



Let's  
Learn  
about

Soil

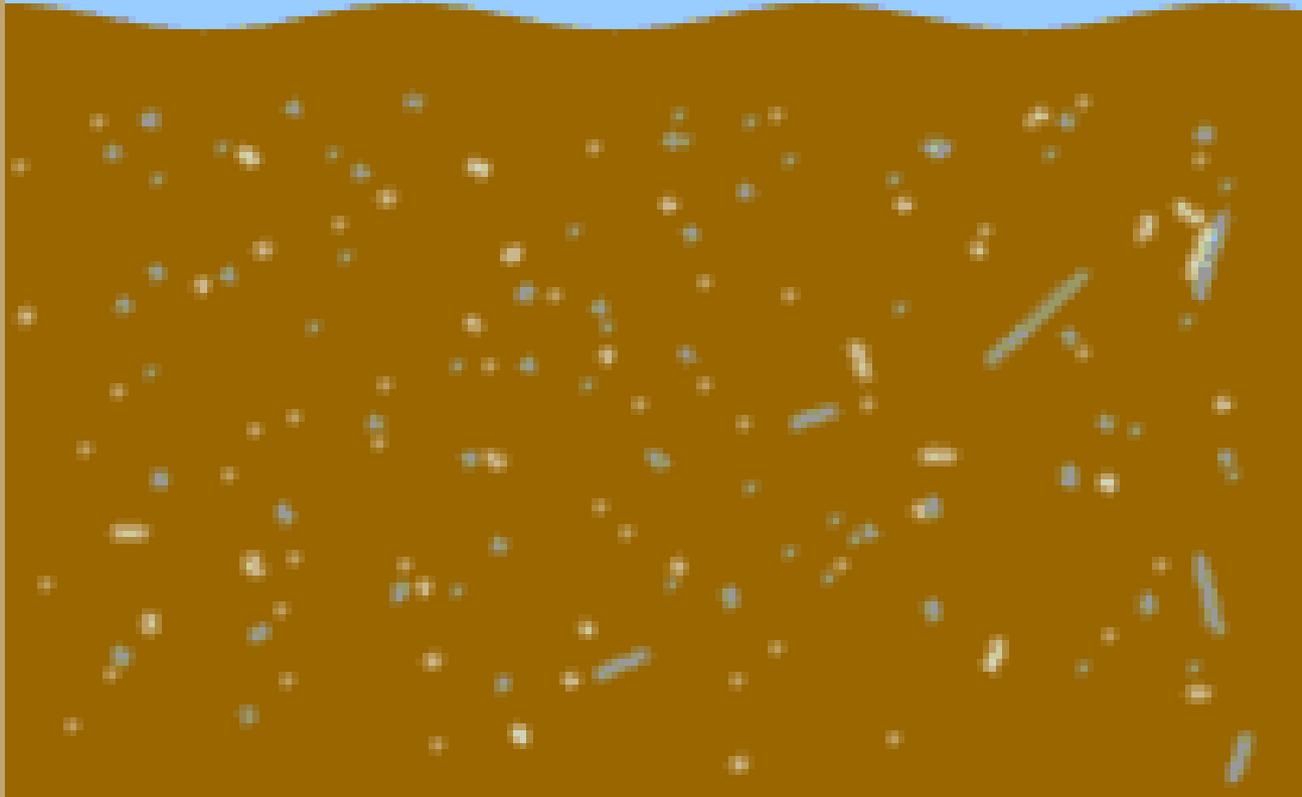
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# What is soil?



- The loose material in which plants can grow in the upper layer of Earth

**Soil is made of...**



# Soil is a Resource

- Resource

- A material found in nature that living things use

- Water

- Air

- Trees

- Minerals

# Humus

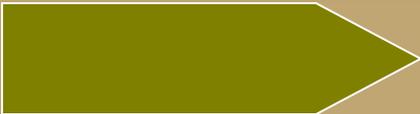
- The part of soil made up of decayed parts of once-living things
- Dark and soft
- Contains much of what plants need to grow

# Three Layers of Soil

- Topsoil
  - Top layer
  - Richest soil



# Three Layers of Soil

- Subsoil 
  - Under topsoil
  - Larger grains and less rich than topsoil



# Three Layers of Soil

- Bedrock
  - Solid rock under soil
  - Weathering breaks down bedrock into soil



# Why is Soil Important?

- All living things need minerals.
  - Plants get minerals from soil.
  - Plant-eating animals get the minerals from the plants that they eat.
  - We get minerals from the plants and animals that we eat.

