



Super soils

Soil and farming are inextricably linked. Healthy well cared for soil allows food to grow, mitigates the risk of floods and droughts, and even locks away carbon. These activities will help students learn about our super soils!






Soil separation

Take a sample of soil and put it into a clean, clear jar or measuring cylinder. Add water to cover the soil and put a lid on it and then leave the sample to settle.

- The heaviest, biggest particles sink first (stones and sand).
- The smallest, lightest sink last (silt/clay).
- Floating on top will be any organic matter.

Soil types

Farmers need a good understanding of the type of soil they are working with. This activity is a simple hands-on soil texture test, and it is a great way to begin exploring the properties of different soil types. A large version of the soil type table is available at the end of this document.

				
Cone	Ball	Straight worm	Curved worm with cracks	Curved smooth worm


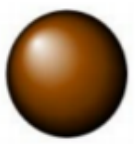



Shapes you can make	Soil type
Cone only	Sandy
Cone and ball	Sandy loam
Cone, ball and straight worm	Loam
Cone, ball and curved cracked worm	Clayey loam
Cone, ball and curved smooth worm	Clay

- Take a handful of slightly moistened soil and squeeze out the water
- Make the shapes shown in order
- When you can't make your shape, you have your soil type.





Super soils – soil types

				
Cone	Ball	Straight worm	Curved worm with cracks	Curved smooth worm






Shapes you can make	Soil type
Cone only	Sandy
Cone and ball	Sandy loam
Cone, ball and straight worm	Loam
Cone, ball and curved cracked worm	Clayey loam
Cone, ball and curved smooth worm	Clay





Activity 1: Soil Types

1. Take a handful of soil and wet it
2. Squeeze out the water
3. Make the shapes shown in order
4. When you can't make your shape you have your soil type

				
Cone	Ball	Straight worm	Bent cracked worm	Bent smooth worm

Shapes you can make	Soil Type
Cone only	Sandy
Cone and ball	Loamy sand
Cone, ball and straight worm	Loam
Cone, ball, worm and bent worm with cracks	Clayey loam
Cone, ball, worm and bent smooth worm	Clay

My results

	Shape made	Soil type
Soil 1		
Soil 2		
Soil 3		

Notes and observations
