

Activity	Growing Sunflowers		
Key:	Due the various abilities of our children we have graded some of the activities into different levels. Your child may access different levels depending on the activity as well as their ability.	Contact details:	schools@cdssgroup.org.uk
Seeds			All Education Advocates access this email.
Saplings			Sarah Larkin (Cheshire West) Becky Harris (Cheshire West)
Trees			Yvonne Edwardson (Cheshire East)

Brief description of Activity



Mid to late March is a great time to plant and grow sunflowers. Try growing them or some other seeds and check out their progress over a period of time. What do you need to do to make them grow?

Resources needed

Sunflower seeds – although this activity would work with any seeds
 For this activity you will need small plant pots, sunflower seeds, compost, water and cling film. You may also want to use a ruler, garden cane and chalk.
 Optional - Glass jar.

Activity – Seeds, Saplings or Trees

Show your child the sunflower seeds and look how small they are! Explain that you can grow them together and they will become a tall plant with a big yellow flower on the top. You could explain that to grow, a seed needs lots of the same things we do to stay healthy. They need to be given food (soil), something to drink (water) and be kept warm (the sun)

You can watch a time lapse of a sunflower growing from seeds to flower on you tube <https://youtu.be/Z-iPp6yn0hw>

Ask your child to fill the plant pot with compost or moist soil from the garden. Push 1 seed firmly into each pot, about 2 cm below the surface.
 Cover the pots with cling film and leave in a warm, sunny position e.g a warm window sill or green house.



You could also plant a seed in a glass jar so you can see what is happening beneath the soil. You can fill the jar with soil and push the seed against the side of the jar or use cotton wool or tissue to fill the jar and dampen slightly.

If you have several jars you could see what happens if you don't water one of the jars or if one grows quicker when kept inside or outside.

Remind your child to keep the soil moist in the plant pots and then after about 2-3 weeks shoots should start to appear. Remove the cling film.

When the plants are about 10-15cm tall (check the height together with a ruler. Show your child the number you are looking for on the ruler and check daily to see if your young plants are tall enough) plant the contents of the pots in the garden somewhere sheltered from the wind.

Keep the soil around the bottom of the plants moist and watch them grow! Use chalk to keep a track of growth against the wall or against a garden cane. If you want to look at centimetres together and measure the plants you can, otherwise you can just look at who's is growing bigger/taller. Who's will grow the tallest by the end of summer?

When the plants start to flower (August/September) see if you and your child can spot the seeds as they appear in the centre. Show your child the different parts of the plant. The flower, the petals, the stem, the leaves.

Once the flower heads start to face downwards (late September/October) you can pick the sunflower seeds and save them to grow more plants together next year. Pull the plant out of the ground and explore the roots together.

Activity - Trees or grown ups!

Van Gogh painted a very famous picture of some sunflowers. If you use the link below you can try and find it by visiting the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam on a virtual tour!

Attachments

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/van-gogh-museum?hl=en>



Cheshire Downs Syndrome Support Group

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