



Nature Play at Home – Lesson Plan

Lesson Title: **Things that Grow**

Supplies Needed: Plastic water bottles, string, paint, dirt, seeds, water, blue and yellow beanbags and a tape measure

Lesson Activities:

Craft: Recycled Hanging Planters

- Show the kids the photo of the pre-made hanging planters. Explain to them that it is important to recycle materials to take care of Mother Earth, which is why today they will be making planters out of plastic water-bottles.
- Allow each kid to paint their hanging planter. Once finished, leave it to dry (will continue craft at the end of the session).



Play a game: Water and Sun:

- One person is “it” with a yellow (sun) bean bag. Yellow allows them to freeze people.
- One person is “it” with a blue (water) bean bag. Blue allows them to unfreeze people.
- Children run in a designated area until they are tagged with a yellow bean bag. Then they have to freeze until the blue bean bag unfreezes them.

Plant Lesson:

- Ask the group if they know what plants start as before they become plants? All the plants around you start life as a **seed**. Without seeds, there would be no plants, fruits, vegetables, or even trees.
- Ask the group if anyone has ever planted a seed before. Encourage conversations to start and ask supporting questions to hook the participants in the lesson.
- Explain that when seeds are planted, they first grow roots. They usually can't be seen as they are under the dirt. Soon after, a small plant will begin to break through the soil. Share that this is a process called **sprouting** or **germination**.
- Could show this video “Plant Life Cycle of a Bean Seed”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=31&v=pg92cspLy0I
- Next, ask the kids if they know what a plant needs to grow. Plants need **light, food, and water**. All of these things are important to help ensure that the little seeds become something bigger and better and that the plant continues to grow!

Activity: How Old is That Tree?

- 1.) Find a piece of wood and look at it.
 - Explain to them that you can count the rings to determine the age of the tree. This is because each year, the tree grows a new layer directly underneath the bark.
 - This technique isn't exact, but rather gives a rough idea.
 - Let the participants investigate the tree. Count the rings with them.

- 2.) Find a tree that is taller than an adult (doesn't work with small trees)
 - Using a measuring tape, measure the inches around the widest part of the tree (this is called the circumference)
 - The number of inches is equal to the age of that tree – count the inches with the participants
 - Try two or three and see which is the oldest/youngest
 - Again, this is a rough estimate

Have each child look to see who can find the biggest tree in your background, neighbourhood, or the nearest park. Measure some trees and discuss what/where the biggest/oldest tree was. Note: you will need a tape measure for this activity.

Plant Flower Seeds:

- Now that the paint should be dry, allow the kids to plant their seeds.
- Allow the children to have their choice of what they want to plant.
- Have the children put dirt in the planter, using their finger, make a hole in the center about an inch down.
- Place seed in the hole and cover with dirt.
- Water until moist, not wet.
- Tie on string
- Hang in a place where the plant will get sunlight
- Then enjoy watching your plant grow!!

A few children's books about how plants grow:

