

Kids 'R' Kids Mini Camp



Garden Club



Laying the Groundwork: Gardening 101

WEEK ONE

Intro day: (Monday)

Materials: internet access, chart paper, marker, journals (one for each camper), construction paper, glue, scissors, nature stickers, any other materials you have for campers to decorate their journals with

Preparation: Set up an area for campers to decorate their journals after you have a group discussion.

Time: Approximately 30 minutes group discussion and 30 minutes journal design

Instructions:

Welcome campers to the Garden Club! As a group, have campers share why they joined this club. Allow them each a few minutes to share.

Briefly explain to the group what they can expect over the course of the following 4-6 weeks. For example, "Campers, you will learn all about gardening over the course of the next 4-6 weeks while growing plants together and individually. Along the way, you will document the different plants and experiences in your journals several times a week."

Find out what your campers already know about gardening by asking questions. Here is a list of a few questions to help get you started: "What do plants need to grow?" "Why is gardening important to humans?" "Have you done any gardening before? If so, share with the group your experience."

Next, define key terms with your group that you will use over the next few weeks. Some of these terms can include fertilizer, soil, germination, nutrients, herbs, etc. Discuss why the right soil

is important and that knowing how often to water your plants is necessary. Keep these definitions on hand for campers to refer to throughout the next few weeks.

Lastly, discuss what you will plant and grow together in this club. Include campers on deciding what you will be planting. This will build their excitement and ownership over this project. It is important, however, to guide campers and offer them suggestions on what will grow best for your group. Choose a variety of different things to grow. This will allow campers to garden a variety of different plants and learn about them along the way.

Here are some suggestions based on ease and quick growth:

Flowers: Sunflowers, Marigolds, Sweet Alyssum

Vegetables: butter lettuce (or similar variety), tomatoes, snap peas

Herbs: basil, parsley, mint

Now, have campers decorate their journals. This area should be stocked with the materials listed above and any other materials you would like to make available. Remind campers that

they will use these journals over the next few weeks to document their gardening journey and the changes and growth in their plants.

Dirty Hands: It's Planting Day! (Flowers and Vegetables)

Activity

Materials: soil, planters, seeds/plants (for flowers and vegetables), shovels, watering cans, garden gloves, plant markers



Preparation: You will prepare all items prior to planting day. Decide if you will be doing garden boxes, plastic planters etc.

You will plan where the garden will be kept on the school's property. Make sure all management approves of location. Purchase all needed items and/or ask families for donations. You can provide or ask each camper to bring a pair of garden gloves and small shovel from home, but it is a good idea to have a few on hand if anyone forgets or if any items get misplaced. Label each campers equipment with first and last name.

Time: 10 minutes for group discussion and 50 minutes to 1 hour for planting.

Instructions:

As a group, discuss the plan for the day. Share with campers that the group will be planting the garden today. Recap the plants you chose as a group. Inform campers of where you will be planting. Make sure all campers have the proper equipment with them. Provide any campers with equipment if needed.

It's time to plant! You can plant your flowers and vegetables or any variety you have chosen in the way that best suits your school. Include the campers in planting and talk with them through the entire process. Point out features of the soil, the direct sunlight they will receive, the differences in seeds and plants that you have, etc. As you plant your seeds, remember to use plant markers to remind you what was planted and where. Have campers help to water all the plants and seeds once you finish planting.

Weekly Extension:

You can extend this week with having campers create homemade plant markers. Search the web for DIY plant markers to see various ways this can be done. Here are some quick fun options:

- A. Paint large popsicle sticks for each plant. Make the color reflect the plant it will represent and use a permanent marker to write the plant's name.
- B. Paint medium flat rocks. You can paint the actual vegetable or flower on the rock or paint it however campers would like. Use a permanent marker to write plant's name.



Allow campers to each make one or work in pairs.

Indoor Herb Jars

WEEK TWO - Activity

Materials: one mason jar, plastic pot or large plastic cup for each camper, herb plants or seeds, soil, rocks, labels for jars, markers

Preparation: Have all materials above ready for campers to complete this activity.

