

## SEED COLLAGES

**Materials Needed:**

Construction paper

Glue

Variety of seeds

**Preparation:**

Place seeds, glue and paper at the art table.

**Directions:**

Ask the children to make a seed collage. Show the children each of the seeds letting them know what kind each seed is.

Older preschoolers might want to try to write their names in seeds using glue to outline the letters in their names.

**Variation:**

Make collages using pictures from seed catalogues or seed packets.

## PAINTING A GARDEN

**Materials:**

Easels  
Paint (variety of colors)  
Paintbrushes  
Paint shirts  
Paper

**Preparation:**

Place a variety of colors of paint with paintbrushes at the easels.

**Directions:**

1. Encourage the children to the easel to paint a garden.
2. Discuss with the children what colors might be in a garden, for example, would there be red in the garden? Which fruits and vegetables are red? Comment about the colors that individual children choose to use.
3. When dry, ask the children to use their words to describe what is in the garden. Then, write their words on their painting.

## PLANT PARTS ART

### Materials:

Book: I'm a Seed by Jean Marzollo  
Colored pompoms or scraps of wrapping paper  
Construction Paper  
Craft sticks or pipe cleaners  
Dried lima or fava beans  
Feathers  
Glue  
Markers  
Paint  
Paintbrushes  
Ramen noodles, broken (uncooked)  
Scissors

### Preparation:

1. If using craft sticks for this project, paint or color them green.
2. Cut brown paper strips approximately 3 inches wide to fit along the bottom of a piece of construction paper.
3. Break ramen noodles into pieces.
4. Place materials at the art table.

### Directions:

1. Share the book I'm a Seed with the class.
2. Then encourage the children to make a plant by starting with the soil and the seed. The children can make their plant by looking at the pictures in the book or create their own plants any way they would like. Ask the children to use a bean to represent the seed, ramen noodles to represent the roots, feathers to make the leaves and pom poms or gift wrap can be the petals.
3. Review the parts of a plant with the children when they are finished.
4. When the pictures are dry, the children may take them home and share the parts of the plant with their families.

## **GARDEN**

### **Materials:**

Gardening tools  
Plastic fruits and vegetables  
Plastic plants  
Sun hats  
Empty seed packets

### **Directions:**

Enhance the block area by adding garden props for the children to use while they play.

## TENDING THE GARDEN

### **Materials:**

Artificial flowers and plants  
Plastic fruits and vegetables  
Gloves  
Hoe or other gardening tools  
Seed packets  
Stakes for marking the plants  
Sun hats  
Watering cans

### **Preparation:**

1. Arrange the artificial flowers, plants, or vegetables to resemble a garden.
2. Place the dress up items in the dramatic play area.

### **Directions:**

Suggest that the children dress up like a gardener. The children can work in the garden, planting and picking fruits, vegetables, and flowers.

## GARDENING VOCABULARY

**Materials:**

Gardening tools

Storybook from unit such as Jack's Garden by Henry Cole

**Directions:**

After reading the storybook, Jack's Garden, go back through the story and introduce any new vocabulary words to the children. Explain the meaning of the new words to the children and show them examples of gardening tools mentioned in the book. Below are some examples of new vocabulary words to introduce to the children.

**New vocabulary words**

Buds- flowers that have not fully opened

Germinate- to begin to grow

Hoe- a gardening tool used to remove weeds and prepare the soil

Larva- a young insect or bug

Nectar- a sweet juice made inside flowers. Bees use nectar to make honey.

