Factors That Build Soil

Directions: Fill in the blanks using the words in the word bank.

Climate refers to general weather including temperature and rainfall. Living organisms such as microbes, plants, insects, animals, and humans exert considerable influence on the formation of soil. Bacteria help break down plant and animal residues in the soil. Parent material is the layer of unconsolidated material from which a soil develops. Fertility, which affects the ability to grow crops, is greatly influenced by the parent material of a soil. Topography affects how soil moves across the surface of the land. The slope, hills and valleys affect the way that water drains and carries soil particles. The amount of water held in soil due to the topography causes the soil to form slower or faster. Soil forms from the chemical and physical weathering of parent material over time, as affected by climate. Some soils form faster than others.

Particle Size
Remember, individual silt and clay particles cannot be seen unless they are magnified. Sand particles can be seen by the naked eye.

Word Bank:
Climate  Parent material  Clay
Living organisms  Topography  Sand
Time  Silt