



Soil Creation Station

Creating healthy soil is a fun and explorative activity that can take learning in many directions. When thinking about climate change and biodiversity, soil has a huge impact on our planet. Through inquiry and play, learners can explore what healthy soil is and begin to understand the important role it plays in a healthy environment. Allow learners to touch, smell, and look at soil before prompting them to think about and discuss what it is made up of.

Teaching time

Continuous provision station

Learning outcomes

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding; - - Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Step by step

Most soils are a mixture of decomposed organic matter, insects, rock particles, water, air, dead plants and animals. Introduce the concept of worms eating dead things in nature and turning them into soil. Discuss what other things we might find in soil. Some possible answers from learners may include.

- Sand
- Clay
- Mud
- Leaves
- Bark
- Rocks
- Bugs
- Chalk
- Leaves
- Flowers
- Compost
- Water

Introduce to the group that you will set up a soil inquiry and each pair will need to choose their own ingredients to make up a soil mixture and compete to see which soil, a seed will thrive most in. In pairs, learners should discuss which items they would like to place in their soil potion. They will all begin with a cup of compost, described as soil made by worms. They can then add three other items to their potion. Once the pair are both happy with their soil potions, they can place them in a sunlit spot and sow their seed. In front of their pots, they should be supported to write a list of ingredients that went into their pot. Remind the learners to spray with water each day and in one week compare the seed growth. Ensure the pots receive an equal amount of sun and water to ensure a comparative test is carried out. The soil creation station can remain open for learners to explore the different elements and textures.

Green Skills



Suitable for

Early Years

Location

Outdoors

Season

Spring
Summer
Autumn
Winter

What you'll need

Seeds

- Cress (germinate 1 - 4 days)
- Sunflower seed (germinate 7 - 10 days)
- Beans (germinate 7 - 10 days)
- Basil (germinate 7-10 days)
- Marigolds (germinate 4 - 14 days)

Different materials for children to make their own soil

- **Base:** potting soil
- Small rocks
- Sand
- Mulch (coconut husk)
- Dried Leaves
- Syringe of water (to limit amount)
- Bark
- Dried / dead flower petals
- Recycled containers to put their potions in

Key vocabulary

- Soil
- Decomposer
- Natural materials
- Compost

Support and extension opportunities

More activities for the Early Learning Goal of Communication and Language can be found on the corresponding webpage.

*Don't forget to remind the children to wash their hands after they have finished making their potions.



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