



Activity 10. Protecting our soil

Aim

To see which absorbs water more quickly – a bare or grassed soil surface.

Materials required

- A watch of stopwatch
- String
- A bucket of water

Procedure

1. Put the string out into a 30 cm x 30 cm square on bare flat soil.
(Have your watch ready for timing.)
2. Pour the water from the bucket onto the soil from a height of 5 cm. Pour it as quickly as you can without letting it spread outside the square. Time from when you start pouring until all the surface water has soaked into the soil. How long did it take for the water to soak in?
3. Repeat the activity on a square of soil with a healthy grass cover. Make sure you use the same amount of water. How long did it take for the water to soak in this time?
4. Repeat *Steps 1 and 2* quickly. Does all the water soak in? What is the name for water spreading outside the square?

Discussion

1. In a storm, in which situation (bare or plant covered soil) is water more likely to run off and cause soil erosion? Explain your answer.
2. What happens to the water that soaks in?