

Plant a Salsa Bed

THEME: GROWING AND ACCESSING HEALTHY FOOD

4TH
GRADE

50
MIN.

SPRING

Step 6 Follow-Up after two weeks: 10 min.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What actions and intentions can we set today that will benefit us in the future?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Students will be able to transplant a seedling in the garden.
- ✓ Students will be able to set intentions for the future.

CONCEPTS

future selves intention setting
salsa tool safety

Engaging the Classroom Teacher

- Prior to the lesson, discuss whether the teacher feels comfortable leading the art project in Action Step 3 while you lead the planting. Determine whether there is an additional adult volunteer who could support the lesson.
- Ask the teacher if they have a way to easily divide the class into four groups for Action Steps 3 and 4.
- During Action Step 5, encourage the teacher to create their own intention to share with students during Action Step 5.

LESSON DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students plant starts for a salsa garden bed that they will harvest and enjoy as fifth graders. They also “plant” intentions for their future selves that they can revisit at the start of the next school year. This lesson is designed to be taught in the spring prior to the fall fifth-grade lesson What’s in My Salsa?.

MATERIALS

- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Permanent markers
- 4–5 starts of each of the following:
 - onion
 - tomato
 - pepper
 - cilantro (or seeds)
- Digging fork
- Trowels
- Watering cans
- Hose for filling watering cans
- Wooden paint stirrers, wide horizontal blinds that you can cut up or any other material you can use as plant markers that are wide enough to write on
- Permanent markers of various colors
- Newspaper or tablecloth to protect table (optional)

PREPARATION

- › Enlist the help of the classroom teacher or parent volunteer to supervise the art project while you supervise the planting station.
- › Get onion sets, tomato and pepper starts,

and cilantro seeds or starts. Determine the number of starts you'll need, considering the amount of space in your garden bed and the number of students in your class.

- › Write the following sentence frame on chart paper or a whiteboard where everyone can see it: "Intention: Today I will _____, so that in the future I can _____."
- › Create a model of an Intentions plant stake that is colorful and includes a personal intention on one side, using the sentence frame above, and the name of one of your crops on the other.
- › Choose an appropriate area to establish your salsa bed. You'll want to plant in a space that gets maximum sunlight for heat-loving crops.
- › Prepare the soil for planting by clearing debris and weeds and loosening soil if needed with a digging fork.
- › Set up a station for students to work on their Planting Intentions craft project, including permanent markers and wooden paint stirrers.

ACTION STEPS

1. Engage: Gather students in a circle and say, *Today we're going to be planting a gift for ourselves to enjoy this fall. These will be our ingredients. Can you guess what we'll be making in the fall?* Show them your various plant starts and seeds, and have them guess what they're all for (salsa!). **(5 min.)**

2. Explain the Activity: Reiterate to students how any time we plant something in our garden, we're being kind to our community and our future selves. Say, *When we plant these plants, we're setting an intention of*

creating a delicious meal for ourselves and others. What are other things we do now that benefit our future selves? Ask students to turn and talk to a neighbor and then share as a class. Students might say brushing their teeth, eating healthy food, doing well in school, practicing a sport or musical instrument, learning a new hobby, or saving money. Explain, *Eating healthy food is an example of a favor we can do for our future selves. Today, in addition to planting our ingredients for salsa, we'll also be planting intentions for things we can do today as a favor to our future selves! To write out your intention, you can complete this sentence: "Today I will _____, so that in the future I can _____."* For example, *"Today I will eat lots of vegetables, so that in the future I can be healthy and strong enough to play my best soccer game!"* Ask, *What's something you can do now or in the next few months that will help your future self?* Explain that you'll be pulling groups one at a time to plant. Split students into different groups based on what start each group will plant (i.e., have an onion group, a tomato group, a pepper group, and a cilantro group). **(5 min.)**

3. Writing Intentions: Help students get started on their Planting Intentions project by showing them your example. Set expectations for how students will be sharing and using supplies. Explain how when you call their group, they'll temporarily leave their project, do their planting, and then get right back to working on their Intention plant stake. **(25 min.)**

4. Planting Starts: Meanwhile, call one group up at a time. Show students the start their

group will be planting, and briefly explain that plant's unique needs and planting requirements. Demonstrate how to properly transplant, modeling proper tool safety. Then have groups of two or three students plant and water the transplant. **(6 min. each)**

5. Planting Intentions: Have students clean up their projects, and then have a mini ceremony where students share their intentions aloud and “plant” their intentions in the ground. **(10 min.)**

6. Follow-up: Return to the garden a few weeks later to check on their starts, and invite students to reflect together: *How have you been following through with your intention? Are there any obstacles getting in your way? How can we support our classmates in following through on their intentions?* **(10 min.)**

REFLECTION

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

Social and emotional learning

- Ask yourself: *What can I do to make sure I follow through on the intention I planted in the garden today?*
- Ask yourself: *Was I safe and respectful in the garden today?*

Check for understanding

- *How will our garden bed help us in the future?*
- *How will our garden bed help the garden ecosystem?*
- *We talked today about things we can do to benefit our future selves. What can we do to benefit other people in the future?*
- *When do you think our plants will be ready to harvest?*

ADAPTATIONS

Cooking Extension: See the lesson *What's in My Salsa?* for a recipe to make salsa with students.

ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

English Language Arts Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Sample Intention Plant Stake

