

# BREAKOUT: DUST BOWL SOIL LAYER JAR

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

a clean clear jar with a tight fitting lid  
a soil sample from your backyard  
some water  
and a bit of dish liquid

## WHAT TO DO:

Start by gathering a soil sample. You'll probably need about a cup.

Pull out any insects or large pieces of plant and break up any clods with your fingers.

Fill the jar with soil until it is about half full. Hang onto your leftover soil. You are going to use it for the ribbon test.

Next, fill the jar nearly to the top with water, but make sure to leave a little room for shaking.

Add a drop or two of dish liquid to help the components separate a little easier.

Put on the lid and tighten to prevent any leakage.

Shake the jar vigorously for a minute or so to make sure all the particles are in suspension. Then, set the jar on a flat surface and leave to settle overnight.

**So how do you tell one layer from another?**

**If you look closely, the bottom layer will be the heavier particles - sand, and rock.**

**The middle layer will be the silt.**

**Above that is a layer of clay particles.**

**The part that's floating on or just below the surface of the water is organic matter.**

