NEW FOREST CURRICULUM

‘Dirty hands’ soil test

Hold a lump of soil the size of a large marble in your palm and add water until it resembles putty.

Add dry soil to soak up water

Yes

Yes

Does soil remain in a ball when squeezed?

No

Is soil too dry?

No

Is soil too wet?

No

SAND

Yes

No

LOAMY SAND

Place the ball of soil between your thumb and forefinger and gently squeeze with your thumb to form a ribbon of uniform thickness and width. Let the ribbon extend over your forefinger until it breaks under its own weight. Does it form a ribbon?

Yes

Weak ribbon, less than 2.5cm long

Medium ribbon, 2.5-5cm long

Strong ribbon, 5cm long or longer

Excessively wet a small pinch of soil in your palm and rub with your forefinger

Does it feel very gritty? Yes = SANDY LOAM

Does it feel very gritty? Yes = SANDY CLAY LOAM

Does it feel very gritty? Yes = SANDY CLAY

No

No

No

Does it feel very smooth? Yes = SILT LOAM

Does it feel very smooth? Yes = SILTY CLAY LOAM

Does it feel very smooth? Yes = SILTY CLAY

No

No

No

Neither gritty nor smooth. Yes = LOAM

Neither gritty nor smooth. Yes = CLAY LOAM

Neither gritty nor smooth. Yes = CLAY