Rake- a gardening tool used to loosen the soil for planting

Seeds- what plants grow from

Seedling- a young plant

Soil- the dirt and other materials that plants grow in

Sprout- to begin to grow; also a very young plant just as it comes out of the soil

## MY GARDEN

This is my garden  
*(extend one hand forward, palm up)*

I'll tend it with care  
*(make raking motion on palm with three other fingers)*

Planting the seeds, some here and some there  
*(planting motion)*

The rain will fall down  
*(let fingers flutter down to lap)*

The sun will shine bright  
*(make circle with hands)*

My garden will bloom, oh what a sight!  
*(extend arms upwards slowly, spreading fingers as you go)*

**PRE AND POST-READING DISCUSSION IDEAS**  
*I'm a Seed*, by Jean Marzollo

**Supplies:**

Book: *I'm a Seed*, by Jean Marzollo  
Packets of different seeds



**Directions:**

1. Ask children to sit in a circle.
2. Pre Reading Questions:
  - a. Show children the cover of the book. Tell them the title.
  - b. Ask: What do you think this book is going to be about?
  - c. Ask: Have you ever planted seeds? What did you grow?
3. Read the story to the children.
4. Post Reading Questions:
  - a. Ask: What did the seeds become when they grew up?
  - b. Ask: Flowers and pumpkins come from seeds. Can you think of anything else that comes from seeds?
5. Post Reading Activity:  
Sort and plant different kinds of seeds.

**PRE AND POST-READING DISCUSSION IDEAS**  
*Jack's Garden*, by Henry Cole

**Supplies:**

Book: *Jack's Garden*, by Henry Cole



**Directions:**

1. Ask children to sit in a circle.
2. Pre Reading Questions:
  - a. Show children the cover of the book. Tell them the title.
  - b. Ask: What do you think this book is going to be about?
  - c. Ask: What kinds of animals or insects do you think you might find in a garden?
3. Read the story to the children.
4. Post Reading Questions:
  - a. Ask: Can you name some of the creatures that were in the garden Jack planted?
  - b. Ask: Why do all these animals, birds and bugs like the garden?
5. Post Reading Activity:

Go on a nature walk or look outside for the plants and creatures that were shown and mentioned in the book.

**PRE AND POST-READING DISCUSSION IDEAS**  
***Growing Vegetable Soup*, by Lois Ehler**

**Supplies:**

Book: *Growing Vegetable Soup*, by Louis Ehler  
Ingredients and supplies for making vegetable soup



**Directions:**

1. Ask children to sit in a circle.
2. Pre Reading Questions:
  - a. Show children the cover of the book. Tell them the title.
  - b. Ask: What do you think this book is going to be about?
  - c. Ask: Have you ever eaten vegetable soup? What could you put in vegetable soup?
3. Read the story to the children.
4. Post Reading Questions:
  - a. Ask: What did the vegetables need in order to grow?
  - b. Ask: What vegetables did they use for their soup?
  - c. Ask: What kinds of tools do we use to grow plants in a garden?
5. Post Reading Activity:

Try making you own vegetable soup.

## WATCH US GROW

### Directions:

1. Ask the children to spread out around the room.
2. Then encourage the children to crouch down on the floor as if they are a tiny seed under the ground.
3. Tell them they will be pretending to be a seed that grows into a plant.
4. Encourage the children to use arm and body motions to demonstrate going from a tiny seed to a tall plant as you read the poem below.

I'm just a tiny seed. I know someday I'll grow.  
You'll see I'll get so tall with flowers I can show. (crouched down)

Here comes the rain I need so much to help me start.  
I need some sunshine too, that's an important part. (starting to grow)

Here I go, here I go, I'm starting a tiny sprout.  
I'm breaking through the earth! It feels great to get out! (push up against the earth)

A nice green shoot! Wow! Look at me – I'm getting tall!  
It wasn't very long ago that I was very small. (slowly stretching to standing)

See my leaves are sprouting out – big and soft and green.  
I'm strong and straight and getting buds – what does that mean?  
(shaking arms out)

Look at me those buds have burst! I've got flowers now!(waving arms, open and closing fists)

I have done an amazing job. Let me take a bow! (take a bow)

I'm still growing, but what are these, hanging from my stem? (arms out, hands dangling)

I know, those are tomatoes! I guess I'm one of them! (thumbs up, pointing at self)

### Variation for older preschoolers:

As you read the poem, demonstrate the actions in parentheses and have children act out what the plant is doing.

