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Desktop Garden

Great for grades 2-5

Create a tiny garden for your students' desktop!
Add small toys, rocks, labels or marbles to this oasis in a lid!

Preparing your Garden Plot

1. Take a clean lid from a peanut butter jar or a plastic soup-cup lid.
2. Lay a damp tissue inside the lid.
3. Sprinkle seeds on the area where you want growth to occur. Leave room for small rocks or other items you want to use to perk up your garden.
4. Cover the lid with a thick piece of cardboard to block the light and allow seeds to germinate.
5. Check your garden everyday until you see little shoots growing, then you may remove the cardboard. Be sure to continue to keep your tissue damp.
6. Once your seeds have sprouted let them grow by watering your desktop garden regularly. Decorate your gardens with small cars, rocks and even marbles.

Desktop - Tip!

Use mustard seeds or cress seeds. They are speedy growers and will sprout anywhere as long as they are damp!

Standards

Math:
Fourth Grade:
Number Sense;
1.0, 1.5, 1.7

English Language Arts:
Second Grade:
Writing
2.0, 2.1

Science:
Fifth Grade:
Life Sciences;
2.f

Classroom Activities

Math

- Find out what percentage or fraction of each student's desk is covered by the garden plot. Use tape to create a grid on each desk. Each square in the grid should be the length and width of the lid. Have the students figure out the fraction and then the percentage.

English Language Arts

- Have students keep a journal of the growth stages of the garden plot.
- Ask students to create a poem about their garden plot and all of the decorations they decided to place in the plot.
- Have students write a story about their plot and submit the top five stories to the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom for the Imagine this... Story Writing Contest.

Science

- Create an experiment with the desktop gardens. Separate gardens into groups and see how they do with less water or more water. How will the gardens grow with less light or too much light? Compare the growth of mustard seeds to tomato seeds. Which does better? Ask the students to explain why one kind of seed may not grow in differing conditions.

Adapted from The Gardening Book by Jane Bull; DK Publishing.