

Kindergarten: Overview of Plant/Newt Unit

Plants And Newts - A Study of Living Things

Our class will be involved with an in-depth study on plants. We will be listening to a variety of read alouds that cover **parts of a plant, lifecycles, trees and even some literature on famous botanists**. The read alouds will be a variety of texts that range from informational texts to fictional stories. During each lesson, we learn new things about plants and the students will be exposed to rich content vocabulary. Over the course of the month, we will plant seeds, visit the garden and make observations with the plants in the Haldane Garden.

Unit Goals:

- Students will understand that plants are living things that need nutrients, air, water and light.
- Students will identify the parts of a plant and understand each part's role.
- Students will explain what seeds are and understand the basic life cycle of a plant.
- Students will learn about bees and their role with plant pollination.
- Students will learn about different types of trees.

During the unit we will also explore **different fruits and seeds**. We will compare and contrast the fruits and seeds of our favorite plants. We will discuss how people eat fruits of many plants and that seeds can be found inside the fruit. Midway through the unit the class will feast on a seed snack. Each student will be asked to bring in a favorite fruit or vegetable that we will dissect, observe and EAT!

The class will then move on to study **deciduous and evergreen trees**. The students will continue their work on comparing and contrasting. They will look for similarities and differences in trees through the seasons and observe how they look/change throughout a year. One of the most interesting trees we will learn about is the Giant Sequoia. Taking a look at amazing plants in our world will expose the students to plants that are very different to what we see here in our natural habitat. Some other ones we will look at are: orchids, Venus flytraps and cocoa pods. **If you have helpful specimens of the above plants, we would love to share them in class!**

In addition to the plant unit we will welcome new class pets, Red Spotted Newts. Newts are cold-blooded animals of the salamander family. We have learned about where a newt lives in the wild, what they eat, and what is important for a newt **habitat**. We have already observed the newts and completed a scientific writing workshop. We plan to release them back to the wild to James Pond.

Suggested Books

The Boy Who Didn't Believe in Spring by Lucille Clifton
The Carrot Seed, by Ruth Krauss and Crockett Johnson
Eating the Alphabet: Fruits & Vegetables from A to Z, by Lois
Flower Garden, by Eve Bunting and illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt
From Seed to Plant, by Gail Gibbons
The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rainforest, by Lynne Cherry
Growing Vegetable Soup, by Lois Ehlert
The Honey Makers, by Gail Gibbons
How a Seed Grows (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science 1), by Helene J. Jordan and illustrated by Loretta
I Am a Leaf by Jean Marzollo and Judith Moffatt
I Am an Apple by Jean Marzollo and Judith Moffatt
Johnny Appleseed, by Reeve Lindbergh and illustrated by Kathy Jakobsen Hallquist
OLIVIA Plants a Garden (Olivia Ready-to-Read), by Emily Sollinger
Plant a Little Seed, by Bonnie Christensen
The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle (Aladdin,

Fun Websites

1. Parts of Plant Game

http://www.softschools.com/science/plants/plant_parts/

2. Plant Games

<http://www.cookie.com/kids/games/grow-plant.html>

3. "Groovy Garden" Game

<http://pbskids.org/arthur/games/groovygarden/groovygarden.html>