



Why Is Soil Important?

Soil may be something that you have only thought of as being under your feet. Soil is much more than that. It is one of Earth's greatest natural resources. Almost all of the world's food crops grow in soil, and the world's livestock eat plants that grow in soil.



Most plants put their roots down into the soil, and many kinds of animals make their homes in soil. Most building foundations are put into the soil. The layer of soil that covers the land is very thin compared to the radius of the Earth. The depth of soil can vary widely on the Earth, from a few centimeters to tens of meters. This is not very much considering the importance of the soil layer to life on Earth!

What Will You Investigate?

To help you understand the science of soil, you will study local soil samples. You will also do research to see what types of garden plants grow best in the soil. Here are some of the characteristics of soil that you will investigate:

- the kinds of materials in soil;
- the arrangement of soil materials;
- the amount of water the soil can hold;
- how water flows through soil;
- how soil is eroded.

You will need to practice your problem-solving skills and be good observers and recorders. You will also need to be creative in finding out information about your local soil. It will be necessary for you to consult a variety of sources. To complete your investigations you will work together with other members of your class.

