

Name _____

Living Things in Soil - Student Worksheet

There are more living things in a handful of soil than there are humans on the surface of this Earth. Most of these live in the top 30cm of soil and are too small to see without the aid of a microscope. These microorganisms are mostly bacteria and fungi.

Scientists classify things (or separate them into groups with similar characteristics). The first separation is into "**Living**" and "**Non-living**" things. Into the "Living group" goes anything that is alive or has ever been alive. A dog goes into the "Living" group, as does a newspaper because the newspaper was once part of a living tree. Anything "dead" is placed in the "Living" group. Into the "Non-living" group goes little bits of rock, sand and silt.

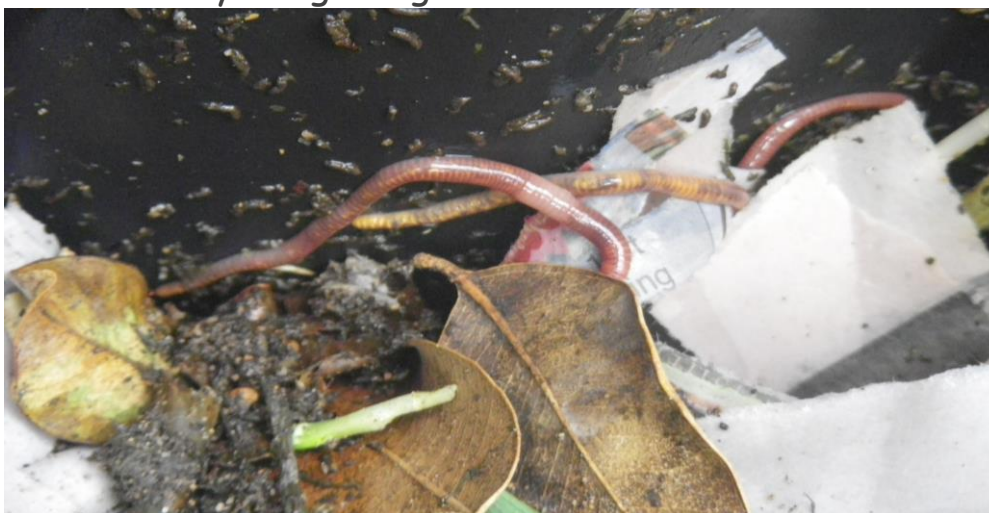
Classify these things into living or non-living groups

	Living	Non-living
Worm		
Diamond		
Wooden table		
Metal fork		
Tree		
Insect		
Plastic bag		
Cotton T-shirt		
Marble table top		
Student		
Sand		

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We next classify living things into "*Plants*" and "*Animals*"



In the picture above, the worms, dead leaves and newspaper pieces are **all** first classified as living, as are the dead roots, stem and pieces of stick.

Which of the larger living things in the photograph are plants?

Which of the larger living things in the photograph are animals?

Activity: Classifying what can be seen in soil

Materials

- Hand lenses
- White plates, trays, Petri dishes or even white paper



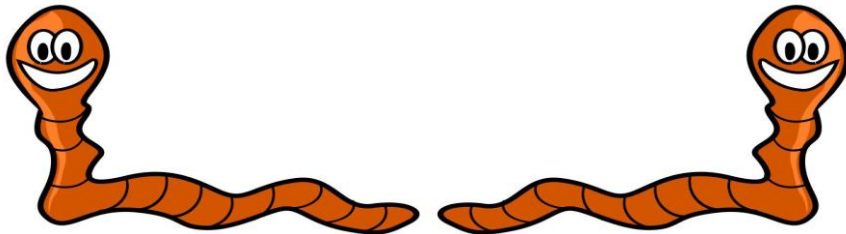
A vertical strip of various line art icons. From top to bottom, the icons include: a magnifying glass, a globe, a spiral shell, a pencil, a flower, a star, a tree, and a hand.

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- About two tablespoonsful of soil and compost

Observation

Living things		Non-living things
Plants	Animals	



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