## GROWING CIRCLE GAME

### Directions:

1. First choose two children to be the seeds. Then divide the rest of the class into three groups: Sunshine, Water and Soil
2. To play the game, the two seeds will start in the middle holding hands and walking in a circle. The rest of the children will stand on the outside or in other parts of the room, clapping and/or marching in place.

As they are walking the seeds chant:

*"Here are seeds, oh, so small.  
Help them grow big and tall."*

The seeds will decide which group (sunshine, water or soil) they will call next to join them by saying:

*"I know, I know! \_\_\_\_\_ will help us grow!"*

*Sunshine*

*Water*

*Soil*

(The teacher may need to help direct which group will be chosen next.)

When they call the group (for example the sunshines), the group will come to the middle of the circle and join hands with the seeds. The seeds and the sunshines will walk in a circle and chant:

*"Here are seeds, oh, so small.  
Help them grow big and tall."*

They will then call another group to join them saying:

*"I know, I know, \_\_\_\_\_ will help us grow."*

3. Do this three times until all of the groups have joined the circle.
4. Play the game again giving children different parts to play.

## SEED MATCH

### **Materials:**

Large bowl

Margarine containers with lids

Seeds or beans (various kinds)

### **Directions:**

Ask the children to sort the beans into containers by type. They could also sort the beans and seeds by color and size.

## FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PUZZLES

**Supplies:**

Fruit and Vegetable Puzzles

**Preparation:**

1. Find and cut out fruit and vegetable pictures from magazines or grocery-store advertisements.
2. Make a second copy of the fruit and vegetable pictures to show to the children as they assemble each puzzle.
3. Glue fruit and vegetable pictures to a piece of sturdy cardboard.
4. Cut the first set of each picture into simple puzzle pieces. Cut fewer pieces for younger children and more pieces for older children.

**Directions:**

Suggest that the children work in small groups or individually to put the puzzles together. When the puzzles are completed ask the children to point to and name the foods on the puzzles. Introduce new words and foods. Point out which foods they might be tasting or eating at lunch or snack today.

**Source:**

Cryer D, Ray AR, Harms T. *Nutrition Activities for Preschoolers*. California: Addison-Wesley Publishing; 1996.



## PLANTING SEEDS

### Materials Needed:

Bean seeds  
Newspaper  
Containers for planting or re-sealable plastic bags  
Permanent marker  
Potting soil  
Small watering can  
Spoons or scoops

### Preparation:

1. Set up a table covered with newspaper for planting.
2. Place planting materials on the table.

### Direction for containers:

1. Give each child a container.
2. Write their names on the containers.
3. Then ask the children to scoop out the potting soil to fill half of the container.
4. Encourage the children to pour a small amount of water in the container.
5. Give each child one or two bean seeds to lie on top of the soil.
6. Then ask the children to fill the container, leaving about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch at the top using potting soil.
7. Pour some water on the soil.

Later, talk about the planting process. Discuss with the children what the plants will need in addition to the water and soil to grow. Place the plants where they can get sunshine during the day. Continue to monitor and care for the plants on a daily basis by using a growth chart.

### Directions for plastic bags:

First, wrap the seed in moist paper towel. Then, place the paper towel in plastic bag. Seal the bag and tape it to a sunny window. Examine seeds daily to see if they sprout.

## LOOKING FOR SEEDS

### **Materials:**

Glue or scotch tape

Marker

Sharp knife

Small plastic container

Variety of fruits and vegetables such as: red pepper, tomato, carrot, green beans, sugar snap peas, strawberry, kiwi, banana, apricot, apple, grapes, oranges, avocado

### **Directions:**

1. Show the children one fruit or vegetable.
2. Ask them where they can find seeds for this item.
3. Then suggest the children explore the fruits and vegetables and cut them open to find the seeds.
4. Collect the seeds in small plastic containers and label them for each fruit and vegetable.

