

# Cut and Paste: Creating Your Schoolyard Garden Map

Grade levels: 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>

## Lesson Summary

After your students have considered how much space they have, how much growing time they have and what they want to do with the produce, it is time to start planning out your garden beds! Creating a garden map is a great classroom activity to get your students ready for the growing season. This activity can be accomplished by dividing students into small groups, or allowing each student to plan their own garden bed.

## Objectives

- To practice basic math and mapping skills by drawing their garden and using proportions to measure out the spacing between each vegetable plant
- To plan out your garden this upcoming season

## Tools You'll Need:

- Raised Bed Garden Grids (4x12, 4x8 or 3x9)
- The list of veggies you and your students decided on planting this season
- Vegetable pictures
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- KCCG's plant spacing guide

## Discussion

What are some plant needs that we should consider when planning our garden?

*Space, sunlight, root depth, height, and time for plants to grow to full maturity*

To make a map of our garden plan, what information do we need?

*KCCG Plant Spacing Guide, KCCG Planting Calendar, an image or idea of what our schoolyard garden looks like*

## Procedures

KCCG has pre-made garden grids that are 4x12, 4x8 and 3x9 (see attached). You can copy these grids depending on the number of raised beds in your garden. **Each square represents one cubic foot.**

1. Have the list ready of what you want to plant—the vegetables will need to be in season. Refer to our [Cool and Warm season plants list](#) to see what KCCG has available to order. Try to limit four veggie types per bed.
2. Begin by drawing out your garden beds on a white board, so that all the students can see. Add a compass and significant landmarks (trees, the school building, etc.) to the map. Write out all the vegetables on the white board, and have the students divide up the vegetables between the beds, depending on how much they would like to plant of each.
3. Divide the class into smaller groups so that each group works on planning out one raised bed each. Provide each group with one raised bed grid and scissors, and a sheet of the vegetable images that are going into their beds.
4. Ask the students to discuss their plan before cutting out their vegetables. How many of each vegetable should they plant? Have the students add a compass to the bottom of each of the garden grids.



5. Invite the students to start cutting and spacing out their vegetables on the paper grids. Do not set out the glue sticks until the end, when the placement of the vegetables has been finalized.

### **Rules to remind your students:**

- The cut-out images of the vegetables should not overlap— the size of the image represents how much space the vegetables will take up. If the vegetables are overcrowded, they will not be successful
- Each vegetable has its own section—do not plant a vegetable type in more than one area of the garden
- While we don't want the images overlapping, we don't want any empty spaces in the garden either! We want to use all of the growing space that we have, so be sure that the rows of vegetable images are touching, and that there's no white space on the grid
- Plant rows the width, not the length of the bed. These 4' rows should be planted with the same vegetable
- Plant vegetables north to south—the taller vegetables should be planted on the north, so that they don't shade out shorter vegetables from the south sun.

Once each group has completed mapping out their garden bed and placing the vegetable images, pass out the glue sticks and have the students glue each piece of paper to the grid. Have each student count how many of each vegetable is included in each bed. This will give the students an idea of how many plants and seeds they will need for their garden, and how much food their garden will produce. Share these numbers with your KCCG garden contact, so that we know how many transplants and seed packets to bring!

Display these garden grids in your classroom and bring them out with you on planting day. Divide up the class in the same small groups, so that each group is planting the bed that they worked on.

### **Wrap Up**

What would be the outcome if we scattered seeds randomly in the garden? Why bother planning out the garden?

*Scattering seeds randomly would result in a mixture of seedlings growing throughout the garden. Vegetable plants would grow too close together and shade each other out. It would be more difficult to distinguish the vegetable varieties, and the plants would not be successful.*

Why is it important to plan the garden?

*We plan our schoolyard garden so that we know how far each plant should be spaced out, so that we know what is growing where, if we need to re-seed or thin seedlings. Planning the garden helps us distinguish between the vegetable varieties and makes it easier for us to determine what is a weed. By planning the garden we also are able to determine how much food we will end up with. Plus it makes for a neat and tidy garden!*

