Painting With Soil

**Materials:** small cups or containers, small shovel or trowel, a couple different soil samples, spoon, water, glue, paper, paint brushes

**Background Information:** Soil is a mixture of rocks, minerals, water, air, and organic (once living) matter. Soils form at the surface of land when rocks break down due to weathering. Soils can be a lot of different colors depending on the types of rocks that break down to make the soil. Soil is capable of supporting plant life and many organisms live in soil. Soil is important for all life on Earth.

**STEM Career Connection:** Soil Health Specialists observe, test, and monitor soil to ensure that it is healthy for the living things that live in and grow in the soil. They also work to ensure that soil stays in place and does not get eroded away.

**Literature Connections:** *Jump Into Science: Dirt* by Steve Tomecek, *Soil Basics* by Mari Schuh, *Dirt: The Scoop on Soil* (Amazing Science) by Natalie M. Rosinsky

**Challenge:**

1. Gather materials. Collect soil samples in cups/containers by digging up a scoop of soil from a couple different locations. Cups should be about \( \frac{1}{3} \) full.
2. Observe the soil samples. How are they similar? How are they different? What things do you see in the soil?
3. Remove any living things or large rocks from the soil and return those things to where they were found.
4. Use a spoon to crush the soil samples into powder.
5. Add a small amount of water and a little bit of white glue to the soil samples and mix everything together with the spoon to make soil paint.
6. Use a paint brush to paint a picture on a piece of paper or the sidewalk using the soil paint you made.
7. Clean up materials.