## **A CLOSE-UP LOOK AT SEEDS**

**Materials:**

Magnifying glass  
Variety of seeds

**Preparation:**

Place a variety of seeds and a magnifying glass in the science area

**Directions:**

Allow the children to look at seeds using a magnifying glass.

## FROM SEED TO HARVEST

### **Materials:**

Sequence cards (A set of seed to harvest cards from page 20)

Clear contact paper

Markers

Scissors

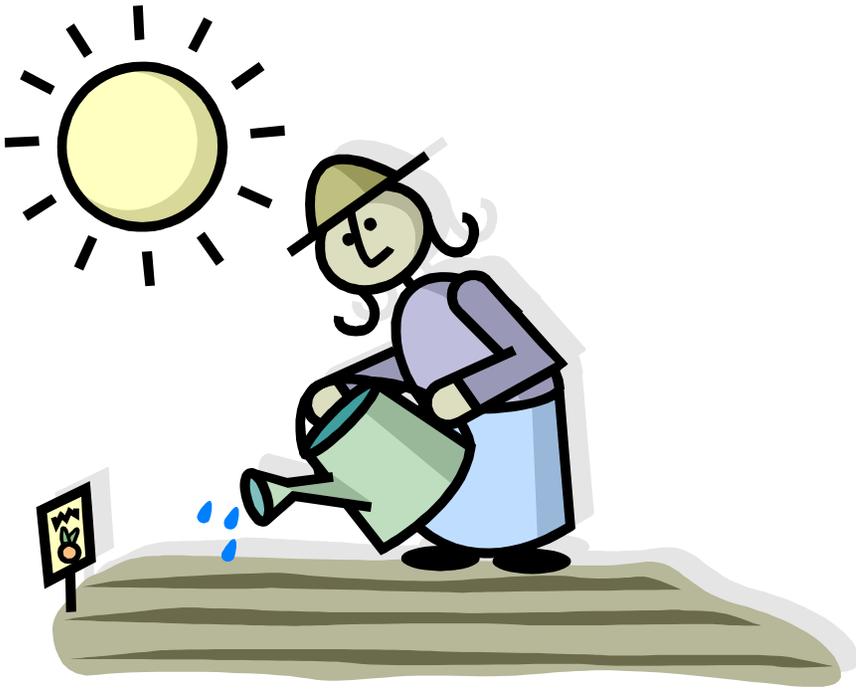
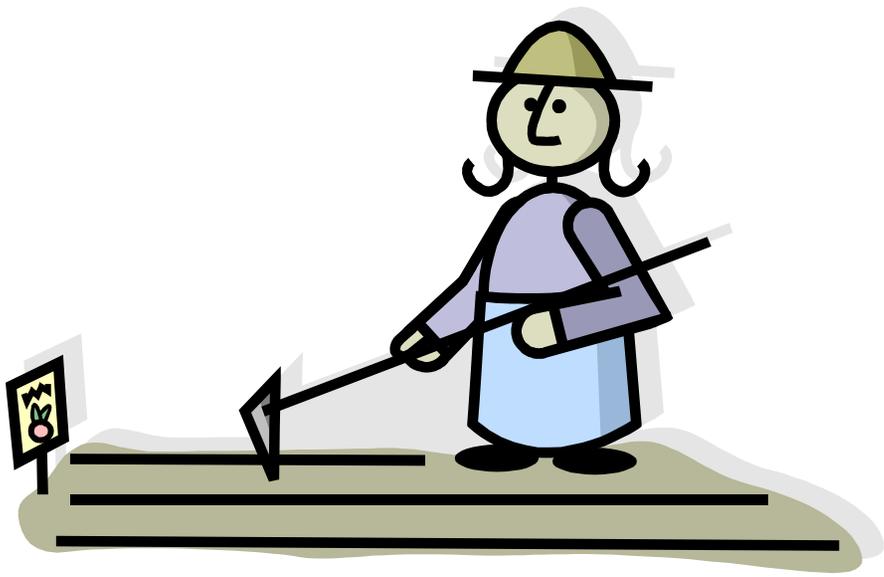
### **Preparations:**

1. For additional sets of cards, copy, color and cut out sequence cards on the following page.
2. Cover the cards with contact paper and cut them out.

