



Life of Plants

Grade Level

Grade 3

Engage

This activity is designed to start your students in recognizing themselves as scientists and thinking critically about problem-solving. The goal is to teach concepts through discovery and to encourage using scientific thought processes. As with all lessons provided, please feel free to adapt them according to your students' abilities. Some of your students may be early readers, in which case you may find it more successful to lead activities and discussions as a whole group rather than using individual Research Plan sheets. Certain scientific vocabulary may or may not be appropriate for your students' level of understanding. Take these ideas, make them your own and your students will have a greater chance at success.

In what ways are plant life cycles the same or different from one another?

1. Begin this lesson by telling students that they will be investigating the life cycles of plants.
2. If your students are familiar with brainstorming and recording their ideas, break them into small groups. If your students need more guidance, work with them as a large group. Engage your students in a discussion of what they predict the answer to this question to be. More importantly, why do they think this?

Explore

3. Explain to the students that they are going to explore this question in more depth by looking closely at the life cycles of different plants.
4. Assign each student a different plant, preferably a variety of different types and from different environments. To provide for diversity, consider assigning some of the following plants: bamboo, cactus, fern, kelp, oak tree, palm tree, pine tree, rose, tulip.

Explain

5. Once students have their assigned plant, explain that they will be drawing a life cycle of that plant.

6. Ask students to consider the following things while doing their research: the length of time each life cycle stage takes, what each life cycle stage looks like, and where each plant might be found.

Expand

7. After the students have drawn their pictures, pair them up with a classmate that was assigned a different plant. Ask the students to create a Venn diagram comparing the two plants that they researched.
8. Bring the students back together as a large group to discuss their findings. Did they find more similarities or more differences? Why do they think the differences existed?

Expand

9. Ask the students to share their plant life cycle drawing with the class so that all researched plants can be discussed. How closely did their plant life cycle match the idea they brainstormed at the beginning of this lesson? Was there anything about their plant that they didn't know prior to doing research?

Assess

10. Review the life cycle drawing created by each student. Observe student work when creating Venn diagrams and their participation in class discussions.

Standards

Ohio Academic Content Standards
Grade 3 Life Science Topic: Behavior, Growth and Changes Plants and animals have life cycles that are part of their adaptations for survival in their natural environments.



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Supplemental Materials

My Research Plan

1. What is my research question?
Is it a good question?



In what ways are plant life cycles the same or different from one another?

2. How can I get my information?



3. What will I do with this information?



4. How will I know I did my job well?

