

The Ingredients of Life

Objectives:

Students will:

- Acknowledge the importance of air, water, food, and sun for all life-forms
- Learn the “Sun, Soil, Water, Air” song
- Engage physically with soil in an outdoor environment

Educator Notes

- Do not pick an outdoor space that is too open or large; stay somewhere that makes it easy to keep an eye on all the kids (preferably a fenced garden)
- Remind students not to touch their faces or eyes since they will be touching soil and dirt
- Let the students wash their hands thoroughly upon completion of the activity
- In order to get students thinking about what is necessary for living creatures to survive, show them pictures of various animals and plants and ask them to consider what we as humans have in common with other life forms

Materials:

- Soil
- Cup to scoop soil
- Cup or bottle of water
- Magnifying glasses (for EXTENSION ACTIVITY)

Preparation:

Select an outdoor location with soil and sun exposure. Preferably, this module should be done on a nice day. Fill a cup or bottle with water.

Key Vocabulary:

Soil

Activity:

Invite students to brainstorm a list of essential elements that humans need to survive. After some discussion, guide the students to the 4 elements: air, water, soil, and sun. Air is what we need to breathe. Water is what we need to drink. Soil gives us food. The sun gives us light. Like humans, soil is alive and needs these 4 elements to survive: air to breathe, water to drink, food,

and sunlight. Together, these elements help soil be healthy and produce plants, fruits, and vegetables. Take the class outside and place a scoop of soil in each student's cupped hands. Then add some water. Explain that students now have all the ingredients of life: air, water, soil, and sun.

Wrap-Up:

To close the activity, teach the students the "Sun, Soil, Water, Air" poem:

Sun, soil, water, air.

Sun, soil, water, air.

Everything you eat,

Everything you wear

Comes from

Sun, soil, water, air.

Extension Activity (K-5):

If working with older students, hand out magnifying glasses that can be used to explore the outdoor space. Encourage students to pay attention to and make lists of various life forms (i.e. flowers, worms, trees, birds). Instead of the Wrap-Up poem, ask students to discuss how the life

forms they observed need air, water, soil, and sun to survive, just like humans.

Sources:

<http://www.songsforteaching.com/bananaslugstringband/sunsoilwaterair.htm>