Fill a bowl with potting soil or soil from your garden. Use the prompts below to explore the soil. You can record your answers on this sheet, in the chart below, or in your journal.

1. Investigate soil **with your eyes.** Look at the soil and find/describe the following:
   - The largest and smallest pieces of soil you can see
   - Any materials you recognize
   - Different colors you see
   - What else do you see?

2. Investigate soil by **smell.** Scoop up a handful of soil with both hands and, without sticking your nose in the soil, smell it!
   - Does the soil smell good? Bad? Sour? Rich?
   - Does the smell remind you of anything?
   - Why do you think the soil smells the way that it does?
   - If you're worried about inhaling soil, describe what you think soil would smell like and why.

3. Investigate soil by **feel.** Take a pinch of soil and rub it between your fingers.
   - Is the soil smooth? Rough? Gritty?
   - Does the soil feel heavy or light?
   - Does the soil feel wet or dry?
   - Does it feel cool or warm?
   - What do you think it would feel like to move through the soil if you were a worm or an insect?

4. Investigate **soil structure.** Grab a handful of soil and pack it into a ball in your hands. Hold the ball in an open palm and see if it stays together. See how hard of a tap on top of the ball it takes for the ball to break.
   - Is the soil blocky? Is it loose?
- Does it stay fluffy or does it compact easily? Why?

- Soil is made up of four main components: air, water, organic matter (like decaying plant parts or insects) and minerals (like rocks). Can you identify any of those components, using sight, touch, or smell?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I can see:</th>
<th>I can smell:</th>
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<th>I can feel:</th>
<th>Additional thoughts:</th>
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**Conclusion**

Share or reflect on key parts of today’s activity. Check out the Soil Podcasts activity for more journaling prompts and don’t forget to clean up your area as needed!