

Preparing for the Unit

1. Curiosity Centre

The Curiosity Centre gives students an opportunity to investigate science ideas and tools through active participation, free exploration, and independent play. In this hands-on centre, students can touch and explore soil and other objects related to soil.

The Curiosity Centre could have

- various soil samples such as sand, clay, silt, humus, loam, gravel, pebbles, rocks, organic matter
- magnifying glasses, tweezers, rulers, balances, small paintbrushes, straws, small sponges
- measuring cups, trowels, spoons, strainers, colanders, mesh screens, window screens, funnels
- sealable plastic bags, plastic containers, jars, plastic flower pots, beakers, basins, watering cans, spray bottles, plastic bags, paper plates or Styrofoam trays, baking pans, baking sheets
- potted plants, seeds
- an ant farm or vermicomposter (worm composting)
- paper and coloured pencils
- items made from soil such as a pottery vase or bowl, clay flowerpot, a brick, a tile, a glass jar, and, if possible, a traditional Indigenous item such as a food vessel made from soil
- soap, water, paper towels

Check the centre frequently to ensure it is well stocked with items. Invite students to contribute to the centre by bringing in items or photographs related to soil. Remind students to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling soil.

Note: You may choose to display new items every few days or introduce items one at a time throughout the unit.

2. Science Journals and Folders



Demonstrate for students how to record observations, questions, ideas, results, notes, and so on, by writing or drawing pictures in their Science Journals. Encourage students to add new questions or ideas to their Journals as often as they like.

Science Journals along with completed BLMs, drawings, stories, etc. related to the unit can be stored in the students' Science Folders.

3. Word Wall



Add any relevant science terminology to the Word Wall throughout the unit.

4. I Wonder Wall



Build the I Wonder Wall throughout the unit by posting students' questions as they arise. Refer to the I Wonder Wall often and select questions that students may be ready to answer.

5. Reading Centre

Add texts (books, magazines, and photographs) relating to soils to the Reading Centre. Or, you may choose to include these texts in the Curiosity Centre. The titles in the Science Library will help start off a collection of books. Also refer to the lists of texts pertaining to *Exploring Soils* in the Additional Resources section of this guide (pages 82–83).