



Level 1
Grades K - 1st

Intro Story

Hi! My name is Whitney the Worm and I can't wait to show you around my home. But I don't live in a house or apartment. My home is the soil!

Soil is where plants grow and where animals like me live. Farmers grow the plants we eat in soil. You might even have a garden at home! Soil might not seem like it's doing much but its an important part of the Earth. I can't wait to take you on a tour of this exciting place!



Did You Know?

The soil is home to many living things. You may be able to easily spot worms and bugs, but many of the creatures that live in the soil are too small to see with your eyes! A handful of soil may be home to millions of tiny organisms.

You can help protect soils! If you have a garden at home, it's a good idea to cover your soil with materials like straw. This will keep soil from blowing away in the wind or washing away in the rain.

Animals like earthworms are good for the soil. You can help animals that live in the soil by keeping it healthy and using chemicals like weed killer only when necessary.

We use natural resources from the soil. Actions like recycling can help us reuse these resources so we can protect soils.



What Do You Think?

Draw a picture of what you think it looks like in the soil. What animals might live there? What might you see growing?



Food Grows in the Soil

The food we eat comes from plants and trees that grow in soil. How does healthy soil help us have a healthy life? Let's take a look at cereal - you might have had some for breakfast!

1. Whole wheat cereal is made from wheat that grows in the soil.
2. Fruit, like berries, are grown in soil.
3. Milk comes from cows. Cows eat grasses that are grown in soil.

Read each sentence. Write the number of the sentence by the picture of the food it matches. Draw a line from the food to the plant or animal it comes from and to the soil where our food gets its start.

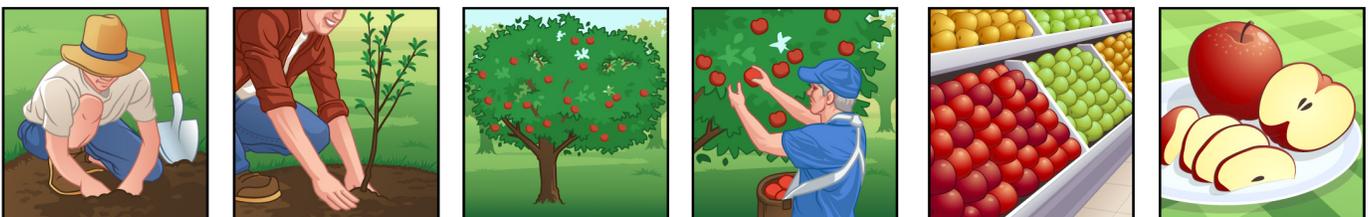


We Get Our Food From Plants & Animals

Plants and animals need food, water and a good place to grow just like you. Plants need healthy soil to live in, water, and light from the sun to make food. Plants use the soil to help them grow. Animals need plants for food.

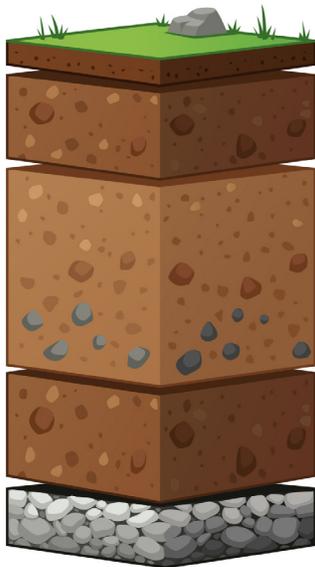
Most of the food we eat is grown on farms or raised on ranches. Farmers and ranchers take good care of the soil and water on their land. Healthy soils grow the healthy foods we need to have a healthy life. Soil that is taken care of can also help make sure that the water we drink stays clean.

Write the numbers 1 through 6 on the box below each picture to show how an apple gets from the soil to you for a yummy snack!



Soils are Habitats!

Whitney the Worm here! Healthy soils can grow the foods we need for a healthy life. Soil also provides a habitat for animals like me! Animals and other living things may change the environment they live in to survive. Earthworms can tunnel through the soil. Our tunnels provide spaces for air and water to get into the soil. We also help by making it easier for roots and plants to grow. Help me navigate this worm tunnel maze so I can meet up with the rest of my worm buddies!



Layers of the Soil

Did you know that the soil is more than just one layer? It actually has multiple layers, just like a cake! Scientists who study the soil are interested in learning more about the characteristics of each of these layers. Check them out!

How Does Your Garden Grow?

One way for you to connect with soil is by growing a garden. Gardens can include plants like flowers, or even fruits and vegetables. What would you grow in your garden? Draw your garden here!

