

Coal Formation - Secondary

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Title: Coal Formation

Level: Secondary

Day/Time:

Objective:

The student should be able to simulate and observe the conditions present in coal formation.

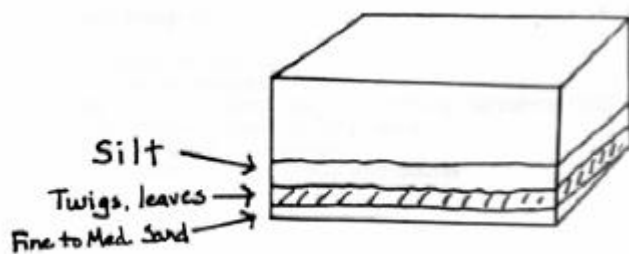
Materials:

Aquarium
Fine to medium grained sand
Fern fronds
Twigs
Plant Leaves
Screen or sifter
Fine silt
Sand

Activity:

1. Take an aquarium and place about 6 inches of water in it.
2. Spread about 2 inches of fine to medium grain sand on the bottom.
3. Drop in small leaves, sticks and fern fronds. Let it stand for about two weeks. Write down observations of changes in decomposition and color.
4. Wait another two weeks. The sift fine silt and sand to a depth of 2 inches. Notice the "coal layer."
5. Take out the surface water and let silt and sand dry for a few weeks. There will be plant "fossil" imprints left where the sediments are removed and broken.

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TIP: This is a smelly activity. If you have an area where you can put this out of the way and observe occasionally you will like it more!

Provided by American Coal Foundation