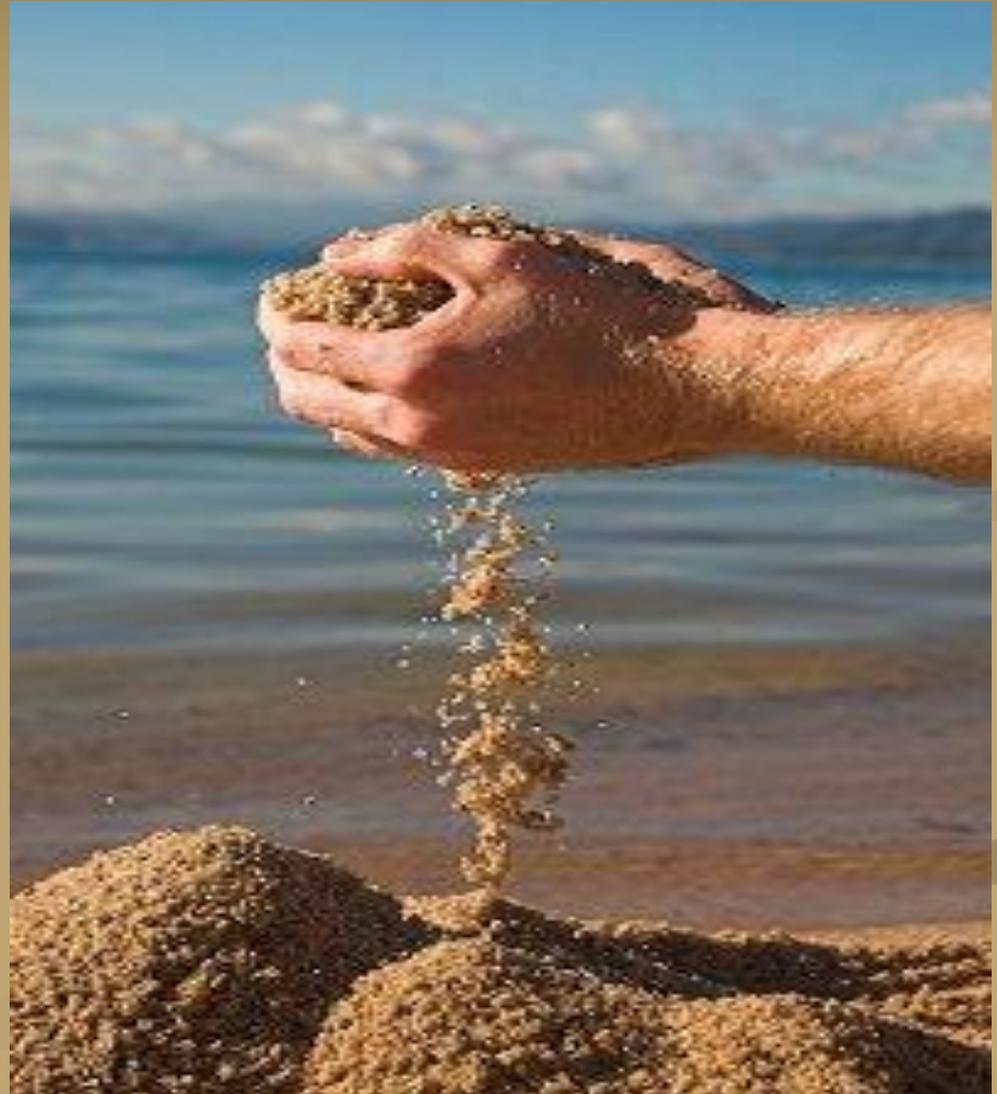
# Different Types of Soil

- Soil can be black, brown, gray, red, yellow, or white.
- Color depends on what types of minerals are in it
  - White soils form from light rocks, such as limestone.
  - Black soils have lots of humus.



# Different Types of Soil

- Sand has large grains and feels gritty.
  - Large spaces between the grains let water leave it quickly.
  - Too dry for plant growth



# Different Types of Soil

- Clay



- Very small grains that form hard clods when dry
- Small grains hold water easily, which makes it sticky.
  - Dry clays are too hard, and wet clays are too soggy for plant growth.

# Different Types of Soil

- Loam has small grains.
  - Holds enough water for plants but also drains well



# Check this out . . .

- Visit the Discovery School site to learn more and play Soil Safari!!

