

The Plant Dance

Objectives:

Students will!

- Learn the life cycle of plants
- Act out the different stages of the plant life cycle
- Understand that the plant life cycle correlates with the seasons

Educator Notes

- Be able to explain, in general terms, when different stages of the plant life cycle take place (seed, sprout, plant)
- Review with students what plants need to grow (air, water, sun, soil) prior to beginning the dance. The educator can use interactive movements to reinforce this:
 - o Air – arms move back and forth, accompanied by a whooshing sound
 - o Water – wiggle fingers to imitate rain
 - o Sun – outstretched arms with fingers pointed like sun rays
 - o Soil – motion to the ground

Materials:

- Notes (including motions and descriptions of plant life cycle stages) for educator's use

Preparation:

The educator should familiarize him/herself with the plant life cycle stages and the corresponding actions of the dance.

Key Vocabulary:

life cycle | seasons | pollination

Activity:

The educator should lead the dance as follows:

Seed – Curl up in a ball on the floor. Send up a hand (shoot) and send out a leg (root). Uncurl and kneel – you have sprouted! The seed contains all the nutrients that a plant needs to start sending up shoots and sending down roots.

Root – Stand up with feet together. Spread your feet apart – you are spreading roots! Wiggle your toes. These are small roots. Say “slurp, slurp” as you drink up water from the ground.

Stem – Stand straight and taller. The stem provides the support for the plant so that it doesn't fall over. It moves water and nutrients from the roots up to the leaves, and it moves sugars from the leaves downward.

Leaf – Wiggle your fingers and hold your arms out – you grow lots of leaves! Leaves are the food producing centers where sunlight, water, and air are transformed into sugar – food for the plant. Leaves turn toward the sun and blow in the wind.

Flower – Place palms on your cheeks and spread fingers widely away from face. These are the petals that open and reach outward. The flower is the first step in making a new plant. A bee or butterfly must visit the flower to pollinate it so that the plant can produce fruit and seeds. Give each other high-fives to represent pollination.

Fruit – Form a large circle with your arms over your head. The fruit has seeds in it that are eaten by animals and birds and then spread to start a new plant. Sometimes the fruit falls on the ground and a new plant will sprout from the seeds in the rotting fruit.

Wrap-Up:

The teacher and students can repeat the dance several times to reinforce the progression of the plant life cycle. The role of seasons in the growing process can be explained here, as well. The point of this activity is to show students that plants – like humans – have different stages of growth. The educator should feel free to draw parallels to stages of human growth (i.e. babies, toddlers, teenagers, adults).

Extension Activity (K-5):

Instead of leading students through the dance step-by-step, the teacher can begin the lesson by discussing the plant life cycle with students. He/she then can ask the students to act out the plant life cycle in small groups. Also, the teacher can ask the students to think about how they fit into plant cycle (i.e. planting, eating fruit, caring for plants).

Sources:

<http://seed.ucdavis.edu/node/17>