Time: 45 minutes

Instructions:

1. Campers will add a few rocks or pebbles to the bottom of their mason jar. This will help with drainage.
2. Next, they will fill their mason jars halfway with potting soil.
3. Each camper will plant the herb of their choice that you have available. They will plant seedlings or grown plants into the soil. Add some more soil to cover the seeds or plant.
4. Have the campers lightly water the herbs. Continue to water them moving forward only when the soil feels dry (over watering herbs could make them die).
5. Have each camper make a label for their herb jar. It should include which herb they planted, the camper's name, and any designs he/she would like to add.
6. Place the mason jars in a sunny and safe location, such as a windowsill that is in a low traffic area of the school.

As campers watch their herbs grow, they will harvest their herbs to bring home or use at school for recipes as you choose. Remind campers to only harvest 1/3 of the herbs at a time as to not harm the rest of the plant.



Recurring Activity

(Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays)

Plant Journal:

Observe, Measure, Document

*This activity can be done multiple times a week.

Materials: campers' plant journals, pencils, colored pencils, tape measure or ruler

Time: 30-40 minutes

Instructions:

Campers will make an entry into their plant journals. They can write about their garden and document the information about the herbs they planted. They should write down observations about each plant: what changes have occurred, the moisture of the soil, how often they have been watering, the length of growth if any, the health of the plant, and any other observations campers make.

They can draw what each plant looks like. They can note any fragrances or smells. Encourage and support your campers through the journaling process. Allow time for campers to add color and creativity to their entries.

Kitchen Scrap Gardening

WEEK THREE – Activity

Materials: scraps from the kitchen that you can grow (oranges, lemons, limes, sweet potatoes, avocados, carrots, beets, onions, and ginger work well), growing containers, potting soil, water



Preparation: Gather kitchen scraps to use for planting. Any of the above-mentioned work great but feel free to research your own as well. Have enough that each camper can plant a kitchen scrap of their own.

Time: 45 minutes

Instructions:

Start this activity by showing campers the materials you have and asking them if they have ideas of what you will be doing. During your discussion, talk with campers about how this activity connects to recycling and reusing. After a short discussion, begin this activity.

1. Designate an area where you will work together to plant your kitchen scraps.
2. You can plant seeds from oranges, lemons, limes, etc. in a pot with soil. You can prop a sweet potato or ginger root over a water-filled glass by poking three toothpicks in a circle into the middle of the sweet potato or ginger root and resting the toothpicks on the rim of the glass. Make sure that the narrower, pointed half of the tuber is submerged in the water.
3. Place the glass in a sunny window to promote healthy growth. You can chop the off heads of items like carrots, pineapples, beets, etc. and place them in a shallow dish with water and rocks. Once new growth emerges on top, campers can transplant them into a pot with soil.
4. Continue until all the campers have planted and labeled their kitchen scrap plant. Campers can journal about this now and in the future as they observe its changes over time.

For more information on kitchen scrap gardening you can visit: <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-activities-kitchen-scrap-gardening/>

Recurring Activity

(Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays)

Plant Journal:

Observe, Measure, Document

*This activity can be done multiple times a week.

Materials: campers plant journals, pencils, colored pencils, tape measure or ruler

Time: 20-30 minutes

Instructions:

Campers will make an entry into their plant journals. They can write about their garden and document the information about the herbs they planted. They should write down observations about each plant: what changes have occurred, the moisture of the soil, how often they have been watering, the length of growth if any, the health of the plant, and any other observations campers make. They can draw what each plant looks like. They can note any fragrances or smells. Encourage and support your campers through the journaling process. Allow time for campers to add color and creativity to their entries.

Observing Insects in the Garden: The Good, The Bad, The Helpful

WEEK FOUR - Activity

Materials: chart paper, marker, paper, clipboards (if you don't have one for each camper, cardboard pieces will work), pencils, magnify glasses, insect identification book or website.

Time: 45 minutes

Instructions:

Gather campers for a group discussion. Ask campers what their thoughts are on insects. Encourage detailed responses from campers by asking open-ended questions. Chart all information and ideas shared. Lastly, ask campers what they know about how insects interact with plants and gardens. Next, you will have campers explore their garden and surrounding outdoors for different insects. Encourage campers to look in various places (in the soil, on leaves, near flowers, on the ground, in the air, etc.). Explain to campers that their job is to observe, draw, and gather information about garden insects. You can work in groups or individually. Once you have finished exploring for insects, meet as a group back inside. Discuss what insects were found, the biggest, the smallest, etc. Discuss campers' thoughts about insects prior to going outside to explore and how they may have changed their previous thoughts. Use your insect identification book or website to identify some of the insects that were found. Discuss whether they are harmful or beneficial to your garden.