### **Directions:**

Encourage small groups of children to put the pictures in order from preparing the soil to harvesting the vegetables using the following sequence:

1. Hoeing the soil
2. Planting the seeds
3. Watering the garden
4. Harvesting the vegetables



## **MARY, MARY QUITE CONTRARY**

Mary, Mary, quite contrary, how does your garden grow?  
With cockle shells and silver bells and pretty maids all in a row.

### **Variations:**

1. Mary, Mary, quite contrary, how does your garden grow? With big potatoes and small tomatoes, and green peas all in a row.
2. Mary, Mary, quite contrary, how does your garden grow? With long string beans and carrot greens and broccoli all in a row.

## HOW A GARDEN GROWS

### Sing to the tune of “Head, Shoulder, Knees, and Toes”

Do you know how plants grow, how plants grow?  
Do you know how plants grow, how plants grow?  
All kinds of plants that grow up big and strong.  
Do you know how plants grow, how plants grow?

The gardener hoes and plants the seeds, plants the seeds.  
The gardener hoes and plants the seeds, plants the seeds.  
The seeds are buried down into the ground.  
The gardener hoes and plants the seeds, plants and seeds.

The sun and rain feed the plant, feed the plant.  
The sun and rain feed the plant, feed the plant.  
Sun and rain make plants grow up tall.  
The sun and rain feed the plant, feed the plant.

The seeds begin to bud and bloom, bud and bloom.  
The seeds begin to bud and bloom, bud and bloom.  
Buds and blossoms turn into fruit.  
The seeds begin to bud and bloom, bud and bloom.

When ripe, the gardener picks the fruit, picks the fruit.  
When ripe, the gardener picks the fruit, picks the fruit.  
The gardener picks and eats the yummy fruit.  
When ripe the gardener picks the fruit, picks the fruit.

#### **Variations:**

1. Combine the singing of this song with the “Gardening Vocabulary” activity on page 6 of this unit, reviewing the vocabulary and then singing the song.
2. Sing this song after completing the “From Seed to Harvest” activity on pages 19-20 of this unit.

## WATERING

**Materials:**

Sensory table

Water

Watering cans

Colanders, sieves, or plastic cups

**Preparation:**

1. Partially fill the sensory table with water.
2. Add a variety of watering cans, colanders, sieves, and plastic cups.

**Directions:**

Suggest the children fill their watering cans with water and sprinkle water back into the sensory table.

**Variation:**

Add plastic plants to the sensory table for the children to water as they play.

## SEED SHAKERS

**Materials:**

Different kinds of seeds.

Glue

Film canisters or other small plastic containers

Sensory table

**Preparation:**

Make shakers by placing several of one kind of seed in a container and gluing the cover on. The shakers will have different sounds depending on the seeds. For example, use corn kernels in one container and sunflower seeds in another to create a variety of sounds.

**Directions:**

Place the shakers in the sensory table for the children to use.

**Variations:**

1. Encourage the children to make the shakers themselves.
2. Ask the children to use the shakers during music or singing time.

## **DIGGING IN THE DIRT**

### **Materials:**

Potting soil

Seeds to plant (larger ones, like peas and beans)

Sensory table

Spoons or scoops

### **Preparation:**

Fill the sensory table with soil and seeds for planting.

### **Directions:**

Suggest the children put their hands in the soil and pretend they are working in the garden.