

How Soil is Created

Fill in the blanks to explain how soil is formed. Use the words and terms from the word list.

- algae • bedrock • biological • broken
- chemically • carbon dioxide • organic matter
- physical • succession • weathered

1. Soil formation starts with _____. The rock is gradually _____ by wind, rain, heat and freezing.

2. The rock is _____ into smaller and smaller pieces. This provides the _____ component of soil. The rocks contain minerals.

3. Microbes and _____ grow in the crevices. They fix nitrogen and _____ from the air. When they die, they leave organic matter containing nutrients.

4. Lichens grow in harsh rocky areas and live on the nutrients left by microbes and algae. They secrete acid to _____ erode the rocks they live on to get the minerals they need to grow.

5. As the lichens grow and die, layers of organic matter are gradually built up. Organic matter provides the _____ component of soil.

6. Rooting plants begin to grow. When these plants die they add more _____ to the soil so larger plants can grow. This process is called _____.

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