

Watch It Grow!

Goals of this lesson:

Youth will:

- learn about plants as they watch them
- taste a new food that they have grown

What You Need to Know:

- Plants grow in different ways – some from seeds; others from pits or part of plant
- Plants need nutrients, water and light to grow
- Vegetables are an important part of a healthy eating plan

Materials Needed:

- Large clear jars or other containers for planting
- Potting soil
- Garden seeds (as lettuce, carrots, radishes); avocado pit; carrot; sweet potato
- Optional: toothpicks, knife, string, grow light

Learning Activities:

- Take a field trip to the vegetable department of the grocery store
- Note different shapes, colors of vegetables
- Talk about: Where they grow – in the ground or above ground?
How do they get started? from seeds, pits, part of a plant - as “eye” of potato?
- Show vegetables in Food Guide Pyramid www.mypyramid.gov; talk about their importance in healthy eating plans.
 - Discover how many servings of vegetables each youth should eat per day.
- Plant containers with garden seeds; water; keep in sunlight or under grow light
Lettuce: <http://www.doityourself.com/stry/how-to-grow-lettuce-indoors>
Radishes: <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/how-to-grow-radishes.html>
Carrots: <http://www.doityourself.com/stry/how-to-grow-carrots-indoors>
- Note the number of days to maturity on seed packet. Mark on calendar.
- When vegetables are ready to eat, plan a special menu including the vegetable so youth will taste something they have grown.

Other Fun Things to Do:

- Instead of using seeds, these plants will grow from a pit or vegetable.
- Suspend avocado pit and/or sweet potato over jar of water with toothpicks. Watch it grow. (It won't grow an avocado or sweet potato to eat, but it is fun to watch the plants sprout from the pit or potato.)

Avocado:

<http://www.howtodothings.com/home-garden/how-to-grow-an-avocado-pit>

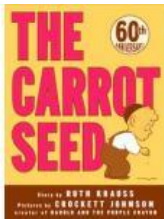
<http://www.avocado.org/grow-your-own-tree>

Sweet potato:

<http://www.suite101.com/content/grow-a-sweet-potato-vine-a8452>

http://www.ehow.com/how_2066823_grow-vine-from-sweet-potato.html

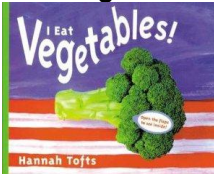
- Grow a hanging carrot.
[How to Grow a Hanging Carrot | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/how_2129553_grow-hanging-carrot.html#ixzz1AqUFQw6y)
http://www.ehow.com/how_2129553_grow-hanging-carrot.html#ixzz1AqUFQw6y
[How to Sprout a Carrot Plant | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/how_2081542_sprout-carrot-plant.html#ixzz1AqUXUPgQ)
http://www.ehow.com/how_2081542_sprout-carrot-plant.html#ixzz1AqUXUPgQ
- If possible, plant a small “outdoor” garden (either in the ground or containers) that youth can care for.
- Books to read:



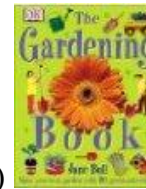
The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss, (Beliefnet, July 2000) "It won't come up," everyone warns the young boy in this story, who has great expectations for a carrot seed that he plants and tends carefully. The boy's conviction remains strong in the face of strong doubt and opposition. And to everyone's surprise except his, the carrot he eventually harvests grows as large as his faith, earning him first prize at the state fair. Young readers will learn the values of conviction and faith in this warm children's tale.

Know how. Know now.

I Eat Vegetables! By Hannah Tofts, Zero To Ten; Revised edition (April 1, 2001)



From the *Things I Eat* series, these stunning children's picture books allow toddlers to look inside fruit and vegetables and see seeds, pits, and other interesting things. Combining real photographs, illustrations, and simple text these books appeal visually to toddlers while delivering tons of information.



The Gardening Book by Jane Bull, DK CHILDREN (January 2003)

The hottest hobby around is the perfect outdoor activity for kids; the fresh, energetic designs in *The Gardening Book* will inspire kids to get growing. Learn how to choose plants and give them what they need to grow, use your craft skills to make a scarecrow or funky yet useful flower container and much, much more. Atmospheric photography, helpful cartoon gardening characters, and easy to follow text make *The Gardening Book* the ideal introduction to the rewarding world of kids' horticulture.



Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert, Voyager Books, 1990.

Author and illustrator Lois Ehlert's cut-paper collages are bold and colorful. The story of a father and child's vegetable garden project is told in rhyme. While the text of the story is brief, each of the plants, seeds, and gardening tools illustrated is labeled, making this a book that's fun to read aloud and then read through again identifying everything. The story begins with the planting of seeds and sprouts and ends with delicious vegetable soup.

Submitted by: Jeanette Friesen, Extension Educator