



Seed to Table: Let's Grow Beans

Children explore how plants grow through hands-on experience and storytelling.

START

- The goal of this activity is for children to explore how plants grow through their own hands-on experience and an interactive story time.
- Set up each bean-growing bag by wetting a paper towel, folding it in half, and placing it in the bag.
- Introduce the activity by asking Who would like to grow your own plants in a bag? Hold up a premade bean-growing bag for them to see.

NEXT STEPS

- Ask the children to gather around the read-aloud area for story time. First, we're going to read a story about how plants grow from seeds. Then each of you will make your own bean-growing bag!
- Read the story aloud. Throughout the reading, ask questions such as Have you ever planted a garden? What do you think will happen to the bean in this story if it is watered every day?
- At the end of the story, tell all of the children to curl up tight or make a fist, pretend you are sprinkling water and shining sun on them, and let them pop up into a plant!
- After the story, invite the children to go to the project table and give them each a bag and five seeds. Make sure their names are written on their bags with the permanent marker.
- Have the children each place their seeds in the bags, against the paper towel.
- Seal the bags all the way to get the the seeds home safely, but remind adults once they get home to open the bags part way to allow oxygen in and then tape the bags onto a sunny window or leave on a window sill.

MATERIALS

- * 1 sandwich-size Ziploc bag per child
- * 5 lima- or mung-bean seeds per child
- * 1 paper towel per bag
- * Permanent marker
- * Water
- * *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert or *From Seed to Plant* by Allan Fowler

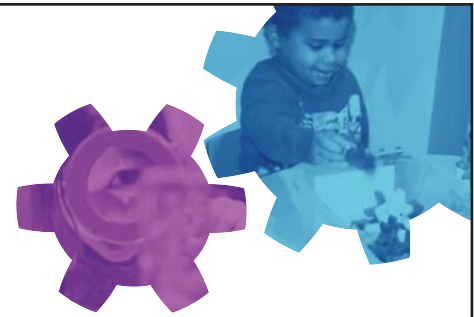
Learning Guideline:

Science: Observe and identify the characteristics and needs of living things: humans, animals, and plants.

Tip Sheets:

Go Green, Experiment

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FINISH UP

- When all the children have their bags ready to go, ask them to think about what might happen next with their seeds. You can refer back to the book, asking questions such as When the plant was watered every day, what happened to it? What were the things that the plant needed to grow? If you plant your little sprout in the dirt, what do you think will happen to it?
- Let the adults know that once the little sprout has become a seedling (2–3" tall) they can put it in a container with dirt and it should continue to grow. They can also leave it in the bag and it will continue to grow for quite a while.

EXPAND YOUR ACTIVITY

- Do this same activity, but give each child a bean mix. For example, you can buy seeds for radishes or green, garbanzo, mung, and lima beans. They will all develop differently and over different time periods, and they will have different leaf shapes.
- Have story time with a variety of read-alouds and reference books about different kinds of plants and how they grow. You can include root vegetables, such as potatoes and carrots, as well as seed plants. You can use plastic fruits and vegetables as props to help make it more interactive and create personal connections for the children.

TAKE IT HOME

- Children can create their own Mr. Potato Head with hair by scooping out a potato and filling it with wet cotton balls. Sprinkle the cotton balls with grass seed and add google eyes if you'd like. Keep the cotton moist and place the potato in a sunny spot. Watch the tiny sprouts grow into long, green hair!
- Children can make their own indoor mini greenhouse using a clear, plastic takeout salad container with a lid. Fill the bottom with dirt, select flower seeds, and plant them. Water occasionally so that the soil is moist but not soaked, prick a few pinholes in the lid to let in air, place in a sunny spot, and watch your flowers grow!

BOOKS

- *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert
- *From Seed to Plant* by Allan Fowler
- *The Gigantic Turnip* by Aleksei Tolstoy and Niamh Sharkey

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