

Harvesting Lesson

The Harvest Lesson will guide the students through harvesting their vegetables and fruits correctly.

Lesson Summary

1. Students will understand the different harvesting techniques for their vegetables and fruit
2. Students will participate in harvesting and washing their produce
3. Students will taste test their vegetable and fruits

Garden Checklist

- Explore** — Which plants look ready to be harvested?
- Harvest** mature veggies and place into food-safe containers
- Water** the remaining fruits and vegetables
- Weed** — Pull out any weeds that are growing

Exercise in the Garden

Remind the students the students that gardening is a great way to get exercise. Lead the students in a quick garden warm-up, to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

<i>Dig, dig, dig the earth</i>	(Make digging motion)
<i>Then you plant your seeds</i>	(Pretend to drop seeds)
<i>A gentle rain</i>	(Flutter fingers)
<i>And bright sunshine</i>	(Circle arms above head)
<i>Will help your veggies grow</i>	(Squat and jump up)

Tips on Harvesting

Leafy Greens:

- Cut collards and kale at their outer leaves
- Lettuce and spinach can be cut across the top, keep the base of the plant to allow for new leaf growth
- Store unwashed leaves in plastic bags with a wet paper towel in the bag

Head of Vegetables:

- Cut broccoli, cabbage, head lettuce at base of the plant head and stem

Root Vegetables:

- Harvest when soil is dry
- Loosen soil around plants with hand tools
- Dust off, but do not wash vegetables until you are ready to eat them

Fruit-Bearing Vegetables:

- Harvest by pinching at the point where the stem and vegetable meet
- Harvest when skin of the vegetable is smooth and tight

Reading in the Garden

Choose one of the recommended children's books to read to the class. What connections can you help students make between the book and harvesting in the garden?

Good Enough to Eat by Lizzy Rockwell
Mrs. McNosh and the Great Big Squash
by Sarah Weeks

The Monster Health Book
by Edward Miller

The Vegetables We Eat by Gail Gibbons
Rah Rah Radishes by April Pulley Sayre
I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato
by Lauren Child

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk
Food by Jan and Stan Berenstain

Harvest from the Garden

1. Have your students wash their hands before heading out to the garden. Washing your hands before harvesting is important because it keeps the vegetables free from germs that might make us sick. Locate a clean container or bag to put your veggies in, and head out to the garden.
2. Discuss with the students that each vegetable is harvested differently. Refer to the Tips on Harvesting for the best ways to learn how to harvest your vegetables. Tell the students to wait for directions before they pick the vegetables. It is very important not to pull the entire plant out of the soil.
3. In a clean, food grade container or bag, bring the harvest back into the classroom, have the students participate in washing and drying their vegetables.
4. Reinforce vegetable identification by going over names of the produce they harvested. Prepare the vegetables by cutting them into bite-size pieces and have the students try their freshly grown veggies.



Review Questions

- **Why should we remember to wash our hands before harvesting our fruits and vegetables?** Keep germs that might make us sick off of our fruits and vegetables
- **Why should we wait for our teachers' directions before we pull vegetables off the plant?** Each vegetable may be harvested differently. We don't want to accidentally pull the whole plant out of the ground.
- **Which vegetable are you excited to try today?**