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Plant, Harvest, Eat!

by Wendy Collins

from *Farm to School*

Revised to allow for standards alignment

Grades K-5

Common Core ELA:

W.2.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

W.3.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

W.4.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W.5.7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

RI.4.9 Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

RI.5.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

NGSS:

K-LS1 Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.

MLR: Health Education

Grades 3-5: C1a Design healthy menus.

Lesson Description: Students partner with a local farm to bring food full cycle, from seed to crops to harvest to table. Students plant, grow and harvest food crops for the cafeteria and learn about the growing process in the classroom. After harvesting the school purchases the local produce from the farm and school nutrition experts whip up delicious recipes for all students to enjoy.

Teacher Preparation:

- Determine ahead of time whether the school food service program will be able to purchase harvest crop from the farmer.
- Before beginning this activity, check to determine if your school budget will support two field trips to a farm. If budget permits, explore partnership options with local farms. Find one that has the space available to plant your crops and is willing to work with students on planting and harvesting the crops. Make an agreement about visiting with students, providing seedlings, purchase prices for the produce at the end (if purchase is possible), and any other key details.
- If budget constraints prevent visits, invite a local farmer to your classroom to facilitate planting seeds and discussing local farming practices. Class could care for growing seedlings and a volunteer could take the seedlings to the farm for planting. A volunteer could also take pictures/video of the seedlings being planted, the crop at different stages of growth and at harvest.



Learning Objectives

The student will:

- Use at least two resources to research the crop to be planted. Be sure to address
 - Soil & climate requirements
 - Growing cycle
 - Plant requirements
- Participate in planting, monitoring and harvesting a crop
- Develop a power point presentation of seed-to-table experience (may be done as a class or small group)
- Develop and prepare a healthy recipe that includes the crop as an ingredient

Procedure:

1. Prior to visit to the farm, students will research
 - a. the crop that they will be planting
 - b. soil and growing requirements
 - c. climate
 - d. crop history
 - e. life cycle
2. Record their findings on chart paper
3. Draw a poster showing the life cycle of their crop
4. Plant seedlings at the farm or seeds in their classroom
5. Throughout the growing season, check with the farmer about the progress of the crop and record that progress on chart paper posted in the classroom
6. As crop reaches maturity, ask farmer when crop is likely to be ready and the estimate of amount of harvest
7. Develop a healthy recipe for their crop and develop ingredient list
8. Participate in the harvest of the crop, if budget allows, with attention to
 - a. Harvesting techniques
 - b. Food safety techniques
 - c. Work involved in growing the crop
9. If possible, food service purchases crop and serves as part of school nutrition program. If food service cannot, purchase a small quantity for classroom recipe preparation
10. Prepare recipe and enjoy!

Variations

Learning can also be extended to cover compost and food waste, economics and business development, or other related topics. Older students could be involved in contacting farms and building a partnership with a farmer; developing a recipe and cooking food.

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