



KICK OFF DAY PREPARATION

Pre-installation day activity: 3rd-5th grade

Activity Outcomes

- Students will be aware that a garden is coming to their school
- Students will understand what grows in a garden
- Students will predict who will use their new school garden

Materials and Preparation

- Blank construction paper for coloring
- Coloring supplies
- Clear a bulletin board for their dream garden drawings
- My Dream Learning Garden worksheet, 1 per student or group

Teacher Background

In preparation for your new Learning Garden, complete the following activity to set expectations, build awareness, create excitement, and introduce students to the idea of having a school garden. Your Learning Garden functions as an outdoor classroom, as well as a fun, engaging, and relaxing space for students. A successful introduction to your Learning Garden will lay the foundation for a successful school garden program at your school.

Working with students in an edible garden and bringing learning to an outdoor classroom can increase student engagement, promote healthy choices, and support student learning both academically and socially. As a teacher, you can use this space with your students in many ways. From curricular tie-ins and standards-based lessons, to gardening and tasting activities, the Learning Garden is brimming with potential. Set the scene for your students with this introductory activity which focuses on students sharing and dreaming about what their new school garden will look like and be full of.

Introduction

Let your students know that your school will soon have a school garden. Ask your students to raise their hand and answer the following questions:

- What grows in a garden?
- What kind of plants do you hope to grow?





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Explain to your students that your new garden will be a fruit and vegetable garden called a Learning Garden, and it will be full of plants that you can eat. Ask your students to think of their favorite fruits and vegetables, write their answers on the board.

Ask your students if you can find anything else besides plants in a garden (including people). These responses may include things like: bugs, water, sunlight, students, volunteers, and so on. Write these answers on the boards as well.

Classroom Activity

Distribute the attached worksheet to students. Have them work either individually or in small groups to discuss, design and draw their dream Learning Garden. Students may include things that are listed on the board from your introductory conversation.

Conclusion

Invite students or groups to present their dream garden and answer the following questions:

My dream garden is growing...

My dream garden also has...

My dream garden is a place for...

Have students share out key parts of today's discussion and review the Activity Outcomes.

Students should clean-up the Classroom as needed.



My Dream Learning Garden

What is growing in your Learning Garden?

What animals and insects are in your Learning Garden?

Who is using your Learning Garden?

Draw a sketch of your dream Learning Garden below