



LESSON PLAN: Cinematic Soils

Introduction:

Movies about soil can present facts from experts around the world and provide great material for further discussion about other environmental topics.

Prescribed learning outcomes (PLO) are content standards for the provincial education system; they are the prescribed curriculum. The "Cinematic Soils" lesson plan will help students to achieve the following BC PLOs¹:

- Earth Science 11 – Surface Processes and the Hydrosphere (F1-F3)
- Geology 12 - Surface Processes and the Hydrosphere (F1, F4)
- Geography 12 – Themes and Skills (A2-A4); Gradational Processes (C1-C3); Weather and Climate (D2, D5-D7); Biomes (E3); Resources and Environmental Sustainability (F1, F2)

Learning Objectives:

- Become engaged in the many ways soil health applies to human society

Materials:

- Dirt! The Movie (2009): <http://www.thedirtmovie.org/>
- Symphony of the Soil (2012): <http://www.symphonyofthesoil.com/>

Activity Description:

These are simply two soil-related documentary suggestions, both with the overriding message that soil is an important (and often underrated) resource in our society. The idea behind presenting these films to a class would be to create a jumping off point from which future environment-related lessons could be based, or to generate ideas for in-class discussions about the environment. Many land use applications are touched on in these films, and the importance of soil is shown in various real life settings. For example: Students could be asked to complete a simple worksheet while watching the film, and then this worksheet would provide a set of notes for students to refer to in a discussion later on.

Dirt! The Movie is a film that outlines the historical and current relationship between humans and the soil. It provides some humor to otherwise very serious issues about land management and the need to shift attention to the health of our soil.

Symphony of the Soil focuses a lot on the connection between healthy soil and healthy people, touching on a lot of the same themes as in Dirt! The Movie.

¹ Please consult the appropriate Integrated Resource Package (IRP) to identify the PLOs. A catalogue of the BC Curriculum Documents (including IRPs) can be found here: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/all.php?lang=en#>



Photo: o5com

Figure 11. Soil-themed movies often touch on broad-sweeping environmental topics, and can be a great starting point to generate an environmentally focused discussion in class.