



# WELCOME TO THE GARDEN

Garden

EST. TIME 45 minutes SEASON fall 

GRADE K | LESSON #1

## ? ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)

- How can I be my best self in the garden?
- How can I be my best for my community?
- How can I be my best for my environment?

## MATERIALS

- ☐ Chart paper  
(at least 2 sheets)
- ☐ Easel
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ 1 clipboard for each student
- ☐ 1 sharpened pencil for each student
- ☐ Handout: 1 copy of the *Garden Scavenger Hunt* for each student

## Abc VOCABULARY

- Community
- Environment

## ✓ ASSESSMENT

- Observational checklist



Use the lesson template to create your own and share with us!

## PREPARATION (15 MINUTES)

To prepare for this lesson, gather materials.

## TEACHER BACKGROUND

The development of expectations for the garden space happens collaboratively with students in this lesson. This is a process that encourages students to reflect on how they impact their own learning, their community, and the environment along with what behaviors they can agree to as a class to ensure that their shared goals are met.

## LESSON DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students will explore what makes up the garden space—everything living, nonliving, and themselves! They will then discuss how to be the best for themselves, their community, and their environment in this garden space. The teacher will guide them to cohesive language around these understandings before modeling behaviors that align with these understandings. Finally, students will explore and enjoy the garden while practicing these behaviors.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### Life Skills Learning Objectives

**PLS.1** Students are self-aware and show respect for their own needs, the needs of others, and the environment. They practice safe and conscientious behaviors in the garden and kitchen environments.

**PLS.2** Students are able to express empathy and caring for themselves, others, and the environment.

**PLS.3** Students cultivate honest and responsible behaviors that contribute to the learning of the community.

**PLS.4** Students are active and engaged learners who show up on time prepared to learn and manage their time wisely.

**PLS.5** Students develop the ability to make informed and responsible decisions.

**PLS.6** Students actively seek creative and resourceful solutions.

**CLS.5** Students participate in the development of agreed upon protocols and behaviors for the garden and kitchen environments.

ACADEMIC STANDARD CONNECTIONS

**CCSS.ELA.K.SL.1.** Students will be able to participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

**CCSS.ELA.K.SL.6.** Students will be able to speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

**Social Studies:** Citizenship.

CULTIVATE CURIOSITY (10 MINUTES) *engage*

1. Lead students to a comfortable sitting position in a central gathering area in the outdoor classroom space (in a circle, if possible).
2. Welcome students to the garden and provide them with a few minutes to silently observe what makes up the space from their seated position, using only their eyes and ears. Allow each student's voice to be heard by asking them to say aloud their name and a thing they see that makes up the garden space. As students share, write their individual names and the things they observed in the garden area on a sheet of chart paper.
3. When every student has had the chance to share, take a moment to review the chart paper as a group. Remind students that each of them individually make up the garden space, as well as all of the other living and nonliving things they shared.



See “Teaching Strategies”  
in Appendix section for  
information on how to lead  
Think-Pair-Share.

ROOT AROUND (15 MINUTES) *explore*

1. Explain to students that each of the living and nonliving things that make up the garden are unique and special independently, work together in their **community**, and exist peacefully in their **environment**. Provide an example of something growing in the garden, explaining its value independently, in its community, and in the garden environment.
2. Introduce the first chorus of the song “With People I Like” by the Banana Slug String Band. Sing the first chorus with students as they find someone to partner with and sit down with linked arms in the central gathering area.
3. For the following Essential Questions, provide 1 minute for students to think about their answer independently, 2 minutes to tell their ideas to their partner (pair), before selecting a few students to share their ideas with the whole group, a process referred to as “think-pair-share.”
4. As the Enduring Understandings emerge from the group discussions, write them on a new sheet of chart paper for students to view.


ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS	ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS TO REITERATE DURING GROUP DISCUSSION
How can we be our best for ourselves?	Make choices that keep you safe. (for example: move slowly, stay within the garden boundaries)
How can we be our best for our community?	Show respect for each other. (for example: join the group for the callback, listen, and share)
How can we be our best for our environment?	Show respect for the plants, animals, and environment. (for example: stay on garden pathways, be gentle with plants)

GROW UNDERSTANDING (10 MINUTES) *explain*

1. Explain to students that they are going to practice exploring the garden space in a way that keeps them safe, shows respects for each other, and shows respect for the plants, animals, and environment.
2. Model for students behaviors that are examples and counterexamples of these 3 enduring understandings, asking students to show thumbs up / thumbs down if the model behaviors align with the enduring understandings.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS	EXAMPLES	COUNTEREXAMPLES
<b>Make choices that keep you safe.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• moving slowly through the garden area</li> <li>• staying within the garden boundaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• running carelessly through the garden area</li> <li>• stepping outside of garden boundaries</li> </ul>
<b>Show respect for each other.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interacting with classmates in a gentle way with our bodies and language</li> <li>• joining the group at the callback signal</li> <li>• listening with a still body and attentive eyes</li> <li>• sharing ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interacting with classmates in an aggressive way with our bodies and language</li> <li>• continuing to wander after the callback signal</li> <li>• showing active or distracted behaviors when others are sharing</li> </ul>
<b>Show respect for the plants, animals, and environment.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interacting with plants and animals in a gentle way</li> <li>• moving along garden pathways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interacting with plants and animals in a careless or aggressive way</li> <li>• carelessly stepping into garden beds</li> </ul>

OBSERVE THE FRUITS (5 MINUTES) *elaborate*

1. Explain to students that they will have time to explore and enjoy the garden with their classmates to look closer at the living and nonliving things they observed earlier and to model the behaviors that they just learned.
2. Distribute to each student, 1 clipboard, 1 sharpened pencil, and 1 Garden Scavenger Hunt handout.
3. Explain to students that on your cue, their challenge is to explore the garden to find the six items pictured on the scavenger hunt. When they find objects that match the descriptors on the Garden Scavenger Hunt, they do not need to pick or collect them. They can mark an "X" in the appropriate box with the picture. In the last box, students can draw something else interesting they saw in the garden.
4.  Remind students of their boundaries and their callback signal to let them know to return to the whole group gathering space. As students explore and enjoy the garden area, acknowledge observed behaviors that align with the enduring understandings, such as being active and engaged learners or showing care for the environment. Also, use the observational checklist to assess students' current development of the life skills.

5. After a few minutes, provide the call back signal and as each student returns to the whole group gathering space, acknowledge them by name for showing respect for each other and working together as a group.
6. If time permits, go around the circle and have each student share something interesting that they found.

REFLECT (5 MINUTES) *evaluate*

1. Acknowledge students individually and as a group for the behaviors that they exhibited that aligned with the enduring understandings that they developed together with the goal of being the best for themselves, their communities, and their environment.
2. Ask students to reflect silently on what it means to be the best for themselves, their communities, and their environment beyond the garden—perhaps in the environment they are preparing to return to in school or in their home environment.
3. Share appreciation for each of their individual contributions to the kitchen and to the community, and for their respect for the kitchen. Express excitement for your next time together.
4. Sing the first chorus of the song “With People I Like” by the Banana Slug String Band as students’ line-up to be dismissed.

\*Keep the chart paper of students’ observations to revisit in **Garden Lesson #5: Living or Non-Living**.



## ADAPTING FOR INDOORS

In the case of inclement weather, the Cultivate Curiosity, Root Around, and Grow Understanding sections of this lesson can occur inside the classroom. The Observe the Fruits section should take place in the garden area on the next garden day that the weather allows.

## CONNECTIONS TO KITCHEN LESSONS

Compare group agreements for the garden with agreements students have in the kitchen. How are behavior expectations similar in both places? How are they different?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on group management and group development of procedures and parameters, see:

- *Tools for Teaching* by Fred Jones
- *Rethinking Classroom Management* by Patricia Belvel

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

GARDEN SCAVENGER HUNT



Something neat!





# LIVING OR NONLIVING?

Garden

EST. TIME 45 minutes SEASON fall 

GRADE K | LESSON #5

## ? ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)

- How can we tell the difference between living things and nonliving things in the garden?
- How can we tell the difference between plants and animals in the garden?
- How can we safely use trowels to plant transplants?
- How can we provide plants with everything they need?



