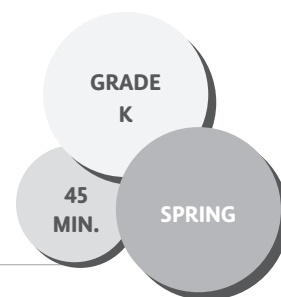


Sunflower House

THEME: GROWING AND ACCESSING HEALTHY FOODS



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What do flowers need to grow?

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

✓ Students will be able to sow sunflower seeds.

LESSON DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students taste sunflower seeds and sow sunflower seeds in cups after reading *Sunflower House*.

MATERIALS

- *Sunflower House* by Eve Bunting
- 1 packet of sunflower seeds to plant
- 1 sample cup for each student
- 12-quart bag of organic seed starting mix, in a tub for easy cleanup
- 2-3 cups of shelled, unsalted sunflower seeds to eat
- Permanent marker
- Trays for carrying cups
- Spray bottle
- Observation Log (p. 229, optional)

PREPARATION

- › Identify an outdoor planting space, if possible. If not, prepare an indoor planting space. You may want to put newspaper or vinyl tablecloths down to minimize the mess.
- › Coordinate with the classroom teacher to create a schedule for students to water and care for their seedlings.

- › Pre-irrigate your seed starting mix by adding water until it is about as damp as a wrung-out sponge.
- › Poke 3–4 drainage holes in the bottom of each sample cup.
- › Prepare trays with the following for groups of 4–6 students:
 - › Sample cups
 - › Sunflower seeds
 - › A container of organic seed starting mix
 - › 2 spoons or other small scoops to use in the seed starting mix

ACTION STEPS

1. Tasting: Gather students and explain that because it's spring it's a great time to plant flowers. Give students clues about what flower you're talking about without naming it. Say, *The flower seed that we're going to plant today grows big and tall, even bigger than me. The head of the flower moves to face the sun during the day. Birds love to eat the seeds, and so do I! Can you guess what it is?* Pass around edible, shelled sunflower seeds for students to try. You may want to explain how we use sunflower seeds to make many other foods like sunflower oil and sunflower seed butter. **(5 min.)**

2. Reading: Read *Sunflower House*. As you're reading, stop and ask questions to check for

understanding. For example, say, *It says I wonder what the word “sow” means. Can we guess based on the picture?* Have students turn to a partner to think-pair-share. After reading, invite students to act out certain events from the book with their bodies, such as planting seeds. **(10 min.)**

3. Model: Explain to students that just like the child in the story, they’re going to sow sunflower seeds today. Show them how to plant their seeds. Fill your sample cup with seed starting mix, and tell students that you’ll make a hole as deep as your first knuckle. Have students point to their first knuckle as you point to yours. Place two seeds in the hole, and ask students, *Now what should I do? Remind me, what do seeds need to grow?* Cover your seeds, and spritz your soil with as many sprays needed to saturate the soil, and tell students that they should only spray their soil that amount of times. **(5 min.)**

4. Sowing Seeds: Give groups of 4–6 students a tray with the materials, and remind them to share, taking and planting just two seeds. While they’re working, walk around the room, and write each student’s name on their cup. Have students clean up their spots. **(15 min.)**

5. Sharing: Gather in a circle, and ask students to share where they plan to plant their sunflower seedling or to whom they plan to give the plant. **(5 min.)**

(After Class): Determine how you will care for the sunflower seeds as they germinate and grow. You might ask the classroom teacher ahead of time if they can grow in a windowsill in the classroom, with the students rotating the job of

watering them every day with a spray bottle to keep the soil moist (but not soggy). Or you might put them all in a tray and grow them in another location such as a school greenhouse, if you have one, and then bring them back to students when they’re ready to transplant. Because you planted two seeds in each cup, many will grow two plants. In those cups, once plants are about four inches tall, cut off the smaller of the two to let the other one grow.

REFLECTION

Have students discuss the following questions in small groups, then share with the class: **(5 min.)**

- *How will we take care of our sunflower seeds over the next couple of weeks?*
- *When do you think we’ll see them sprout?*

ADAPTATIONS

Follow-up: Have each student set up a log where they’ll record observations with pictures of the progress of the plants’ growth.

Garden Setting: Talk to your school grounds/maintenance staff to determine if there is a location where you could establish a sunflower house. Mark off the area and prepare the soil, then bring students out to transplant their sunflower seedlings. Grow them over the summer, and harvest and enjoy the seeds together in the fall!

ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

English Language Arts Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

Next Generation Science Standards, Life Science
Disciplinary Core Idea

NGSS K.LS1.C.

Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in
Organisms – All animals need food in order to
live and grow. They obtain their food from plants
or from other animals. Plants need water and
light to live and grow.



Observation Log

Name: _____

Project: _____

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4