



**Watering is the most fundamental need of your Learning Garden and it will be the most regular responsibility for the Garden Team to manage.** Successful Garden Teams have adopted a watering schedule that is implemented by a group of classrooms and adults. Watering is a great opportunity for students, staff, and parents to stay involved with the Learning Garden long after it is planted. As a Garden Team, you will need to become acquainted with the watering needs of your Learning Garden and the different methods you can use to water. Remember to create a watering schedule that does not burden any who get involved, including yourself and the Garden Team!

### **Your three primary methods for watering your garden:**

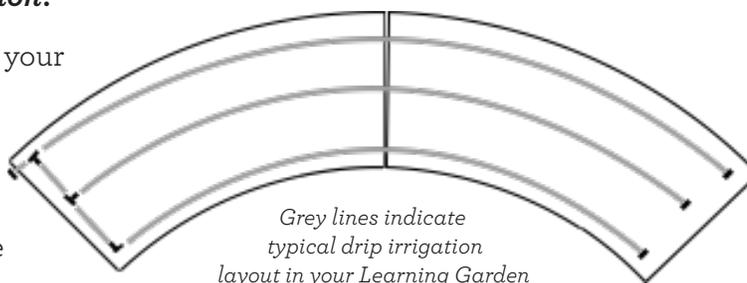
1. Top water by hand, using a hose and spray nozzle. Managed by one person at a time.
2. Top water with students, use Upcycled Watering Can Activity or Little Raincloud Activity. Involves up to one full class at the same time.
3. Drip irrigation, use your drip irrigation system and set up a hose splitter to water multiple beds at one time. Managed by one person at a time.

### **When does the garden need Top Watering?**

Top watering is an effective way to water your Learning Garden throughout the entire growing season. It allows you to water effectively and to confidently water exactly as your plants need. Top watering is always recommended when you start seeds in your Learning Garden until they become established seedlings.

### **When does the garden need Drip Irrigation?**

Drip irrigation is an effective way to water your Learning Garden once the plants have grown several inches and spread their roots throughout the soil. Drip Irrigation is not an effective way to water directly after planting seeds as it does not soak the surface of the soil, but rather drips water slowly soaking the soil below the surface. During the hottest months of the year, drip irrigation can be a very effective as it almost entirely avoids losing water to evaporation.



### **Why do I need to water my Learning Garden?**

Plants require constant access to water for their roots to drink. Plants will grow best in soil with consistent moisture. As you begin watering your Learning Garden, pay close attention to how your soil holds water. Some soils will hold more water and some will dry out faster. Consider that roots



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typically live deeper in the soil so to effectively test the moisture of your garden soil you may need to dig a small hole about two inches deep.

**Remember that water is a precious resource—here are some tips for conservation!**

1. Turn off the water when you are not using it.
2. Keep water strictly in the soil of the Learning Garden beds.
3. Fix any drips or leaks when you find them.
4. If water leaks out the bottom of your garden it likely does not need more water.
5. Avoid watering in the heat of the day as much of the water will evaporate instead of soaking into the soil.
6. Your drip irrigation system is a great water conservation method. By using drip irrigation, the water drips into the beds and soil directly around the plants, thereby reducing spray or other water loss.

