Unit 4: Growing Our Garden

Content Area: **ELA**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Full Year**
Length: **March-April**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

Children will be exploring growth over time by studying gardens and living things. They will learn what plants and animals need to grow and thrive. Students will have many opportunities to problem solve, work together and cooperate on theme related projects.

Enduring Understandings

- **Plants are living things that grow and change.**
  Children understand that plants need care to grow.
- **Gardens provide food and beauty for people and animals.**
  Children recognize that gardens help meet needs and bring joy.
- **Plants grow in stages over time.**
  Children learn that growth happens step by step.
- **People work together to plant and care for a garden.**
  Children understand that teamwork and shared responsibility help things grow.
- **Words, pictures, and stories help us learn about plants and gardens.**
  Children learn that books, labels, and conversations give information.
- **We can use language to describe, explain, and reflect on growth.**
  Children understand that talking, drawing, and early writing help share ideas.

Essential Questions

- What is a garden?
- What do plants need to grow?
- What plants grow in our garden?
- How do plants change as they grow?
- What happens first, next, and last when a plant grows?
- How long does it take for a plant to grow?

- How can we use words to describe plants?
- What new words help us talk about gardening?
- How do pictures help us understand how plants grow?
- How can we take care of our garden?
- How do we help each other in the garden?
- Why is it important to work together?
- What do stories tell us about gardens and plants?
- How are story gardens the same or different from our garden?
- How do people grow food in different places?

Learning Objectives

- Discover how plants grow and why are they important.
- Plants are living things; every part of a plant has an important function.
- Plants grow from seeds and need water, nutrients and light to live.
- Plants are all around us.
- There are many different types of plants.
- Plants are important for many reasons.

Standards: Content

RF.PK.1.a	Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, page by page.
RF.PK.1.b	Recognize that spoken words can be written and read.
RF.PK.1.c	Recognize that words are separated by spaces.
RF.PK.1.d	Recognize and name many upper and lower case letters of the alphabet.
RF.PK.2.a	Recognize and produce simple rhyming words.
RF.PK.2.b	Segment syllables in spoken words by clapping out the number of syllables.
RF.PK.2.c	Identify many initial sounds of familiar words.

RF.PK.3.a	Associates many letters (consonants and vowels as ready) with their names and their most frequent sounds.
RF.PK.3.c	Recognize their name in print as well as other familiar print in the environment.
RF.PK.4	Begin to engage in a variety of texts with purpose and understanding.
W.PK.1	Use a combination of drawings, dictation, scribble writing, letter-strings, or invented spelling to share a preference or opinion during play or other activities.
W.PK.2	Use a combination of drawings, dictation, scribble writing, letter-strings, or invented spelling to share information during play or other activities.
W.PK.6	With guidance and support, use digital tools to express ideas (e.g., taking a picture of a block structure to document or express ideas, etc.).
W.PK.7	With guidance and support, participate in shared research and shared writing projects.
W.PK.8	With guidance and support, recall information from experience or familiar topic to answer a question.
SL.PK.1.a	Follow-agreed upon rules for discussions during group interactions.
SL.PK.1.b	Continue a conversation through several back and forth exchanges.
SL.PK.2	Ask and answer questions about a text or other information read aloud or presented orally.
SL.PK.3	Ask and answer questions to seek help, get information, or follow directions.
SL.PK.4	Begin to describe familiar people, places, things, and events and sometimes with detail.
SL.PK.5	Use drawings or visual displays to add to descriptions to provide additional detail.
SL.PK.6	With guidance and support, speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas.
L.PK.1.a	Print many alphabet letters.
L.PK.1.b	Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs.
L.PK.1.c	Form regular plural nouns.
L.PK.1.d	Understand and use question words (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
L.PK.1.e	Use frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, by, with).
L.PK.1.f	Begin to speak in complete sentences.
L.PK.1.g	Understands and can follow simple multi-step directions.
L.PK.2.c	Attempt to write a letter or letters by using scribble-writing, letter-like forms, letter-strings, and invented spelling during writing activities throughout the day.
L.PK.4.a	With guidance and support, generate words that are similar in meaning (e.g., rock/stone, happy/glad).
L.PK.5.a	Begin to sort familiar objects (e.g., sort a collection of plastic animals into groups: dogs, tigers, and bears).
L.PK.5.b	Begin to understand opposites of simple and familiar words.
L.PK.5.c	Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., “Tell me the name of a place in the classroom that is noisy or quiet.”).
L.PK.6	Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, activities and read alouds.

