



Dig It! The Secrets of Soil *You Can Make A Difference!*

Age Range: 5-10, 11-13

Keywords: Science, Art, Writing



Background

For generations upon generations, we have lived on and learned to use soils. Soils sustain our world. We size up soils every day. Why? Because we care about clean water and clean air, fresh tomatoes and fine wine, dams and dry basements, subway tunnels and superhighways, fields and forests, wildlife and weather. Since humans first settled down, we have been sizing up soils. Today, soil scientists analyze soils and predict how they will behave. But scientists explore soils using tools and techniques—digging, touching, seeing, and smelling—that everyone can use. Every soil’s life story is written in its structure, color, and patterns. You can read it by taking a closer look from the ground down.



Be A Museum Expert! Explore the [Dig It! Smithsonian site](#). Then, using the online exhibits, find the answers to the questions about soils on the [You Can Make A Difference handout](#).



Talk About It! Have a discussion about what the students found out about soils and our impact on them.



Create It! Working in groups, pairs or individually, have students create a poster or short video addressing the fourth question on the worksheet, “List 5 ways you can make a positive impact on soils at home”. Then, have the class work as a group to create a campaign to save the soil in their hometown. Students might want to think about what they have learned about soil, how we impact soil, the role soil plays in our lives, and how we can make a change to preserve the soils where we live.



Share It! Upload your poster or video in the Student Media Galleries on ePals to share your work with classrooms across the globe. Be sure to tag your video or poster with Smithsonian so that the ePals Global Community will know that you have created work for the Smithsonian partnership.