
Lesson 2: Garden Surprise

Target audience: K- 6th-grade youth

Time needed for station: 30 minutes

Volunteers needed to support station: one to two

Objectives

Youth will be able to:

- Describe how food we eat relates to plant parts
- Make exploding seed balls
- Try healthy foods

Materials

PROVIDED

- Measuring spoons
- Book: "Tops & Bottoms" by Janet Stevens
- Seeds such as lettuce, native plants, or herbs
- Air dry clay
- Dry organic potting soil
- Ziploc bags or plastic containers to take seed balls home in

NOT PROVIDED

- Seed ball "recipe" and directions (<https://climatekids.nasa.gov/seed-ball/>)
- Water
- Prepared vegetables – radishes or carrots (root), celery or asparagus (stem), spinach or lettuce (leaf), broccoli or cauliflower (flower), bell pepper (fruit) and dip.
- Wet wipes

Background info

General description of how this activity connects families with nature and health:

Participants will learn together about where their food comes from. They will connect with nature as they learn about how their food grows, which may result in trying healthy foods.

- Participants will spend quality time together reading outdoors, learning about plant parts, and trying healthy foods.
- Participants will dig in to this "hands on" activity as they make seed balls with edible seeds.

WIN! Tip

Learning in nature can support improved relationship skills and reduce stress, anger, and aggression

(Children & Nature Network, 2016).

Procedure

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

Purchase and prepare fresh vegetables if planning to include snack with story.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

Ask about any food allergies before serving vegetables and fruit.

1. Explain to participants that they will be learning about plant parts in the food we eat. They will be taste-testing some of those plant parts and will be making seed balls to take home to plant.
2. Guide participants through *Activity 1: Read in the Garden*.
3. Share the WIN! Tip with participants.
4. Guide participants through *Activity 2: Exploding Seed Balls!*

ACTIVITY 1: READ IN THE GARDEN

Read the story "Tops & Bottoms" by Janet Stevens. Identify tops, bottoms and middles of foods they eat and provide appropriate samples as you read, or after the story. Vegetables can be prepared ahead of time and placed in small snack bags, one per person.

Roots – radishes, carrots

Stems – asparagus, celery

Leaves – spinach, lettuce

Flowers – broccoli, cauliflower

Fruit – sliced sweet bell peppers, cucumber slices

ACTIVITY 2: MAKE EXPLODING SEED BALLS!

Participants can dig in and make seed balls for themselves or to give as gifts. This activity can be done inside or outside. Follow directions on the seed ball recipe (seed ball "recipe" and directions <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/seed-ball/>).

You may choose either vegetable seeds or wildflower seeds, depending on your focus or seed availability. Participants will need to dry the balls in the sun at home, but these can be put in a storage container for now. Remind them to water the seed balls after they plant them in the garden.