

The Learning Garden

The students learned horticulture and environmental lessons by participating in seasonal activities that were designed by Master Gardeners. The learning was especially meaningful because they worked in their own community and participated with community activists dedicated to that community. In this way, they were able to integrate not only the science lessons but were shown how to become an adult who will protect the environment.

Curriculum/State Standard

Science 5.1 #2,3; 5.2 #2,4; 5.4 #1,2; 5.5 #4; 5.6 #2,4,5,6

Overview

Second graders worked cooperatively with the Master Gardeners to plant bulbs in the fall, force bulbs in the winter, plant potatoes in the early spring, and plant 200 trees in a buffer zone they helped to conserve.

In May the students participated in an all day environmental fair. The fair consisted of 15 stations through which the students rotate. They learned about recycling, soil conservation, composting, produce farmed in NJ, musical instruments made by nature, and how to make pots out of recycled newspaper. They learned through puppets and storytelling which insects are helpful and which are harmful, the parts of plants and which foods we eat, the life cycles of plants and animals, and created music and butterflies.

Objectives

- The students will work in conjunction with their teachers and the Master Gardeners to plant and force bulbs in fall and winter to explore the concept of stored energy.
- The students will plant 200 trees in a buffer zone between their school and a new development to reforest the area destroyed by new construction and become active conservationists.
- The students will participate in an environmental fair to learn from community activists working in the areas of health, solid waste management, recycling, soil and conservation, composting, gardening, forest management, music, storytelling, insects, and art.

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2

GRADE LEVEL



ARTS



LANGUAGE



MATH

Misc

MISCELLANEOUS



SCIENCE



HISTORY



SOCIAL STUDIES

10

MONTHS

\$1000

TOTAL BUDGET

“The Learning Garden” project continued...

Materials

Bulbs for every student in the project, bulbs for the cross section display, journals for recording findings, pots, soil, small hand tools, art supplies for the fair

Readiness Activity

Students observed, sketched, recorded, and researched plants in the fall and spring using their nature journal as a personal experience record.

Strategies/Activities

1. Explore stored energy of a bulb by planting daffodil or tulip bulbs in the fall.
2. Further study the technique of forcing bulbs in the winter.
3. Plant 200 trees in an area of deforestation.
4. Participate in an environmental fair staffed by community environmental activists

To learn a variety of ways to understand, enjoy, and insure that nature is protected in the future.

Culminating Activity

All second graders went to Ocean County Park to the area maintained by the Master Gardeners. They rotated to 17 different stations. Students were in groups of 6 and moved to a different station every 15 minutes. The activities were hands on and informative and the movement helped to maintain student interest and participation throughout the day. The stations were manned by volunteers from a variety of community agencies dedicated to teaching about nature and protecting the environment.

Evaluation

Students were tested throughout the year on their knowledge of plants.

Students were graded on Nature Journal completeness.

Students were observed actively participating in the many activities included in the project.

Students planted and maintained bulbs throughout the year.