## MATERIALS

- ☐ Handouts / Visual Aids
- ☐ Equipment
- ☐ Materials for Planting

## Abc VOCABULARY

- Living
- Nonliving
- Plants
- Animals
- Trowel
- Roots
- Stems
- Leaves
- Soil



## ASSESSMENT

- Observational checklist

## PREPARATION (15 MINUTES)

To prepare for this lesson, gather materials and ensure that there is space in the garden cleared for seedlings to be transplanted (1 per every 3 students).

## TEACHER BACKGROUND

While many students may be able to classify objects as living or non-living, categorizing items that were once-living as well as articulating the reasoning behind an object's classification can be challenging. In this lesson, students discover that living things eat food (or make their own food), breathe, move (or react to surroundings), grow, and produce young (seeds, eggs, babies). In contrast, non-living things do not eat, breathe, move (without being moved), grow, or make babies.

## LESSON DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students will work on sorting and classifying the things they observe in the garden area, first by living and nonliving, and then sorting living things into animals and plants, each time developing qualifiers for each category. Students will then learn how to safely use hand trowels and practice by transplanting seedlings. Finally, students will discuss how they can provide their plants with everything they need (soil, water, sun, air).



Use the lesson  
template to create  
your own and  
share with us!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Content Learning Objectives**

**GPM.K.1** Describe what lives in a garden and name what they need to live (sunlight, water, air, nutrients).

**GTE.K.1** Name, identify, and safely use new tools.

**GTE.K.2** Match new tools to tasks.

**GTE.K.3** State how to properly care for new tools.

**GTE.K.4** Describe the purpose of a new tool.

**Life Skills Learning Objectives**

**PLS.2** Students are able to express empathy and caring for themselves, others, and the environment.

ACADEMIC STANDARD CONNECTIONS

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

**NGSS.K.LS1.C Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms**

All animals need food in order to live and grow. They obtain their food from plants or from other animals. Plants need water and light to live and grow.





## LESSON MATERIALS

### Materials for Lesson Introduction

#### Visual Aids

- ☐ Chart from

**Lesson #1: Welcome  
to the Garden**  
(if available)

### Equipment

- ☐ Chart Paper,  
Easel, Markers
- ☐ Hand Trowels  
(1 per every 3 students)
- ☐ Journals (1 per student)
- ☐ Clipboards  
(1 per student)
- ☐ Pencils, Colored Pencils,  
Handheld Sharpeners  
(enough for all students)

### Materials for Planting

Seedlings  
(1 per every 3 students)



See “Teaching Strategies” in Appendix section for information on how to lead Think-Pair-Share.

CULTIVATE CURIOSITY (5 MINUTES) *engage*

1. Lead students to a comfortable sitting position in a central gathering area in the outdoor classroom space (in a circle, if possible).
2. Welcome students to the garden and provide them with a few minutes to silently observe from their seated position (using only their eyes and ears), what has stayed the same and what has changed since their last visit. After a few moments, discuss together.
3. Present the chart poster that was created in the first **Garden Lesson #1: Welcome to the Garden** lesson (if available). Ask students to think-pair-share and identify things from the list that are living and nonliving and request that they explain their reasoning for each. Through the discussion, guide student understanding of qualifications of **living** and **nonliving** things.

LIVING (OR ONCE-LIVING)	NON-LIVING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eats or makes its own food</li> <li>• Breathes</li> <li>• Moves (or has moving parts)</li> <li>• Reacts to surroundings</li> <li>• Grows and develops</li> <li>• Produces young, seeds, or eggs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't need to eat</li> <li>• Doesn't breathe</li> <li>• Doesn't move without being moved</li> <li>• Doesn't react to surroundings</li> <li>• Doesn't grow</li> <li>• Doesn't make babies</li> </ul>



See “Teaching Strategies” in Appendix section for information on transitioning between whole and small groups effectively.