**Then, come back for more!**

# What Harms Soil?

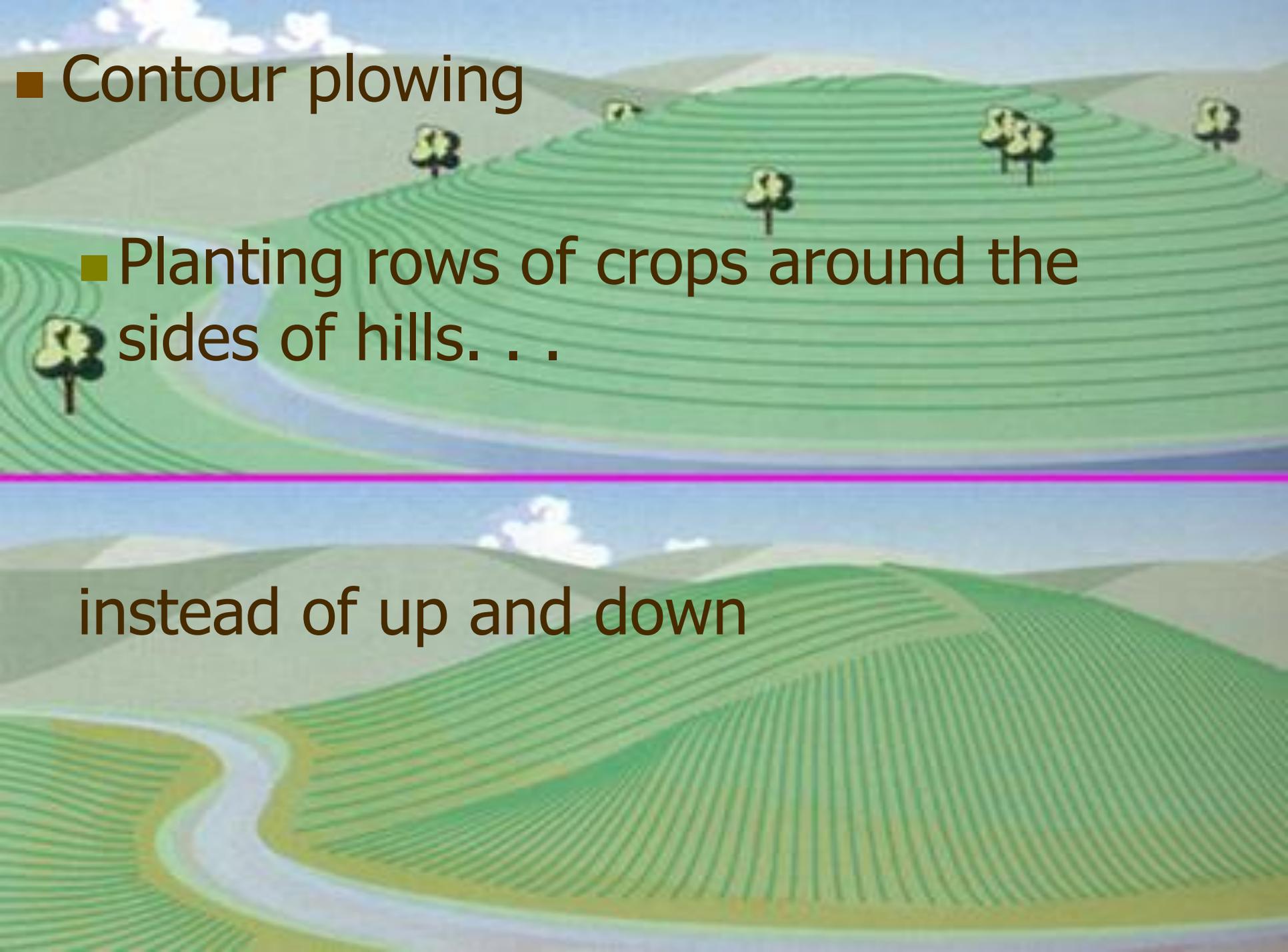


- Planting the same type of crop year after year
- Cutting down too many trees
- Wind and water

# Saving Soil



- Conservation
  - Saving resources by using them carefully
- Strip cropping
  - Planting strips of thick grass or clover between strips of crops



- Contour plowing

- Planting rows of crops around the sides of hills. . .

instead of up and down

# What have you learned about soil?

- What are the three layers of soil?
  - Topsoil
  - Subsoil
  - Bedrock
- Name and describe some types of soil.
- What can be done to conserve soil?
- Want to learn more???

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