



JONES VALLEY TEACHING FARM

AT-HOME ACTIVITIES

Soil Adventures

Kindergarten – 5th Grade

DESCRIPTION and OBJECTIVE:

Did you know that soil can be many different colors? Use this activity to explore the soil right below your feet in your backyard. After collecting a few soil samples, work with your student to turn them into paint and create a beautiful soil masterpiece.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ⇒ 3-4 dry soil samples: red, orange, brown, black (whatever you can find)
- ⇒ 3-4 bowls or cups
- ⇒ Trowel or shovel
- ⇒ Hammer
- ⇒ Water
- ⇒ Paint brushes (or cut a sponge into small pieces)
- ⇒ Elmer's glue (if possible)
- ⇒ Paper

LESSON / ACTIVITY:

- ⇒ With a small shovel and 3-4 vessels to collect your soil samples, head outside with your student. Explore your yard or neighborhood to see what colors of soil you can find. Remember, these soil samples will be what you use to create your paint, so look for as many different colors as possible!
 - If there aren't many different colors of soil on the surface, you might be able to find more by digging deeper. One to two scoops of soil should be plenty for each sample.
 - If your soil samples are moist, spread them across individual sheets of paper and place them in a sunny spot to dry for a couple of hours.
- ⇒ When the soil samples are dry, your student can use their hands to break any large clumps of soil into smaller pieces. Then, they should use a hammer (or mallet or rock) to grind those pieces into a fine powder. This should be repeated



with the soil from each sample, keeping them separate from each other as you go.

- Younger students might need some assistance with this step.
- ⇒ Once all of the samples have been ground into a fine powder, have your student place each of them in separate bowls or cups. Add a small amount of water to each cup until the soil becomes the consistency of paint.
 - The more water you add the more transparent the color will appear on paper (like a watercolor!).
 - If you have Elmer's glue on hand, you can add a few drops as well to thicken the consistency.
- ⇒ Now, your soil paint is ready to go! Have your student either draw what they want to paint with a pen or marker first OR paint directly on their sheet of paper.
- ⇒ When they are finished, have older students (3rd – 5th grade) explore the website below and complete the following writing prompt:
 - Why is soil important? How is soil formed? What makes soil have its color?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- ⇒ Check out the links below to learn more about topics related to this activity!
 - [All About Soil](#)

