

A Slice of Soil



Description: Using an apple as the earth, facilitators cut the ‘earth’ down to the proportion that we use for food production.

Purpose: The following demonstration shows how little of the earth’s surface is actually used for food production as compared with growing populations, and why we need to use the soil wisely to insure the future.

Time: 5 Minutes

Age/Grade Level: Everyone

Suggestions: Have an adult or older youth cut the apple while a younger youth explains.

Materials:

- Large apple (softer apples work better)
- Knife (or heavy plastic knife)
- Cutting board (optional)
- Four notecards labeled Oceans, Land, Wilderness, and Farmland

What to Do:

1. Cut the apple into four equal parts. Three parts represent the oceans of the world. The fourth part represents the land area. Label each with the correct notecard.
2. Cut the land section in half lengthwise. Now you have two one-eighth pieces. One section represents land such as deserts, swamps, Antarctic, arctic, and mountain (wilderness) regions. The other one-eighth section represents land where people can live but may or may not grow food. Label the Wilderness with the correct notecard.
3. Slice this one-eighth section crosswise into four equal parts. Three of these one thirty-second sections represent areas of the world which are too rocky, too wet, too hot, or where soils are too poor for production, as well as developed areas. Carefully peel the last one thirty-second section. This small bit of peeling represents the soil of our earth upon which mankind depends for all food production (farmland).

Reflection:

Soil is one of the most important natural resources, and covers much of the earth’s land surface. How does this affect all living things?

They depend on it as a habitat and as a source of food, either directly or indirectly. Our food producing land remains the same and yet the world population continues to grow. As a result, each person’s food portion becomes smaller and smaller. It is the responsibility of each generation to use the soil wisely to insure the future.

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Source: Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom – 608.828.5719

<http://wisagclassroom.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/A-Slice-of-Soil.pdf>