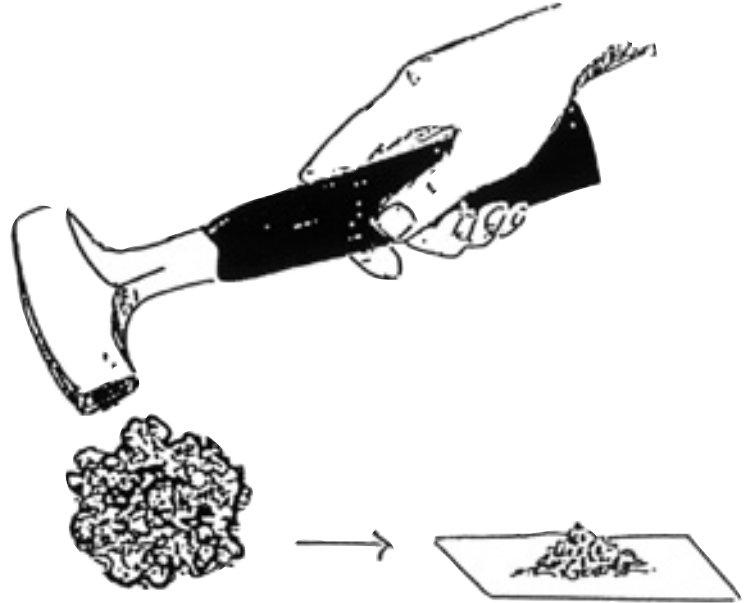


Painting With Soil

Soils are one of our most important natural resources. They also are important for the beauty their many colors add to our landscapes. Most of us overlook this natural beauty because we see it every day. Soil materials can be used to color other things. Soil colors are used as pigments in bricks and pottery, and can be used to do artwork. Be sure to ask for help from an adult before handling tools.

Materials

soil (dried in air)
hammer or mallet
mortar and pestle (rubber-tipped)
paper cups (4 oz.)
pencils
ink pens (black, different tip sizes)
paint brushes (different kinds and sizes)
artist acrylic (clear gloss medium)
sponges and rags
water color paper
masking tape

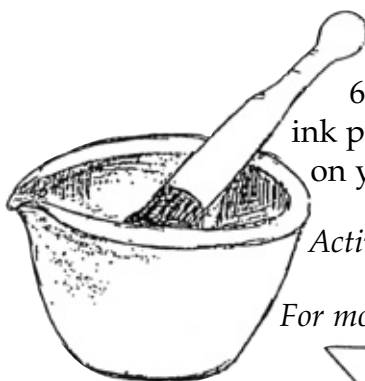


Procedure - Soils

1. Gather soils of various colors.
2. Place each dried soil sample on a piece of paper and crush into pieces with hammer or mallet.
3. Place some of the crushed soil into a mortar. Use a rubber-tipped pestle to crush the soil into a fine powder. Repeat to crush all of the different colored soils.
4. Place the different soils in paper cups -- notice the colors and textures.

Procedure - Artwork

1. Lightly sketch art work on water color paper with a pencil. When satisfied with composition, use ink for permanent lines.
2. With masking tape, carefully tape paper edges to table or board. This is done so that the art work will dry flat.
3. Pour small amounts of artist acrylic in small paper cups. Add small amounts of soil. Experiment with depth of color and mixing the different soils.
4. Use different sizes and kinds of paint brushes, sponges, and rags. Experiment and have fun.
5. Layering colors. When your art work is dry, you may apply another layer of soil paint.
6. You may want to use a black ink pen to make finishing touches on your artwork.



Activity time, about 1 hour

For more activities, visit the website
soils.usda.gov