ROOT AROUND (10 MINUTES) *explore*

1. Explain to students that they will have time to explore the garden with their classmates to find 5 new living things and 5 new nonliving things using the qualifications they came up with as a class. Remind students of their boundaries and their callback signal to let them know to return to the whole group gathering space. Use a phrase such as “when I say go, and not before I say go” to cue students to transition from whole group listening to small group work.
2. As students explore the garden area, acknowledge observed behaviors and reinforce understandings of qualifications of living and nonliving things through discussion with small groups.
3. Provide the call back signal for each student to return to the whole group gathering space.

GROW UNDERSTANDING (5 MINUTES) *explain*

1. In the whole group, discuss some of the living and nonliving things students found in the garden. Ask students to explain their reasoning and reinforce the language around the qualities of living and nonliving things through the discussion.
2. Look more closely at the list of living things with students and work together to further divide that list into **plants** and **animals**. Guide students into a similar conversation about what qualities differentiate plants from animals.
3. Explain to students that throughout the year we are going to do our best to create an environment where both plants and animals can live and grow.

OBSERVE THE FRUITS (15 MINUTES) *elaborate*

1. Explain to students that they are going to learn how to carefully plant new baby plants in their garden and then work together to determine how to provide them with everything they need to live and grow.
2. With all students' attention, identify a handle **trowel** by name and ask students to repeat the name aloud. Then, state the purpose of the tool and describe a situation when it would be used, such as the task for today.
3. Demonstrate how students will retrieve their hand trowel from their storage place and how they will carefully travel through the garden space to their work area with the handle trowel.
4. Divide students into teams of 3, instructing a student in each group to choose from a selection of places for their team to plant their baby plant, a student to retrieve the hand trowel as demonstrated, and a student to meet the teacher to receive their baby plant and carefully carry it to their group's work area. When all students are at their work area with all of their tools, request that they put their eyes on the teacher for their next instructions. Use a phrase such as "when I say go, and not before I say go" to cue students to transition from whole group listening to small group work.
5. When all students are in the work area with their tools and plants, demonstrate how they will use the hand trowel to dig a hole the approximate size of the **roots** of the plant, how to carefully place the baby plant in the hole and loosely pack the **soil** around the roots so the **stem** stands up tall with its **leaves** reaching up into the air to the sun. Instruct students to show you they are finished with this task by placing their hand trowel on the ground outside of the bed and putting their eyes on you. Cue students to transition from whole group listening to small group work.

- ✓ 6. As students work together to plant their seedling, acknowledge observed behaviors that align with the Life Skills Learning Objectives, such as showing care for the environment. Also, use the observational checklist to assess students current development of the life skills.
7. When all groups have finished planting their baby plant, acknowledge their careful use of tools and their gentle care of their plant before demonstrating how to clean their tool and return it to the storage area. Select a student in each group (perhaps the student who was the “site selector” previously) to complete this task and request the other members return to the whole group gathering area to collect their journals and coloring supplies. Cue students to transition from whole group listening to complete their tasks.

REFLECT (5 MINUTES) *evaluate*

1. Read to students the following prompt to complete in their journal:

**Prompt:**

Draw a picture of your plant and where you planted it in the garden. Include yourself in your picture, with the tool you used today and any other tools you think you may need to take care of your plant.

2. Recognize students’ behaviors that aligned with being the best for themselves, their communities, and their environment. Specifically, ask students to reflect on how they showed care for the environment.



## ADAPTING FOR INDOORS

In the case of inclement weather, the Cultivate Curiosity, Root Around, and Grow Understanding sections of this lesson can occur inside the classroom—perhaps with images of the garden or a view of the garden out of a window. The Observe the Fruits section should take place in the garden area on the next garden day that the weather allows.

## CONNECTIONS TO KITCHEN LESSONS

In the kitchen, before you eat a dish featuring fruits or vegetables, celebrate the sun, soil, water, air, and nutrients that made those fruits and vegetables grow.

POSSIBLE EXTENSIONS

**Community:** Draw a picture of your home or neighborhood and circle 5 living and 5 nonliving things.

**Cafeteria:** Look at a school lunch and identify which foods came from plants and which came from animals.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Is It Living or Non-Living* by Rebecca Rissman
- *What's Alive?* By Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld
- *Is it Alive?* By Marcia Freeman
- *Living and Non-Living* by Angela Royston Living
- *Living and Non-Living* by Carol K. Linden