

GRADE 3 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Egg Carton Garden

Summary

In this hands-on lesson, students will plant a seed in an egg carton containing a soil/compost mixture, and then watch it sprout! Students will learn about the science of composting, as well as the importance of composting at home and at school. Connections to Mi'kmaw practices of using plants for medicine are available. **Note:** *This activity takes 2–3 weeks to have seeds transform into sprouts/small plants.*

TRY SIMILAR ACTIVITIES:

See **Compost Creators** lesson plan as an option to create your own compost.

Objective

To teach students the science of composting, Mi'kmaw traditional knowledge of medicinal plants, and to promote composting through hands-on activities.

Pre-Activity

GROUP DISCUSSION

DIRECTIONS

Write the following vocabulary words on the board:

Compost, Decompose, Organic Material, Fertilizer

Break students into small groups and have them brainstorm what the words mean then share their thoughts with the class.

Share that composting is nature's way of decomposing organic material into a rich soil. Compost is important to plants because it is a fertilizer.

OPTION Have students draw their word and show how they are connected or place them in order.

Activity

EGG CARTON GARDEN

DIRECTIONS

Explain that the class will be planting seeds in a combination of soil and compost, and watching them sprout over the next month.

MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

DURATION

10 mins

DURATION

5 mins

MAIN LEARNING OUTCOME

GRADE:

3

SUBJECT:

Science



Learners will investigate plants in the environment.

SKILLS

Investigate

Ask questions; locate several details to support an answer; organize and compare details; communicate findings.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

English Language Arts



Outcome 1

Listening and Speaking

Students will communicate effectively and clearly and respond personally and critically.

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ABOUT DIVERT NS

Divert NS is a not-for-profit organization championing recycling in Nova Scotia. For over 20 years we've helped build a culture of recycling through environmental stewardship, education, and innovation.

Divert NS operates the Beverage Container Deposit-Refund Program and the Used Tire Management Program. In addition, we work in collaboration with government, industry, and academia to divert waste-resources from landfill.

Divert NS, in partnership with municipalities, delivers education and awareness programs to schools, businesses, and community groups. Divert NS also works to develop stewardship agreements and funds innovative research and development initiatives.

We welcome feedback from students and teachers on these lesson plans and resources. Please send your feedback to:



Toll-free
1.877.313.7732
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divertNS.ca

EGG CARTON GARDEN (cont'd)

DIRECTIONS

Have each student follow these steps:

- Cut out an individual egg holder from the larger egg carton.
- Fill the egg holder with the soil/compost mixture.
- Plant a seed in the soil following the instructions on the seed packet (Keep the soil moist until the seed sprouts, then water as needed.)
- Write his/her name on a piece of paper attached to each egg holder.

OPTIONS FOR A MI'KMAW PERSPECTIVE

- Research Mi'kmaw traditional plants and choose one of those to grow.
- Find out if there is a local Mi'kmaw elder or herbalist to take the class on a medicinal plant walk.
- Ask a local Mi'kmaw elder to visit the class and share their knowledge on traditional medicines.

For help in finding a Mi'kmaw speaker for your class, contact:

Mi'kmawey Debert at 1-877-892-2424, ext. 271

www.mikmaweydebert.ca/home/sharing-our-stories/education-and-outreach/

More resources, including how plants are used in traditional culture:

www.cbu.ca/indigenous-affairs/mikmaq-resource-centre/

Post-Activity

PREDICTING THE PLANT LIFE CYCLE

DIRECTIONS

Have each student name his/her plant.

Ask students to predict what their plant will look like over the next month by filling in the **Plant Growth Activity Sheet (Appendix 1)**. Each student will draw how he/she predicts the plant will look after two weeks, three weeks, and one month.

After two weeks, three weeks, and one month, have students again fill in the Plant Growth Activity Sheet to compare how they thought the plant would look to how it actually looks.

OPTION FOR EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Once the seedlings are growing, transplant them into a school or community garden. The class could also arrange a field trip to a nearby community garden or farmers' market, where students can speak with gardeners/farmers about the importance of compost.

Assessment

FORMATIVE

Assess student understanding by observing their work at different stages throughout the lesson.

SUMMATIVE (OPTIONAL)

Option to collect and correct the Plant Growth Activity Sheet.

MATERIALS

Egg cartons
Bag of soil
Compost (available in stores or from your local municipality)
Seeds (beans, or cucumbers recommended)

DURATION

20 minutes

MATERIALS

Appendix 1
Plant Growth
Activity Sheet

School or
community
garden

Local Farmers'
Market

Plant Growth Activity Sheet

Your Plant's Name: _____ Your Name: _____

Plant Species: _____

DRAW YOUR PLANT AS A SEED

| PREDICTION | ACTUAL |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| DRAW YOUR PLANT AT 3 WEEKS | |

| PREDICTION | ACTUAL |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| DRAW YOUR PLANT AT 1 WEEK | |

| PREDICTION | ACTUAL |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| DRAW YOUR PLANT AT 2 WEEKS | |