

Dirty Hands Teachers Notes

This activity links with the Travel and Camp on Durable Ground principle of Leave No Trace

Natural Materials are materials that are found all around us. We may have to dig them out of the ground, grow them, or take them from living things

Man-made Materials are natural materials that we can work with and change so they become man-made materials

Fionn Fact!

Wood can be made into paper

Oil can be made into plastic

Sand can be heated and made into glass

What are Durable Surfaces?

Durable surfaces are more resistant to pressure, damage or general wear and tear. They are often described as strong, tough and hard-wearing. Common durable surfaces that we encounter on a day-to-day basis include: rock, sand and gravel.

Aoife's Says....

Some natural surfaces, such as grass and soil, are more easily damaged by our footsteps and can take longer to recover than more durable surfaces. All of these surfaces play important roles within the ecosystem so we should consider the effect our footsteps can have.

Soil is an ecosystem in which millions of living creatures live and interact. A single spade full of rich garden soil contains more species of organisms than can be found above ground in the entire Amazon rainforest!

Sand, and in particular sand dunes, are important wildlife habitats that support a rich community of highly specialised plant and animal species. In addition, they play an important part in defending shorelines against the constant buffeting of waves and erosion.

Grasses play an important role, not only for wildlife but also for humans! Grasses are now the most widespread plants in the world and are a valuable source of food and energy for all types of wildlife.

Leaves are an important micro-habitat. A micro-habitat is a small specialised habitat that can be found within a larger habitat or ecosystem. Leaf litter (leaves on the ground) provides a suitable home for many insects, spiders and molluscs.

Rocks are also important micro-habitats. If you have ever looked under a rock before, you probably saw lots of insects scuttling away. Rocks make great shelters for insects because they protect them from predators and provide shade in hot weather.

For more information on the Travel and Camp on Durable Ground principle and the other Leave No Trace principles visit:

www.leavenotraceireland.org

