

Soil Analysis

Summary

In this experiment you are going to take a sample of soil and see what it is made up of - this will take 1-2 weeks.



Safety!

- Have an adult with you if you need to use scissors
- When collecting the soil, ensure to maintain social distancing, and be respectful of parks and other peoples gardens
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling the soil using soap and water

Apparatus

- A clear large jar (or clear plastic bottle with the top cut carefully off)
- Soil (from garden or park)
- Water
- Torch or other bright light



Method

Steps

- Fill your jar $\frac{1}{3}$ full of soil
- Pour in water so that there is an inch left at the top of the jar
- Stir the soil and water well with a spoon, making sure that everything is well mixed
- Leave your jar on a level, still surface for 1-2 weeks (the longer the better)
- After 1-2 weeks you should find that the soil has separated into its different components - the sand should have settled to the bottom, then the silt on top of that, then the clay should be on the very top (the clay is the part that takes the longest to settle, so best results are after two weeks). To see this best, shine a bright light into the jar
- Then visit this website: <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/> and put in your postcode and compare your soil sample to the soil that you are meant to have in your area. If you want to be even more advanced follow this link: <https://bit.ly/2XdTcT0> and you can try to see what type of soil you have if you estimate the quantities of sand, silt and clay (this website is hard to use, so have an adult to help)



Evaluation / Conclusion

Scientists use a similar experiment to work out what the soil is made up of. This can be useful to see how well certain soil absorbs water, and can also help show the history of an area

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