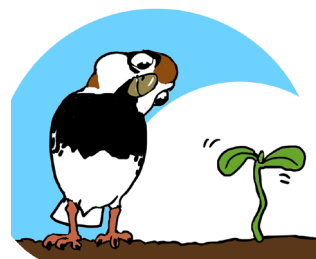




Children learn that soil is also special for its ability to 'magically' decompose green things.

Nature's Magic 3



Keywords school grounds • experiment • observation • photo story

- 1 This activity introduces the wonder of plant decomposition, which is a critical part of the life cycle. You need (1) a fresh tray-container (2) some leaves (try orange-tree leaves because as leaf decomposes it leaves a beautiful mesh of veins) and (3) soil you saved from NATURE'S MAGIC 2. Give the children a feel that they are scientists who are going to investigate if the soil has any more magic. Increase excitement of discovery and observation by inventing props they can wear (e.g. cardboard monocle) before going out to observe.
- 2 Take the children to the Soil Magic Place, along with container, leaves, soil and camera. Fill the tray with soil (leaving some aside), then lay the leaves flat on top of the soil. Take an overhead picture of the leaves, then cover the leaves very lightly with soil and sprinkle some water. Print the picture for a Soil Magic Display you create, and project the image on the board for the children to see the leaves in detail. Forget about them for a couple of weeks.
- 3 Revisit the tray with the children and carefully remove the top layer of soil, trying as much as possible not to move the leaves. You will notice that the leaves are changing. Now take another overhead picture, and back in class compare the original photograph with the new one. Get the children to spot the differences. Ask what is happening, how and why.
- 4 Repeat the process a couple of weeks later and keep doing this until only leaf veins (or less) are left, each time asking the children what they think is making the change happen. Sustain a sense of wonder about the things soil can do. Link any topics that emerge from the discussion about decomposing material in the soil.
- 5 Create a story line with your photos, making a display with letters/numbers to represent what has been happening.

Use the Dinja Waħda Notice Board and tell the school about what you're doing.

Send photos of

☐ children putting vegetation in soil

☐ the story line

☐ children checking and taking photos

