

2nd Grade- Spring Flower Seed Planting – benefits and pollination

Date: 2nd week in April, after spring break

Description: Students learn about pollination, pollinators and other benefits of creatures in our garden. Students then plant flower seeds either in planting cups to be transferred to the garden during a follow up activity, OR directly into the garden depending on the time of year/weather.

Objective:

Students list what organisms need to live. Students understand pollination and the reason for a flower. Students discuss ways some organisms help other organisms. Students plant flower seeds in small containers to be transferred to the garden (or plant them directly in the garden depending on the time of year you do this activity).

Time Required:

60 minutes

Materials:

Pollination Power point presentation, flower seeds (sunflowers, cosmos, marigold, zinnia, nasturtium), popsicle sticks and sharpie to mark and label where seeds have been planted. Drawing paper and colored, pencils, markers, or crayons. If you are starting the seeds indoors, you will need potting soil, containers and a tray to set them on and light area for the pots to grow, possibly a grow light or an area in a window sill.

Preparation:

Gather materials, Prepare the area in the garden where you will be planting. Work with the teacher to get the Pollination PowerPoint ready to show the class. If planting indoors, set up a follow up lesson for planting the starts 2-3 weeks later into the garden.

Class Discussion/Action:

1. Gather class at the rug. Introduce yourself and give a brief description of the activity.
2. Have students Turn-n-Talk with an elbow partner about all of the scientific things they already know about flowers. Have a few partners share out their ideas.
3. Students may bring up bees, butterflies, pollination etc. If so, let the class know that is what we will be investigating today. Ask the class to put their thumbs up if they have heard this word pollination. Have students volunteer to share any information that they think they know about Pollination right now.
4. Show the power point presentation to assist with this discussion of beneficial creatures. Birds, butterflies, bees and bugs help pollinate our garden. Good bugs eat pests like ladybugs that eat aphids. Wild native areas in the garden help maintain a large number of different plants that have many different good qualities.

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5. Let the students know that today they will get to plant habitats and food for these beneficial organisms.
6. If planting indoors, take students through the process of loading soil into containers, planting flower seeds into small containers, placing in the tray that captures the excess water and watering. Place in grow light area or on a south facing windowsill. If you are planting in small groups, the other students can draw their own flower diagram.
7. If separating into two groups, one group hears the book “The Reason for a Flower” by Ruth Heller, while the other group plants.
8. At the Garden - Explain the process of planting to the students. Seeds should be planted at a depth 2x the size of the seed. How large are these seeds? How deep should they be planted? Should we dig lots of small holes or dig a furrow?
9. Show students how to dig a furrow and have 3 students each dig one furrow to the correct depth depending on the seeds to be planted. These will be very shallow (or pre-prepare the furrows and label them)
10. Show students how to plant the seeds by spreading them out in the furrow - why don't we drop them all in one clump? *Plants need their own space – just like you and me*
11. Give each student about 10 seeds of the flower they chose and have one student at a time plant if possible.
12. When plants indoors have their true leaves, take students out to garden in small groups to plant flowers, in designated areas around the garden. Extra plants can be taken home as a Mother's Day gift.

Wrap Up:

Gather students at the rug after planting the seeds. Have the class recall what they knew about pollination and flowers. Ask them to Turn-n-Talk with an elbow partner about what else they know now about flowers, what they learned today.

Additional station options:

Pollination game to test materials Bees vs. Butterflies

Plant Anatomy – Finding the Mallow Plant – Painted Lady caterpillar's food