Standards: Interdisciplinary

0.1.1	Express individuality by making independent decisions about which materials to use.
5.1.2	Observe, question, predict, and investigate materials, objects, and phenomena during

	classroom activities indoors and outdoors and during any longer-term investigations in progress. Seek answers to questions and test predictions using simple experiments or research media (e.g., cracking a nut to look inside; putting a toy car in water to determine whether it sinks).
0.1.2	Express ideas for activities and initiate discussions.
0.1.3	Actively engage in activities and interactions with teachers and peers.
5.1.4	Communicate with other children and adults to share observations, pursue questions, make predictions, and/or conclusions.
0.1.4	Discuss their own actions and efforts.
5.1.5	Represent observations and work through drawing, recording data, and “writing” (e.g., drawing and “writing” on observation clipboards, making rubbings, charting the growth of plants).
0.2.1	Make independent choices and plans from a broad range of diverse interest centers.
0.2.2	Demonstrate self-help skills (e.g., clean up, pour juice, use soap when washing hands, put away belongings).
5.2.1	Observe, manipulate, sort, and describe objects and materials (e.g., water, sand, clay, paint, glue, various types of blocks, collections of objects, simple household items that can be taken apart, or objects made of wood, metal, or cloth) in the classroom and outdoor environment based on size, shape, color, texture, and weight.
0.2.3	Move through classroom routines and activities with minimal teacher direction and transition easily from one activity to the next.
5.2.2	Explore changes in liquids and solids when substances are combined, heated, or cooled (e.g., mixing sand or clay with various amounts of water; preparing gelatin; mixing different colors of tempera paint; and longer term investigations, such as the freezing and melting of water and other liquids).
0.2.4	Attend to tasks for a period of time.
0.3.1	Recognize and describe a wide range of feelings, including sadness, anger, fear, and happiness.
0.3.2	Empathize with feelings of others (e.g., get a blanket for a friend and comfort him/her when he/she feels sad).
5.3.1	Investigate and compare the basic physical characteristics of plants, humans, and other animals (e.g., observing and discussing leaves, stems, roots, body parts; observing and drawing different insects; sorting leaves by shape; comparing animals with fur to those with feathers).
0.3.3	Channel impulses and negative feelings, such as anger (e.g., taking three deep breaths, using calming words, pulling self out of play to go to “safe spot” to relax, expressive activities).
5.3.2	Observe similarities and differences in the needs of living things, and differences between living and nonliving things (e.g., observing and discussing similarities between animal babies and their parents; discussing the differences between a living thing, such as a hermit crab, and a nonliving thing, such as a shell).
5.3.3	Observe and describe how natural habitats provide for the basic needs of plants and animals with respect to shelter, food, water, air, and light (e.g., digging outside in the soil to investigate the kinds of animal life that live in and around the ground or replicating a natural habitat in a classroom terrarium).
5.3.4	Observe and record change over time and cycles of change that affect living things (e.g., monitoring the life cycle of a plant, using children’s baby photographs to discuss human change and growth, using unit blocks to record the height of classroom plants).
0.4.1	Engage appropriately with peers and teachers in classroom activities.

0.4.2	Demonstrate socially acceptable behavior for teachers and peers (e.g., give hugs, get a tissue, sit next to a friend/teacher, hold hands).
0.4.4	Respect the rights of others (e.g., “This painting belongs to Carlos.”).
5.4.2	Explore the effects of sunlight on living and nonliving things (e.g., growing plants with and without sunlight, investigating shadows that occur when the sun’s light is blocked by objects).
0.4.5	Express needs verbally or nonverbally to teacher and peers without being aggressive (e.g., “I don’t like it when you call me dummy. Stop!”).
0.4.6	Demonstrate verbal or nonverbal problem-solving skills without being aggressive (e.g., talk about a problem and related feelings and negotiate solutions).
0.5.1	Play independently and cooperatively in pairs and small groups.
0.5.2	Engage in pretend play.
0.5.3	Demonstrate how to enter into play when a group of children are already involved in play.
0.5.4	Take turns.
0.5.5	Demonstrate understanding the concept of sharing by attempting to share.

Assessment Evidence

Formative	PreK Formative Assessments ● Teacher observations throughout daily routine ● Classroom participation ● Work samples ● Student photographs and video clip
Summative	● Work samples and portfolios ● Unit Projects ● Student photographs and video clips
Alternative & Benchmark	● Work samples and portfolios ● Unit Projects ● Student photographs and video clips
Assessment Evidence Resource	

Instructional Resources

Instructional Resource List

Curricular Mandates

Below are the curricular requirements as defined in NJ Administrative Code and Statute

	Amistad		Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
	Holocaust		LGBT and Disabilities (Grades 6-12)
	Climate Change		Asian American & Pacific Islander

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies

NJ Social and Emotional Learning Competencies & Sub-Competencies

	Self-Awareness	X	Relationship Skills
X	Responsible Decision-Making	X	Social Awareness
X	Self-Management		

21st Century Skills & Themes

X	Global and Cultural Awareness		Technology Literacy		Planning and Budgeting
X	Creativity and Innovation		Financial Institutions		Risk Management and Insurance
	Information and Media Literacy		Digital Citizenship		Economic and Government Influences
X	Critical Thinking and Problem Solving		Credit Profile		Career Awareness and Planning
	Civic Financial Responsibility		Financial Psychology		