



Garden Education - Lesson 2

Planting in the Cool Season
All Grades

Lesson 2: Planting in the Cool Season is the second LiveWell Kids Garden Education lesson for the 2020-2021 academic year. In this lesson, you will learn the difference of planting in the “cool season” and “warm season.” You will use your gardening skills/knowledge and become a plant detective by planting mystery seeds and figuring out what kind of plant you are growing.

Materials:

- Gardening Kit
- "Planting Instructions" video
- "Plant Detective" video

Preparation: Set yourself up in a space with a flat working surface, such as a table, that is calm and quiet.

Vocabulary Words:

- WARM SEASON - The warmer months of the year that are conducive for growing plants whose requirements to thrive are warm weather and extended hours of sunlight.
- COOL SEASON - The cooler months of the year that are conducive for growing plants whose requirements to thrive are cooler weather and decreased hours of sunlight.
- CULTIVATE – To remove the weeds and loosen up or break up the soil to improve the amount of air, water, and nutrients a plant can get.
- AERATE – To create small holes in the soil that will allow for air, water, and nutrients to reach the roots.
- AMEND – To improve the soil by adding additional materials that improve the physical nature of the soil.

Gardening Activity:

Are you ready to become a plant detective? In this activity, you will be growing some mystery seeds. First, you must go to your school and pick up your gardening kit. Your job is to make sure that you plant and water your seeds, then figure out which plants you are growing. Refer to the “Plant Detective” handout for this lesson to give you clues that will help you determine what your plants are. The items in your kit (brown paper bag) include:

- Small compostable pot
- Small bag of potting soil
- Envelope with mystery seeds

Instructions:

- Set pot on a tray or plate to collect water that leaks out when watering.
- Fill pot with soil (supplied in kit.)
 - When filling the pot, make sure you do not fill it all the way to the top with soil to avoid it spilling out when you water it – leave a little room.
- Follow the instructions in the "Planting Instructions" video to see how deep to make your planting hole in the soil.
- Measure this depth on your finger and press your finger into the hole according to the measurement.

- Drop a seed in the hole and close the hole around the seed, covering the seed.
- Repeat, spacing the seeds away from each other, until all seeds are planted.
- GENTLY water your plant until the soil is soaked.
- Place your seed outdoors in a place where it will receive full sun all day (or on a sunny windowsill.)
- On a piece of paper (you provide), write down the date that you planted your seeds.
- Water your new seeds once per day for the first 3 days.
- After the first few days, water the seeds when the soil feels dry. This might be every 2-3 days, but gently push the tip of your finger into the soil (not where the seeds are!) to feel if the soil below the surface is damp or dry. If it's damp, don't water. If it's dry, water.
- Write down that you watered it, keeping a log.
- Write down the date when you first see a sprout peek through.
- Refer to the "Plant Detective" video after your sprouts are about 4 inches tall.
- Once your plant is about 4-6 inches tall, take a picture of your plant to share your guess.
- When your plant grows too large for the pot, you can plant it right in the ground (or a larger pot of soil) by digging a hole for it and dropping it in, pot and all! Be sure to tear the bottom of the pot off first so the roots can grow into the new soil. Leave a little bit of the top of the pot above the surface (like a "lip".)

We can't wait for you to try this activity out. Hope you enjoy being a plant detective!