

We Are All The Flowers of One Garden: Diversity in the Classroom Lesson Plan

Developed by Maxine McKenzie-Cox, March, 2008, for the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan's March 21 campaign for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Level: Grades 1- 3

Goals: Students will be able to:

- Identify the things that plants need to grow
- Plant a seed and care for it as it grows
- Compare the needs of classmates to those of plants
- Recognize and appreciate the diversity among their classmates
- Recognize that despite their differences, all people have the same basic needs
- Identify ways in which they can help a friend to grow

Curriculum links:

- Science – plant life
- Health - basic needs for healthy growth
- Social studies- being part of a family or group, diversity
- Math – track and measure plant growth
- Language Arts – vocabulary development and oral expression

Materials: bouquet of flowers (or picture of bouquet or garden), seed packets, potting soil, planting pots, sweet pea plants at different stages of development

Introduction:

Display a picture of a garden or bouquet of flowers and ask students to comment on their observations.

- different types of flowers
- variety of colours, shapes and sizes of flowers
- each flower as part of a whole (one flower by itself is not a bouquet or garden)

Instruction/Discussion:

Display the sweet pea plant at different stages of development- seed, plant, flower

Lead the students in a discussion using the following questions. As the discussion progresses, provide information specific to the sweet pea plant (maximum height, growing season, length of time to bloom, temperature/shade requirements, support needed, pruning needed, etc)

- How did the plant get from seed to flower?
- What does the sweet pea plant need to grow?
- How does it get what it needs? Who provides these things for the plant?
- How long it takes to grow?
- How can we keep our plants healthy so that they keep growing and don't die?
- What would happen if plants didn't get enough care and attention?

Do all plants need the same things?
Do some plants need more of one thing than others?
Do all plants produce the same flowers?

Draw students' attention to the different colours of the flowers of the sweet pea plant
Is one colour flower better than the other or are all the flowers equally beautiful?

Comparison

How is our class like a bouquet/garden?

Look around at classmates, does everyone look the same?
Why does each child look different from the other?
How are children like the flowers in the garden/bouquet?
What do children need to grow?
Did all children need the same things?
Who provides the things that children need to grow?
How do parents keep their children growing healthy?
What would happen if children only received food and water?
How can we make sure our friends keep growing?

Lead students to the understanding that just as plants/flowers are different so are people and just as plants/flowers need care and attention, so do people.

Activities:

Science/Math - Plant a seed and track its growth

Work sheets - Color the things that plants need to grow

Colour the things that children/people need to grow

- Art
- design a garden of your favorite flowers
 - draw & colour or paint a "garden of friends"
 - draw your own personal flower (display student flowers on a bulletin board garden)

Readings:

What Happens When Flowers Grow? – Daphne Butler (Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers)

How a Plant Grows – Bobbie Kalman (Crabtree Publishing Company)

All The Colours of the Earth – Sheila Hamanaka (Mulberry Books)

