



# LEARNING GARDEN TOUR

## HIGH SCHOOL

### **KEY UNDERSTANDINGS**

In this activity, students will participate in a garden tour and task stations in order to become familiar with:

- garden vocabulary,
- the basics of what plants need to survive and thrive,
- what is growing in the garden, and
- basic gardening techniques.

### **MATERIALS & PREPARATION**

Based on the needs of your Learning Garden, choose at least three of the stations below for student rotations.

NOTE: Big Green provides seasonal seeds and seedlings for your Learning Garden. In addition, your resource binder contains more information about the other stations.

- Prep at least three activity stations:
  - Bed Preparation: compost, fertilizer, bucket or bag for weeds
  - Seeding: seasonally appropriate seeds for planting
  - Transplanting: seasonally appropriate seedlings for planting
  - Watering: watering can or upcycled watering cans
  - Thinning: a clean container for thinned (or harvested) crops
  - Harvesting: a clean container for harvested crops
- Familiarize yourself with the basics of what plants need to grow L.A.W.N. (light, air, water, nutrients).

### **TEACHER BACKGROUND**

In order to survive and thrive, plants (just like humans) have basic needs that must be met. All plants need food, water, a place to live, and optimal temperature to grow and reproduce. These needs can be summarized by the acronym L.A.W.N., light, air, water, and nutrients.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome your students to the Learning Garden. Let them know that today they will be familiarizing themselves with the Learning Garden and learning a few garden-based tasks.

Let the students know that in order to familiarize themselves with the Learning Garden, they will complete a 5-minute self-guided observation tour.

Ask the students to think about the following questions while they are making observations:

1. **What do plants need to grow?** (light, air, water, and nutrients)



2. **What is in the soil to help plants grow?** (nutrients – nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, worms and other helpful organisms)
3. **Where do plants get water from?** (rain and your schools water source)
4. **What plants are growing; do you recognize any?**

Review the observation questions. (For question number four be sure to identify at least six prominent plants growing in your Learning Garden.) Take students on a quick tour if they are unable to identify any of the plants on their own.

## **ACTIVITY**

Let students know that they will be reviewing three different tasks that can be done in the Learning Garden. After the task review, break students into groups. Each group should spend about 5 minutes at each station completing the task. Rotate each group through the three tasks. Consider rotating from group to group as needed.

### **Station One: Bed Preparation**

- Demonstrate how to properly prepare a bed for planting. This may include removing weeds, lightly turning over the soil with your hands in the bed and applying compost or organic fertilizers.

### **Station Two: Seeding**

- Demonstrate how to properly seed a selected seed (of your choice). Show the seed packet and quickly review the seed spacing and depth information. Plant seed(s) accordingly.

### **Station Three Transplanting**

- Demonstrate how to properly transplant a seedling (of your choice). Review the seedling tag which should include information on spacing and plant depth. Plant seedling(s) accordingly.

### **Station Four: Watering**

- Demonstrate how to top water with a watering can. Show a thorough water of each plant in one garden bed as well as watering the soil in between all of the plants.

### **Station Five: Thinning**

- Demonstrate how to properly thin various crops. Thinning is an important step in small scale gardening and allows for an early harvest and room for larger plants to grow.

### **Station Six: Harvesting**

- Demonstrate how to properly harvest various crops that are ready to be harvested. Be sure students are using clean containers and wash their hands prior to harvesting.



## ***CONCLUSION***

Have students share key parts of the activity and review the Key Understandings.

1. Review what plants need to grow (L.A.W.N.).
2. Review the six plants identified.
3. Review the three garden skills.
  - a. Emphasize the importance of watering the Learning Garden.

