

# Soil is a dirty business

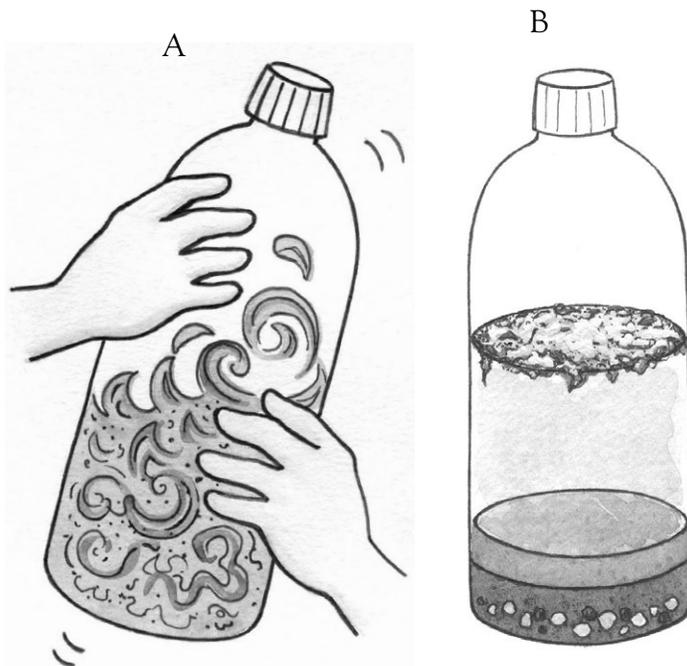


## Background knowledge

*Soil* is made up of small pieces of rock particles. Tiny rock particles form mud when water is added to the soil. Soil can contain larger particles, such as sand grains. Soil often contains the leaves and roots of dead plants. These dead plants add important nutrients to the soil that help new plants grow.

## Science activity

Michiko dug some soil from her garden and put it into a plastic bottle with some water. After placing a lid on the bottle, she shook it very hard until it was a muddy mixture, as shown in picture A. She left it for one hour and then came back to look at it again. Picture B shows what she saw.



Bottle of shaken mud and water

Bottle after being left to stand for 1 hour

Explain what happened.

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## Science investigation

**⚠ Take extra care - ask an adult to supervise you.**

Look at a sample of soil with a magnifying glass. Record all of your observations. Note down if you find living creatures, dead plants, or anything else. Be sure to wear rubber gloves when you handle soil!



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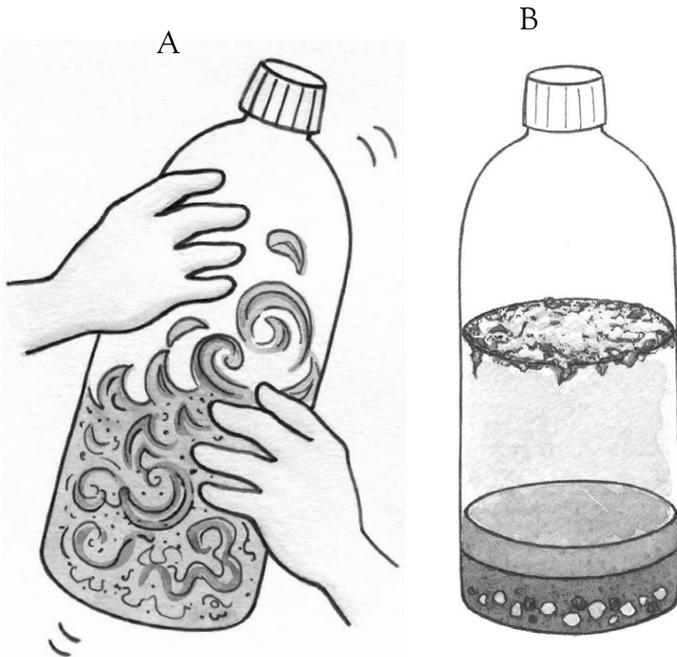


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Explain what happened.

Larger, heavier particles settle on the bottom; smaller lighter particles settle on top.

## Science investigation

⚠️ Tiny fragments are chipped off rocks when strong wind or fast-flowing water causes rocks to collide, or when rocks split as they freeze or are heated up. These fragments gradually accumulate and mix with humus (dead plant material) to form soil.

