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Life Underground: Why Soil Creatures Are So Important! VCE Youth Education

Overview: As plants grow, they **absorb nutrients** from the soil such as nitrogen and phosphorus. But how do these nutrients get in our soil? Soil creatures! Every teaspoon of soil is home to **billions of tiny organisms** such as bacteria, fungi, and insects. Their job is to **break down organic matter into nutrients** that can be stored in the soil and then used by the plant. Without soil creatures, there would be no nutrients in the soil for the plant to absorb.

Age range: Children aged 5-8

Children will learn:

- What types of creatures live in the soil
- Why these creatures are essential for healthy plants
- How they can help create soil full of these beneficial creatures

Explore and Learn

Plants depend on the creatures within the soil to **recycle the nutrients** they need to live.

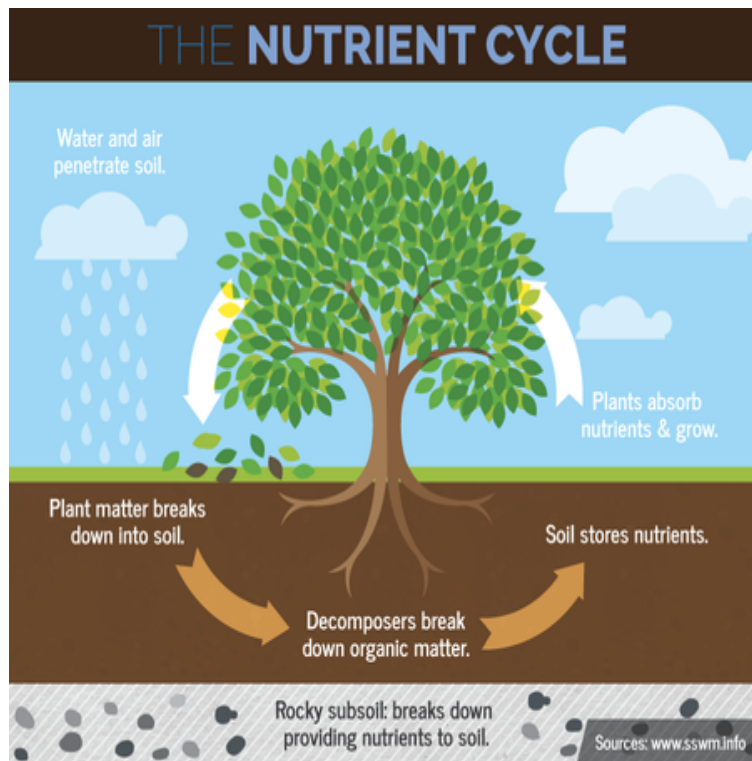
When we use **pesticides**, too much **fertilizer**, and or **disturb the soil** too much, it can **harm the creatures** in the soil that are so beneficial to plants.

By incorporating **organic matter** such as leaves, **reducing chemicals**, and **rotating your plants**, you can build **healthier soil** full of beneficial organisms!

Resources for continued learning:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=if29mjc_d5bc - background video on what soil is

<https://kidsgardening.org/resources/gardening-basics-nurture-healthy-soil-in-fall/> - tips for creating healthy soil this fall



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