to investigate the soil taking turns with the hand-lenses and magnifying glasses. As students find species in the soil sample, have them draw a picture of what they see. If they know what it is, have them label their drawing with the species name (it is not critical that the students be 100% correct, the idea is that students use observation skills and data recording skills). If students do not know the name of the species they find, they can look in books, ask another student or teacher, or if they want, they can create a name for the animal.

You may want to leave the station set-up for several days to allow the students to come-and-go as they wish during free time.

Once students have had plenty of time to investigate the soil, have them put their drawings and information into their "Soil Identification Guide". Alternatively, you can provide each student with their "Soil Identification Guide" book at the start of the activity and allow them to fill-in the pages as they find organisms.

# Soil Identification Guide

Draw a picture of your soil creature here



Soil Creature Name:

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