



A GROWING MARKET

GRADE: 6-8

SUBJECT: Science

NATIONAL STANDARD

(6-8) SC: 4.1, 5.1-2, 5.6, 7.1

SKILL: Horticulture

FOOD AND FIBER TOPIC: I-B, II-B,E

LEARNER OBJECTIVE

Students will research and grow a plant and present findings orally.

VOCABULARY

bedding plant—Flower or vegetable plant planted in beds.

greenhouse—A glass- or plastic-covered structure used for the growing of plants.

BACKGROUND

Bedding plant is the name for young plants grown especially to sell in stores, gardens, farmer's markets and nurseries. People buy the plants, take them home and plant them in their gardens, yards, flower beds and sometimes even in large pots.

Most bedding plants are started in greenhouses and sold in small plastic containers. Growers plant the seeds for many popular plants while it is still cold outside—in January and February. They plant the seeds in greenhouses where they will get several hours of high-intensity light every day. That way they will be strong and ready to transplant early in the spring. Some of the most popular bedding plants are begonia, broccoli, cabbage, garden mums, geranium, impatiens, marigold, pansy, pepper, petunia and tomato. Various herbs have also begun to gain popularity as bedding plants.

In 1987 Americans spent \$896.2 million on bedding plants. Most of that amount—\$816.5 million—was spent on flowering-type plants. The rest was spent on vegetable-type plants.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

1. Share background material.
2. Bring seed catalogs and gardening books to class, and have each student choose one plant to research and use the student worksheet to create an information sheet explaining the plant's history, proper care and other interesting information.
3. Have students list the materials they will need to grow the plants. Suggest using recycled materials like milk cartons as containers for growing plants.
4. Gather materials and have students start plants, using what they have learned in their research.
5. After two or three weeks, have students share what they have learned about their plants, show the progress their plants have made and explain what kind of care the plants will need once they have taken them home.
6. Have students take their plants home for planting.
7. Have students keep journals of their plants' progress and report back to the class after a few weeks.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

1. Have students research plants that are native to your area.

2. Have students find the origins of several garden plants common in your area.
3. Have students grow marigolds and other hearty, quick-growing flowers to give away as Mother's Day gifts.
4. Take a field trip to a greenhouse during the spring so students can see a bedding plant operation.

RESOURCES

Student Books

- Bates, J. (1991) Seeds to Plants: Projects With Biology. Watts.
- Bjork, C. (1991) Linnea in Monet's Garden. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Burnie, D. (1989) Plants and Flowers. Eyewitness Books, Knopf.
- Rhoades, D. (1995) Garden Crafts for Kids: 50 Great Reasons to Get Your Hands Dirty. Sterling.
- Silverstein, A. (1996) Plants. Twenty-First Century.
- Van Cleave, J. (1997) Janice Van Cleave's Plants: Mind-boggling Experiments You Can Turn Into Science Fair Projects. Wiley.
- Walker, L.(1990). Get Growing. John Wiley & Sons.

Teacher Resources

Grow Lab: A Complete Guide to Gardening in the Classroom, National Gardening Association, 180 Flynn Ave., Burlington, VT 05401, 802-863-5962.

Related Internet Websites

PLANTS Project, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
<http://plants.usda.gov>

EVALUATION

Student Journals.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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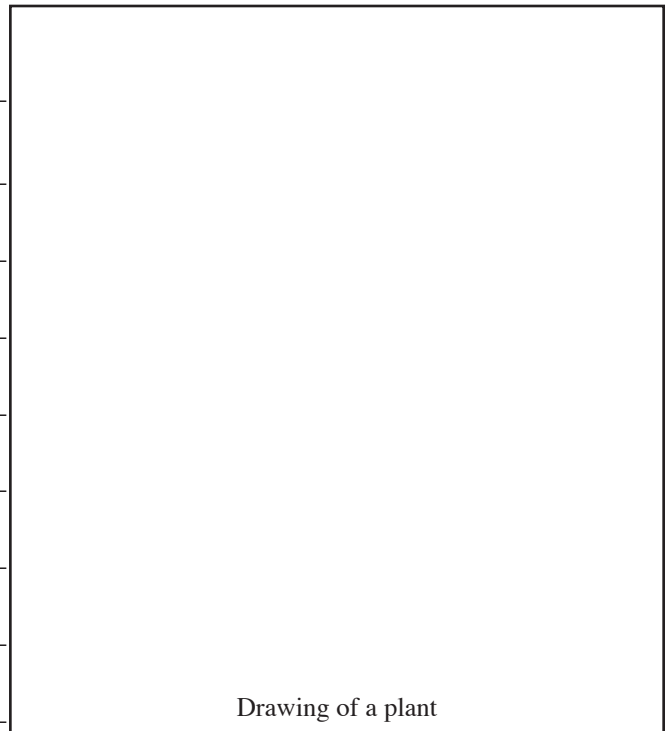
A Growing Market

COMMON NAME _____

Scientific name _____

Description of plant _____

Plant's origin _____



Drawing of a plant

Plant care

Transplanting tips _____

Soil type _____

Watering _____

Light needs _____

Fertilizer _____

Other interesting information _____

Adapted from Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom.



Food & Fiber Systems Literacy
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