I. Soil is made up of decomposed plant material plus ground up rocks. The particles of the ground up rocks are different sizes – clay, silt, sand, gravel, . . .

II. Two broad soil categories
   A. Organic soil – almost all decomposed plants
   B. Mineral soil – mostly sand, silt and clay, with some organic matter

III. Organic Soil -- black or very dark brown, not gritty, very light (a bucket of organic soil weighs much less than a bucket of mineral soil)

IV. Mineral Soil – has a broad range of Soil Textures

V. Soil Texture is determined by the proportion of clay silt & sand particles

VI. See the Soil Texture Triangle

VII. How to determine Soil Texture by Feel . . . see the flowchart

VIII. Sample Soils – Organic Plus a Range of Mineral Soils
   A. Organic – very dark, not gritty, not sticky
   B. Mineral #1 – dark, but not so dark as A, has lots of organic material in it; makes a weak ribbon, feels a little gritty and a little sticky, so it has sand and clay in it too . . . a loam soil toward the sandy clay type
   C. Mineral #2 – not so dark as #1, so less organic material; makes a weak ribbon, still feels gritty and sticky, but less so than #1 . . . a loam soil toward the silty clay type
   D. Mineral #3 – still has some organic matter; makes a strong ribbon; feels a little gritty and VERY sticky . . . a clay soil

http://soils.usda.gov/education/resources