

PARTS OF SOIL

Focus Lesson: Parts of Soil

Materials:

Dirt by Steve “The Dirtmeister” Tomecek
 Shovel
 Plastic bags
 Trays
 Magnifying glasses
 Paper
 Chart paper

Time: 1.5 hour

*Common Core Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.7

Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

Thinking Skill:

**Making observations,
 Compare/Contrast**

Objective:

Students will collect and make observations of soil samples. Students will compare the soil samples to each other and use the information they learn from the book *Dirt* by Steve “The Dirtmeister” Tomecek.

Connection:

Students will see that dirt is not just one thing, it is made up of many things. This connects to the lesson of decomposition and the idea that nature is interconnected.

Explicit Instruction:

Start a guided discussion with students about their prior knowledge about dirt.

Possible questions include:

What do you think dirt is? What is in dirt? Is dirt only one thing or many things?

Read *Dirt* by Steve “The Dirtmeister” Tomecek

Ask students to predict what they would find if they were to go out and look at the dirt surrounding the school.

Take students out to collect dirt samples with small shovels and plastic bags. Take samples from different areas around the school and label the samples with the location where they were taken from. If this is not possible, bring in labeled samples to the classroom.

Guided Practice:

In front of the class, take one soil sample and make observations. Observe the color, wetness, size of grains and any type of organic matter present (leaves, twigs), and take notes as you do so.

Tell students that they will be doing the same thing in small groups.

Independent Practice:

In small groups, students will make observations about each soil sample. Each student should take their own notes, but should discuss within the group what they are observing. Each group can look at soil sample for 5-7 minutes until the teacher tells them to switch to the next sample.

Reflection – Group Share:

Once every group has gotten a chance to look at each soil sample, bring the class back together. Go through each soil sample as a class and take notes on chart paper of what everyone found.

Then have students look at all the different charts.

What reasons can they give to explain the similarities and differences between the soil samples?

Reading list:

Dirt by Steve “The Dirtmeister” Tomecek

Teacher Note: