Introduction to Soil

Grade Level: 2nd

Season: Spring

Larger IGS Unit: Gardens

Essential Question: What is soil? Why do plants need soil? Why do we need soil?

Materials:
- Rock
- Worms (real or pictures)
- Variety of organic and inorganic materials
- Garden tools (hand rakes, hoes)
- Gloves
- Scissors
- Compost ready

Introduction:
- This spring we are going to plant a salad garden. What might be some good crops to grow in our salad garden?
- Before plant our garden, we have to take care of the soil.
- Where does soil come from?
- Show rocks. THESE are part of the story. How?
- Show worms. THESE are part of the story. How?
- What is compost?
  - Go through grab bag of organic and inorganic materials
    - Can this go in the compost?
- Why do plants need soil?
- Almost everything we eat comes from the soil! Let's think about a cheeseburger. What are the ingredients? (Trace each back to the soil.)
  - Burger
  - Cheese
  - Bun
  - Lettuce
  - Tomato
  - Ketchup
  - mustard

Activity:
- Before, going to the garden, review garden rules (thinking about the garden as an outdoor classroom).
- Prepare students for exactly what we will do when we go outside:
  - Walk around the bed
  - I will pour compost in bed
I will hand out these tools which we will use to mix the compost into the soil. Show the tool in the classroom and ask students to review how we use that tool safely.

- Go outside and mix compost into the garden with tools.

Wrap up:
- What do you notice about the soil in our garden?
- Teach students song: “Dirt made my lunch”: http://www.songsforteaching.com/bananaslugstringband/dirtmademylunch.htm

Extensions:
- Salad garden planting and poetry (in 2nd grade toolkit, "Fall" season)
- Salad garden eating