



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Be **inspired,**
take the **challenge**
and **celebrate soils!**



Soil Painting
COMPETITION



Did you know that kindergartners draw soil/dirt in around 30% of their drawings? As part of its outreach efforts, the Global Soil Partnership is organizing a soil painting competition to celebrate World Soil Day 2017 with the theme '**Caring for the Planet starts from the Ground**'. In this contest, participants will showcase their creativity in depicting how soils are indispensable for sustainable development.

The competition is open to children, teens and university students from all over the world. It consists of producing a painting and sharing pictures or time-lapse videos no longer than 1 minute. This awareness raising activity will help young people to learn about soil and how it is formed, the creatures that live in it, and just how important it is in our everyday lives.

Looking at soils from a different perspective will help them distinguish different soil types and investigate soil properties while stimulating their creativity.

audience

The competition is organized in 3 different groups:

- **Group A** | age range between 6-11 (elementary schools)
- **Group B** | age range between 12 and 18 (mid and high schools)
- **Group C** | above 18 (colleges and universities)

how to join the competition

- Canvas dimensions should be 1m x 2m or larger.
- It is advisable the competition to take place in a public area to increase visibility and outreach.
- Participating teams should be comprised of 3-5 individuals.
- Participants are invited to take pictures and record videos throughout the painting process. Please share them on social media with the hashtag **#WorldSoilDay** and send them to world-soil-day@fao.org by the 11th of December.

prize

The winner from each group will receive a prize of **400 USD**, while the second and third runners from each group will receive a prize of **200 USD** and **100 USD** respectively. A series of soil publications and communication material will be also shipped to the winners of each group. High visibility on FAO social media and the FAO/GSP website will be ensured.

timing

- **October 16th**: Launch of the competition;
- **December 11th**: Submission deadline for the photos and/or videos;
- **December 20th**: Jury will select winning entries for each of the three groups.

Tutorial

time needed

Half-day: consider the time to prepare and order the different soil pigments and the painting session.

where

Local schools, libraries, clubs, university atriums, open spaces.

equipment

- At least 2-2.5 cups of various soil samples with differing colors and textures (dried in the air)



- Baking trays or shallow containers



- Crushing tool, such as a hammer



- Metal sieve (three different mesh sizes) and knee-high stocking



- Paper cups and paper plates



- PVA glue and water



- Watercolor paper



- Paint brushes of different sizes, sponges and rags



preparation of the soil pigments

- Using a spoon, collect soil from scraped banks, eroded paths and gullies. Try to gather soils of a variety of colors. Remove any unwanted elements from the samples you collect (grass, rocks, roots, bugs). Air dry the soil samples on baking trays.
- Crumble and crash it with a hammer as it dries. Place some of the crushed soil into a mortar. Push the soil through a metal sieve with the largest mesh onto a paper plate. Place the powdered soil in a paper cup. Wrap a knee-high stocking over the top 2 or 3 times. Turn the cup upside down over a paper plate and shake out finely powdered soil.
- Store the different soils in tubs or jars. Be careful to keep your soil samples separate!

procedure

- Add enough PVA glue and few drops of water to each tub or jar to form a fairly runny paste. Be careful to add the liquids sparingly and gradually.
- Stir until combined and smooth, like whipped cream. When they are ready, put them on a white plate to use as an artist's palette. You are ready to paint!

hints

- Add enough water to make a "mud brownie". If you add too much it may dilute the soil too much so that the color does not come through well in paintings. Experiment with the depth of color by adding more or less soil and create new colors by mixing different soils.
- Lightly sketch a drawing on watercolor paper with a pencil. When satisfied with the composition, trace the lines with ink for permanent lines.
- With masking tape, carefully tape the edges of the paper to the table, board or easel. This will allow the artwork to dry flat.
- Use different sizes and kinds of paint brushes, sponges, or rags to apply the soil paint to your "canvas."
- Do not hesitate to have your art teacher/professor involved!



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The Global Soil Partnership (GSP) was established in December 2012 as a strong interactive partnership to promote sustainable soil management and guarantee healthy and productive soils for a food secure world, as well as support other essential ecosystem services. Awareness raising, advocacy, policy development and capacity development on soils, as well as relevant implementation in the field are among the main GSP activities.

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17955EN/1/10.17

Thanks to the financial support of

