

A Planting We Will Go

Objectives:

Students will!

- Understand that with the proper care and ingredients, seeds grow into new plants
- Plant and observe their own sunflower seeds
- Engage directly with soil, water, and seeds
- Learn the basics of plant care

Educator Notes

- It can take up to four weeks after the initial planting for seeds to sprout, so students should be encouraged to take regular care of their respective seeds and observe gradual changes as they occur
- Convey the concept of the plant life cycle to students: just as tiny seeds grow into mature plants, mature plants produce seeds that can grow into new plants with the proper care and ingredients (air, water, sun, and soil)

Materials:

- Soil
- Gravel
- Sunflower Seeds
- Two Clear Plastic Cups per Student
- Permanent Markers
- *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle (optional)

Preparation:

Gather the above materials and organize them at several stations throughout the classroom or schoolyard. Obtain *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle for the WRAP-UP activity if possible.

Key Vocabulary:

soil | seed

Activity:

Begin by asking the students to label both their cups with their names. Then direct the student to place a thin layer of gravel at the bottom of one of their cups, then followed by a thicker layer

of potting soil. Next, direct each student to place five seeds in the cup and gently push each one into the soil, making sure that at least one seed is visible against the side of the cup so that its development can be easily observed. Next, help the students add half a cup of water to each cup. Ask the students to invert their second cup and place it on top of the first cup. The planted seeds should be placed on a table near a window to facilitate growth and observation.

Wrap-Up:

Initiate a discussion with students about how long they think it will take for the seed to become a new plant. Ask them: What do they need to do to help the seeds grow? Over the next several weeks, students should regularly check on their respective seeds and water them as needed. The activity can conclude with a reading of Eric Carle's, *The Tiny Seed*, which reinforces the growth process of seed-to-plant. Once plants have grown, students can decorate their plastic cups and bring them home.

Extension Activity (K-5):

Older students can observe their seeds daily and record changes and observations in personal journals. This lesson also can be used to teach basic measuring skills. Once plants grow to the top of the cup, students can measure and track their height growth using string and rulers. Use the lesson to teach students about different parts of plants (i.e. roots, stems, leaves, flower). To explore where and how plants grow best, seedlings can be placed in various locations (i.e. refrigerator, dark cabinet, window sill) with and without water to teach students what ingredients plants need to grow.

Sources:

<http://www.amazon.com/Tiny-Seed-Eric-Carle/dp/0689842449>

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/3299>