

Dirty Pictures

Objective

Students conduct experiments with soil, explore the different colors and textures found in the soil and use soils of different colors to create art.

Materials

- soil samples from various locations
- plastic bags
- magnifying glasses
- clear containers
- glue
- heavy paper
- light blue construction paper
- bucket
- garden soil
- water
- pink and lavender tissue paper
- pencil
- artist paint brushes, assorted sizes
- sponges
- rags
- artist acrylic
- masking tape
- white cotton T-shirts

Procedure

1. Send notes home with students asking parents to send a cupful of soil from the yard in a plastic bag.
2. Read and discuss background and vocabulary.
3. Place all the bags on a table.
 - Students will compare the colors and textures of the soils, first just by looking at it in the plastic bags.
 - Students will feel the soils and compare the different textures.
 - Students will dictate words to describe the soil. Write the words on the board.
4. Wet a small amount of soil.
 - Students will work the soil between their fingers to feel for grittiness (sand), smoothness (silt) and slickness (clay).
 - Students look at the soil through a microscope or magnifying glass and describe what they see in writing.
5. Put handfuls of different kinds of soil in separate clear containers.
 - Fill the containers with water, and shake until the water is cloudy.
 - Set the containers aside

Oklahoma Academic Standards

KINDERGARTEN

Speaking and Listening:
R.1,2,3,4; W.2. Print
Concepts: 2,4. Critical
Writing: W. Vocabulary:
R.1,2,3
Life Science: 1.1. Earth
Science: 3-1

GRADE 1

Speaking and Listening:
R.1,2,3,4; W.2. Print
Concepts: 1. Reading and
Writing Process: W.1.
Critical Writing: W.3.
Vocabulary: R.1,3,4. Life
Science: 1-1. Earth Science:
3-1
Visual Art: 1.1; 3.1,2; 4.4

GRADE 2

Speaking and Listening:
R.1,2,3; W.2. Print
Concepts: 2,4. Critical
Writing: W.3. Vocabulary:
R.1,3
Physical Science: 1-1,2
Visual Art: 1.1; 3.1,2; 4.4

- Students will compare the containers after an hour or two.
 - Explain that the largest soil particles will sink first, and the fine particles will float to the top.
 - Explain that the film on top is called humus. Good garden soil will have several different particle sizes.
6. Take cuttings from two or three easy-to-grow houseplants (philodendron, aloe vera, spider plant).
 - Students will place cuttings in water and observe them for several days, until they begin to grow roots.
 - Students will place cuttings from the same plant in different kinds of soil—one in good potting soil, one in sand and one in clay soil.
 - Students will watch the progress of the different plants over a period of time and chart which plants do best in which kinds of soil.
 7. Students will map the soil they have brought from home on a color wheel and discuss hue locations.
 8. Students will use the soil samples to make “dirty pictures.”
 - Students will draw pictures.
 - Students will outline the pictures in glue.
 - Students will sprinkle soil on the glue for color.
 9. Students will paint with soil, as follows:
 - Lightly sketch pictures on water color paper with pencil and then use ink for permanent lines.
 - With masking tape or painter’s tape, carefully tape paper edges to table or board so artwork will dry flat.
 - Pour small amounts of artist acrylic in small paper cups. Add small amounts of finely powdered soil. You may add a few drops of water to the soil mix.
 - Experiment with depth of color and mixing different soils.
 - Use different sizes and kinds of paint brushes, sponges and rags to create paintings.
 - When art work is dry, apply additional layers of soil paint, if desired.
 - Use black ink pen to make finishing touches on your art work.
 10. Students will make Oklahoma Dirt Shirts, as follows:
 - Fill a bucket half full with water.
 - Add enough red dirt so the water is gritty and muddy looking.
 - Place a white cotton T-shirt in the bucket.
 - If desired, tie knots in the shirt or tightly secure random sections with rubber bands for a tie-dye effect.
 - Use a long wooden stick to stir the shirt in the muddy water until the shirt has attained the desired color.
 - Hang the shirt in the sun to dry.
 - When the shirt is dry, rinse it in cold water to remove excess mud
 - Wash it in cold water in the washing machine and dry hot to set the color.
 11. Students will use muddy footprints and handprints as the basis for works of art.
 12. Students will make Muddy Trees, as follows:
 - Mix water and soil in a bucket to make mud.
 - Dip your hand and wrist into the mud.
 - Carefully place your hand on light blue construction paper, spreading fingers to create branches. The wrist print will serve as the tree trunk.
 - Allow the print to dry.
 - Create blossoms of pink and lavender tissue paper (1 to 1 ½ in. squares).
 - Twist the tissue paper squares around a pencil eraser, and use the pencil to gently press the square onto dots of glue placed on the blue construction paper near the “branches.” The tissue should come off the eraser easily.
 - Repeat until the tree is full of blossoms. It should look similar to an Oklahoma redbud in bloom.
 - If there are missing sections of “tree,” or if you want more detail, add lines with a brown marker.
 13. Add food coloring to zip-closing bags of salt or sand to make colored sand.
 - Spread the salt/sand in thin layers on newspapers to dry, then store in the bags.
 - Use rimmed baking sheets as trays for creating sand art.