

March: Planting a Rainbow

Materials

Spring seeds (lettuce: Buttercrunch, spinach: Bloomsdale Longstanding, radish: Cherry Belle, carrots: Mokum, beets: Detroit Dark Red, peas: Sugar Snap), construction paper, scissors, glue, poster board

Preparation

Buy seeds, cut example vegetables out of colored paper (lettuce, spinach, pea, carrot, radish, beet)

Activity – 45 minutes

Intro - 15 minutes

Today, we're going to plant the spring garden and making spring garden posters! Make a list on the board of all the seeds that you are going to be planting. Have the class help decide what colors they are and what nutrient that color might indicate: spinach - dark green - iron, baby beets/beet greens - purple - iron, butter crunch lettuce - light green - Vitamin C, carrots - orange - Vitamin A, radish - white/pink - fiber.

After you've told your class what you are going to be planting, explain how to plant them. Divide the students up into groups and give each group a different seed to plant. Using the planting plan, explain that the peas will be planted in the middle of the box (in small holes, with 3 seeds/hole), then carrots and beets will be planted in rows right outside of the peas, spinach and lettuce will be planted in rows after the carrots and beets, and the radishes will be planted in rows along the end caps.

Planting - 10 minutes

Out in the garden, hand out seeds to the students, and have them patiently take turns as you re-explain how to plant the bed. Peas first, followed by carrots and beets, followed by lettuce and spinach, and radishes finishing it up.

Garden Poster - 20 minutes

Back inside the classroom, let the students know that the seeds are going to take a loooooooooooooong time to grow. For a few weeks, it won't seem like anything is happening out there, then very tiny plants will start coming up and growing. In order to remember what was planted, the class needs to make a poster of the garden.

Ask the students if they remember what they planted and as they call out the different plants, show them the example vegetable that you created, discussing the colors and shapes that you used. For example: when the students call out "spinach!" show them the example spinach patch you made. Show them that it was just tear-drop leaves with rectangle stems all glued together into a spinach patch. Explain that because there is only one shade of green, that you used a combination of blue and green to indicate that spinach is dark green.

Divide the students up and let them work in groups making their vegetables. Assign a few students the task of creating the base of the poster - the soil, worms, sun, weather elements, etc.

After 10-15 minutes, have the students bring their vegetables to the base poster, and glue them on. It is easiest for the teacher to do the actual gluing so that all the vegetables fit in their proper place.

When the poster is done, hang up the poster in the garden corner of the classroom and re-explain that the plants will NOT be ready for at least eight weeks!

March: Planting a Rainbow

Wasatch Community Gardens recommends feed-trough garden beds or raised boxes for school gardens. They are easy to maintain, hard to accidentally walk into, and have the potential to be relocated if needed. These planting plans are for either two 48-inch feed-trough beds or one 4'x 8' raised bed. Be sure to check the seed packets for detailed planting instructions (seed depth, etc). All these plants can be planted as soon as the soil is workable. For other questions, visit www.wasatchgardens.org

