

Interview with a soil scientist

In this three-minute video, soil scientist Anna Sheldon talks about erosion and how she manages it in her work context.

Please note that this is just one “case study” example. Explain to students that there are many other aspects of a soil scientist’s work not mentioned in this resource.

The video is divided into six brief sections, each relating to a particular topic. This enables teachers to stop after each section and discuss the ideas presented. Questioning can lead students to discuss a broader range of ideas about erosion, especially in relation to their local area. Below are some suggested discussion starters for each topic.

1. What can cause soil erosion?

- Where have you seen soil erosion around here?
- What do you think was causing it?
- Can you think of other causes of soil erosion that Anna did not mention?

2. What can increase the amount of erosion?

- Where has erosion been the biggest problem in our area?
- What other factors have made erosion worse?

3. How can we prevent erosion?

- Where have you seen examples of the strategies Anna mentioned?
- What other solutions have you seen?
- What strategies worked?
- Have you seen a strategy that did not work?

4. How can we tell if a control strategy worked?

- What sort of evidence would a scientist collect to prove that their strategy worked?
- Can you think of any other ideas that Anna didn’t mention?

5. What does a soil scientist do at work?

- Apart from the examples Anna mentioned, what other places would a soil scientist be asked to work?
- What could happen if people just made up their own solutions instead of asking a scientist?

6. How do you become a soil scientist?

- Why do you need to do all those things before you can get a job as a scientist?