You can find more information here:

https://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/resources/339_beneficialbugs.pdf,
<https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-encourage-pollinators-and-beneficial-insects/>,
<https://kidsgardening.org/gardening-basics-dealing-with-garden-pests-and-diseases/>

Recurring Activity

(Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays)

Plant Journal: Observe, Measure, Document

*This activity can be done multiple times a week.

Materials: campers plant journals, pencils, colored pencils, tape measure or ruler

Time: 20-30 minutes

Instructions:

Campers will make an entry into their plant journals. They can write about their garden, document changes with their Herbs, and how their kitchen scrap plants are growing. They should write down observations about each plant: what changes have occurred, the moisture of the soil, how often they have been watering, the length of growth if any, the health of the plant, and any other observations campers make.

They can draw what each plant looks like. They can note any fragrances or smells. Encourage and support your campers through the journaling process. Allow time for campers to add color and creativity to their entries.

Gardens Around the World – Virtual Tours

WEEK FIVE - Activity

Materials: internet access, paper, pencils, tablet/smartboard, website:
<https://www.housebeautiful.com/lifestyle/gardening/g31746949/gardens-you-can-virtually-tour/>

Preparation: Pre-load virtual tours using the website above.

Time: 30-40 minutes

Instructions:

Virtually tour gardens from different parts of the world. You can find a few located in the link above but you can search for others as well. Give each camper paper and pencil to write and draw what they see and hear during the virtual tours. While campers watch the virtual tours, ask them open-ended questions to expand your discussion. Below is a list of possible discussion topics:

- plants they have never seen before
- plants they want to look up
- discuss how and why gardens are different around the world
- discuss favorite and least favorite plants of campers
- colors and characteristics of plants they observed
- observe, describe, and reflect on the different gardens you shared with them

Extension:

Break campers up into small groups. Give each group a country to research. They can research plant life, climate, insect life, etc. Each group can present their findings to the club.

Recurring Activity

(Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays)



Plant Journal: Observe, Measure, Document

*This activity can be done multiple times a week.

Materials: campers plant journals, pencils, colored pencils, tape measure or ruler

Time: 20-30 minutes

Instructions:

Campers will make an entry into their plant journals. They can write about their garden, document changes with their herbs, and how their kitchen scrap plants are growing. They should write down observations about each plant: what changes have occurred, the moisture of the soil, how often they have been watering, the length of growth if any, the health of the plant, and any other observations campers make.

They can draw what each plant looks like. They can note any fragrances or smells. Encourage and support your campers through the journaling process. Allow time for campers to add color and creativity to their entries.

Garden Showcase

WEEK SIX - Activity

Materials: all plants and projects completed by the club members, plant journals, garden equipment, any other items campers would like to showcase from their garden club experience.

Preparation: Set up all plants and projects to showcase to the rest of the school and families (if possible).

Time: 1 hour

Instructions:

It is showcase time! A Garden Showcase will allow campers to share their knowledge and accomplishments with staff, peers, and families. Campers will share their garden, their experience, what went right, what went wrong, pieces from their journals, and any other highlights. Campers can make refreshments using harvest from their plants. Allow campers to use their creativity in setting up and hosting their showcase.

Take pictures to document the showcase and the campers' garden. Share pictures on the school's social media pages using #kidsrkidsgardenclub. Print pictures for the campers to add to their plant journals as a memory of all the fun they had being a part of the Garden Club!

Recurring Activity

(Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays)



Plant Journal:

Observe, Measure, Document

*This activity can be done multiple times a week.

Materials: campers plant journals, pencils, colored pencils, tape measure or ruler

Time: 20-30 minutes

Instructions:

Campers will make an entry into their plant journals. They can write about their garden, document changes with their herbs, and how their kitchen scrap plants are growing. They should write down observations about each plant: what changes have occurred, the moisture of the soil, how often they have been watering, the length of growth if any, the health of the plant, and any other observations campers make.

They can draw what each plant looks like. They can note any fragrances or smells. Encourage and support your campers through the journaling process. Allow time for campers to add color and creativity to their entries.