

Oli Earthworm's Recipe for Soil: Puppet Show

Essential Questions:

What are the components of soil?

What works in the soil?

At a Glance:

This lively puppet show provides ecological background information on the components of soil and prepares learners to investigate soil in subsequent activities.

Getting Ready:

There are lively characters in this script. Experiment with interesting and funny voices to create characters that match the personality of each puppet. Two puppeteers will be needed. One puppeteer will perform Foreco, Grunt, and Legs while the other will perform Oli.

Procedure:

1. Assemble learners in front of the puppet theater. Tell the learners that Oli Earthworm would like to visit and tell them about how he makes rich, delicious soil.
2. Perform the puppet show.

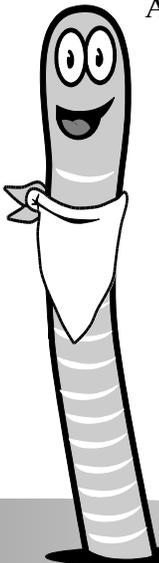
Discussion/Assessment:

Ask the learners what was included in Oli's recipe for soil.

What did Legs and Grunt do?

What happens to dead animals and plants in nature?

Who are some decomposers?



Location: Classroom

Objectives: Learners will

- 1) Display interest in the soil department its workers.
- 2) Describe several different components of soil.

Skills: communication, inference

Supplies:

Puppets

- Foreco
- Oli Earthworm
- Grunt (a fungus)
- Legs (a millipede or centipede)

Props:

- a bowl full of soil
- a mixing bowl
- rocks
- leaf litter
- wood / sticks
- fake animal guts
- fake animal poop
- small sprayer or container of water
- magnifying glass

Script: Oli Earthworm's Recipe for Soil

Subjects: Science, language arts

Time: 15 minutes

Oli Earthworm's Recipe for Soil

SCRIPT

Foreco: *(from one side of stage)* Boys and girls, I always enjoy my visits with Oli and his workers and I am sure you will, too. They are such a dedicated group. Oli, are you here? *(She looks around and calls him again.)* Oli?

Oli: *(pops up)* Hi, Foreco! Hi, boys and girls. Things sure are busy down there in my underground basement department.

Foreco: Oli, take good care of these boys and girls. I know they are eager to learn about your department. I must be going now. Bye, Oli! Bye, boys and girls!

Oli: Boys and girls, want to hear a joke? Why did the worm cross the playground? To get to the other slide! Ha, ha! I'm so funny. Ha, ha! Let me introduce you to some of my workers. This is Grunt. *(Grunt pops up and grunts)* Can you guess why we call him Grunt?! Say something, Grunt!

Grunt: Grunt, Grunt!

Oli: Very good. Let me introduce Legs. *(Legs pops up)* Legs, you sure are looking good. Nice legs, Legs!

Legs: Hi, boys and girls. Legs are very helpful when you try to move quickly through the soil! *(She scampers across the stage to demonstrate)*

Oli: Grunt and Legs, as top workers in my Soil Department, I would like you to tell the boys and girls about our work. How 'bout it? *(Both look at Oli and then begin to talk.)*

Grunt: Grunt, Grunt.

Oli: Thanks, Grunt! Legs?

Legs: Our department has the best smells!... *(She pokes her nose into some soil and snorts a noseful of it.)*

Grunt: Grunt, Grunt!

Legs: ...And the best colors - browns, reds, red-browns, blacks, black-browns, golds, gold-browns... did I say brown? And of course, we have the best-looking workers!

Oli: My department is nice and dark! I'm really not used to all of these bright lights, since I live in the dark soil, but I like telling you kids about the soil. Grunt...Legs...will all of you be a bit more specific and tell the children about the work you do? How about it, Grunt?

Grunt: *(Puts his head in the soil and grunts and flings soil off the stage)*

Oli: Legs?

Legs: We chew on all kinds of delicious dead things and turn them into soil - we say we “**decompose**” things. We put air spaces into the soil so plants can breathe.

Grunt: Grunt!

Legs: We make rich soil from dead trees, animal guts, and rocks. Soil is the birthing material for all life. Soil is very important stuff.

Oli: And now, boys and girls, I will tell you about my Recipe for Soil. Let me put on my apron, and get my bowl *(Grunt or Legs puts a big bowl on stage; switch Oli puppets to the one wearing the apron.)* You all know what a “recipe” is, don't you? *(pause for answer)* Well, brownies are one of my favorite recipes because brownies look like dirt! But, in my Recipe for Soil, we start with....

Grunt: *Grunts and pours small rocks in bowl*

Oli: ...thank you Grunt - yes, rocks...
and then we add . . .*(he looks toward Legs)*

Legs: *(Legs adds leaves and pine needles)* some leaves and pine needles - good organic material.

Oli: And next? *(looks toward Grunt)*

Grunt: *(Grunts and pours in bugs)*

Oli: Bugs - live bugs and dead bugs...looks delicious! Do you like my recipe, boys and girls? And now for the next ingredient...

Grunt: *(Grunts and adds animal guts)*

Oli: Animal guts, yes animal guts. And then...

Grunt: *(Adds poop and grunts the word “poop”)*

Oli: Poop is very important in making rich, delicious soil.

Legs: Animal bones, guts, and gore - an occasional eye, lots of animal **poop!** We decompose it all into delicious, rich soil. Do you remember what “decompose” means? It means to break big things into little things. Oh and I almost forgot ...water. Water is very important. *(Grunt pours in small vile of water; he gets excited and throws some water on children in front row.)*

Oli: Oh, sorry, Grunt tends to get a little excited. (*Looks into soil bowl*) mmm...this is starting to look good! Grunt, Legs...anything else in my recipe?

Grunt: (*Jumps around a bit to get Oli's attention, grunts, and adds a bag of air to the bowl.*)

Oli: That's right! (*Starts to talk fast and with excitement.*) Air is very important – otherwise, how would I breathe?...and how would all of my workers and all of the roots of trees breathe?...and what about the flowers and grasses?...and oh, my department does such fine work!

Well, that's it boys and girls. That's my Recipe for Good Soil. There are lots of fine things in my soil. Grunt, Legs, and I would like to stay longer, but you know how it is...gotta get to it! There are bugs, leaves, and **poop** to decompose. Bye-bye.

Legs: Boys and girls, don't forget how important the soil is! (*Leaves the stage*)

Grunt: (*Grunts and exits stage*)