



Observations of Change

Goals

Students will observe changes in the garden.

Objectives

Over time, students will record observations about plants in their journals in order to recognize the changes that occur.

Materials

- Journals
- Rulers/measuring tapes
- Magnifying glasses (optional)
- Plant markers
- Permanent markers

Time: 30-35 minutes

Background Information

This activity can be done in pairs to assist younger students with the measuring. You may choose for students to observe more than one plant. Ideally students would measure and observe changes once per week, but these observations can be adjusted to more or less frequently according to the time available.

Introduction (5 min)

Explain to the students that they will be observing a plant in the garden throughout the summer to look for changes that occur.

Students should choose one plant from the garden (i.e. tomato, sunflower, squash, corn, etc). Without looking at the plant, they should make some predictions about the plant in their journals. The predictions might include height, length of a leaf, shape of a leaf, a drawing and/or other observations like flowers or fruits. Be sure to date the journal entry.

Activity Steps (20-25 min)

1. Students should date the top of a page in their journal. They can then draw a chart with some or all of the following categories to record:
 - Plant name
 - Date
 - Height of plant (cm or in)
 - # Leaves
 - Length of Leaf (cm or in)
 - # Flower(s)
 - # Fruit(s)
 - Description
 - Picture
 - Prediction
2. Pair students and give each pair a measuring device.
3. Pairs should discuss which type of plant they would like to observe and write the name of the plant in the top left corner of their chart.

4. Give each pair a plant marker and a permanent marker to write their names on the marker. This marker will mark the plant that the pair decides to observe each week.
5. Students can mark their plant and begin observations. Students can use the units they would like to use for their measurements, but remind them to be consistent with their units for all measurements. Move from pair to pair and encourage groups to use descriptive language in their descriptions.

Conclusion (5 min)

Students can use their observations to make predictions about their plant for the following week. You may want them to predict in just one area (height of plant, number of leaves, etc.) or all the areas, depending upon time. A “prediction” row may be helpful to add to the chart.

Notes
