



Introduction

The children in Grove Nursery School in Armagh love to grow plants in their school garden. In the programme we see the children visiting a garden centre to buy a range of plants and planting the plants they bought back at school. They then look at pips in an apple and remove some and plant them in tubs.

The Hurley Burley Man plants tomato seeds and talks about what helps plants to grow. He sings a song about seeds growing and reads a story called "The Enormous Turnip".

Learning Opportunities

The Arts

- Create flowers e.g. using paper and paint, crayons, scrap materials
- Listen to and take part in songs e.g. number songs or songs about plants

Language Development

- Listen to and carry out instructions
- Understand and use vocabulary associated with plants and growth
- Listen to stories and rhymes about growth
- Look at books about plants

Early Mathematical Experiences

- Understand and use language associated with size, e.g. enormous, gigantic, tiny
- Count seeds/apple pips
- Use money to pay for goods

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Make choices about which plants to buy
- Help to care for plants
- Work together to plant seeds/plants

- Tidy up after planting

Physical Development and Movement

- Physical skills of stretching like a plant growing, carrying and placing tubs
- Fine motor skills for planting and watering

The World Around Us

- Understand what plants need in order to grow
- Use their senses to explore different plants
- Observe changes in living things
- Talk about the weather and the seasons

Suggested Activities

- Make an interest table of items that might be needed for gardening e.g. pots, trowels, watering can, small bucket of soil, bulbs, gloves, rake, spade etc. Encourage the children to touch them and talk about them. (The items could also be used to enhance play situations or as items for Kim's and other memory games).
- Talk about all of the things that can be grown in limited space e.g. carrot and beetroot tops in saucers, onions on top of a jam jar filled with water, peas and beans down the sides of jars filled with a wrap of paper and a little water. All these things take only a little organisation and can help children understand concepts of roots, shoots and the need for water, light and warmth for growth.
- Inside an empty egg shell put some damp cotton wool. Sprinkle on cress seeds. Draw a face on the front and wait a few days to watch the man's hair grow!!
- Place a white carnation inside some red coloured water and watch the flower change colour as it absorbs the water over the next few days
- Plant individual sunflower seeds or nasturtiums in yoghurt pots. Then get the parents involved by sending them home to be planted in the garden or patio pot. Encourage the children to bring in photographs of their plants.
- Organise a 'smelling' session by putting some different safe fragrances in

yoghurt pots and taping a tissue lid over the top. See if the children can tell you what the smell reminds them of e.g. baby powder, chocolate, soap powder etc.

- Make turnip soup by chopping up some turnip, a few potatoes and an onion. Boil for 30 minutes in some vegetable stock! Delicious!
- Talk about/investigate dark and light places in the environment e.g. under a bush, inside a cupboard, beside a window, outside in the sunshine. Talk about where light comes from and the dangers of electricity, fires and candles.