

# the joy of flowers

## a science and language unit for the junior & middle school

### curriculum strands:

#### Science

- Making Sense of the Living World

#### English

- speaking, listening, presenting, reading, writing

#### Mathematics

- measurement and statistics

Levels 1-2

#### Teacher Notes

Interrelated Learning Areas:

Art • Mathematics

Essential Skills:

Work & Study • Problem Solving • Communication • Information

Context:

Science and the environment

Setting:

School and local gardens

#### GETTING STARTED

- Have pupils in buzz groups write down their impressions of a garden they know well. These can be single words or short sentences. Junior children can have these written on the board.
- Have children now focus more closely on the garden by getting them to list the elements that make up the garden e.g. plants, trees, flowers, garden furniture, lawn, ponds etc.
- Have pupils close their eyes for a minute (or more), focus on their favourite garden and try and recall the colours, shapes and smells of the flowers.
- Before the pupils open their eyes, tell them to capture the picture in their minds eye and be able to remember it clearly. They can then open their eyes.
- Have pupils recall their minds eye picture and share with the class.
- Challenge them to share it with the class as any of the following: painting; felt pen sketch; poem; short paragraph; radio description (tape record); advertisement; poster.
- Allow time to complete and plan and mount a display with the children.

#### ACTIVITY TWO

- Have pupils survey the school garden/s for flowers.
- Get them to count the total numbers of flowers, different types of flowers (identify if possible), the total numbers of single coloured flowers, numbers of multicoloured flowers, most common colour, most popular flower...
- Decide on ways to record these e.g. simple picture graphs for juniors, bar graphs, pie graphs, line graphs.

- Have children survey their own or neighbours/local park in the same way. Report back to the class and share and record results.

#### ACTIVITY THREE

- Invite a gardener to the classroom or arrange a visit to a local garden shop. The aim is to find out the names of flowers and how to look after them. Have each pupil adopt a flower and have an example of a flower that they want to identify from the school and/or home.
- Discuss with the pupils and list the questions that they want answers to e.g. names of flowers, where to plant, when to plant, caring for the plant, size of plant, control of diseases, how long it lives, preparing the soil, shapes of flowers, colours of flowers, how deep to plant a seed or bulb, what time of the year they flower, flowers that like shade, flowers that like sunshine, how often to water. Have pupils find out anything specific about their adopted flower.
- Have each pupil ask the expert to identify their flower then design a name tag card on card for the flower. Coat it with varnish and place on a stick in the garden by the adopted flower.
- Invite another class, teachers or parents to walk around the school garden and have individual pupils or groups explain the specific features of their adopted flower.

#### FURTHER DIRECTIONS

- Plan a class/group school garden. What considerations are necessary when planning e.g. different colours, single colour groups, multi colour groups, different heights of the plants soil types and preparation, exposure to the wind, best position for visual effect, flowers that will flower all year round, stone borders, paths...
- Have class prepare, plant and care for their own garden as a year round project.
- Have pupils take regular note of changes in the garden and record these changes on a time line chart.
- Keep a visual record of the garden during the year and sketch, paint or photograph the changes.
- Take careful note of visitors to the garden such as birds and insects. Try and identify them and find out why they visit the garden.
- Make sand saucers.
- Invite a florist to demonstrate the art of flower arrangement.
- Find out the uses of flowers and what flowers are appropriate at special times. In previous years, many schools have used the sale of bulbs as an excellent means of raising funds. As a fund raising project, it involves both parents and children with great success and enjoyment.
- Try pressed flowers.
- Try dried flowers arrangements.

# the joy of flowers (pg 2)

- Investigate and be able to identify different types of bulbs, roses, daisies, flowering shrubs and trees, flowering weeds.

## FURTHER ACTIVITIES

- Have pupils make a mobile of flowers, birds and insects of the garden.
- A mobile of flower words.
- Word poems and chants using flower and garden words.
- Create soundpictures of the flower garden with voices and instruments.
- Descriptive writing. The day in the life of a flower
- Adopting and helping a garden of an older person. Could be a group activity.
- Create a magic garden in the classroom. Construct flowers, trees, shrubs, insects, birds, mammals....
- Make a tape of garden sounds and play these in your constructed garden.
- Invite other classes to visit and experience your magic garden.
- Construct gigantic and colourful flowers from another planet out of card and paper.
- Invent a 'Dance of the Flowers'.
- Make a class big book of the garden and enjoy reading it.

## evaluation:

- can the students identify and focus on the elements and plants that make up a typical garden?
- are the students able to create a verbal and visual description of a garden?
- are the students able to conduct a survey into the contents of a garden under different classification criteria and display the results in meaningful and clear graphic form?
- through group and class discussion, can the students devise a list of suitable 'flower/garden questions to ask a garden expert that will aid their understanding of garden content and care?
- can they impart this information to other people who visit their garden?
- did the students show increasing skill and confidence in using various art forms to re-create a virtual classroom garden?