



Tomato Exploration

Goals

Introduce students to different varieties of tomatoes, how they grow, and how they taste. Guide students in making a three dimensional object.

Curriculum Alignment

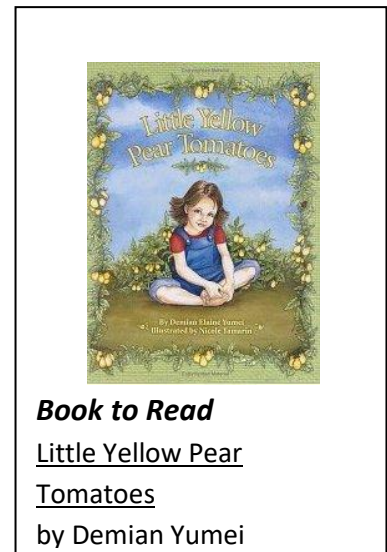
Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at www.growing-minds.org.

Materials

- 9" by 12" red, yellow, and green construction paper or cardstock
- Scissors (for each child)
- Hole punchers (one for every two-three children)
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
- 1/4-1/2 inch brads-two per student (make sure the brad head is larger than the hole made by the hole puncher)
- String

Preparation

If you have a limited amount of time for the craft, we suggest cutting the paper strips ahead of time. With this preparation completed, students can make 3-D vegetables in 10-15 minutes. If students cut their own strips, the activity takes 20-30 minutes to complete.



Book to Read

Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes
by Demian Yumei

Activities

Read a Book

Read Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes. Sound out and spell out the word "tomato" and "tomatoes" on the board. Count the syllables in the word "tomato." With older students explain and differentiate the spelling of the singular and plural word.

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Show your students examples of different types of tomatoes, including cherry, heirloom, plum, and slicing tomatoes. Give younger children several colors of cherry or pear tomatoes and ask them to put the tomatoes into groups by color or shape. First and second graders can put tomatoes into groups of 10, as an introduction or review of more complex counting. Ask the students to describe how the tomatoes look. Are they smooth or rough? Do they look old or fresh? Give the students magnifying glasses. Cut the tomatoes in half and ask the students to become tomato scientists. Guide them in looking at the slices closely. What do they see? How many seeds do they guess are in a tomato? Is there water in the tomatoes?



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Taste Test

Show the students several varieties of cherry tomatoes. Ask them to pick one to taste. Before they taste the tomatoes ask the students to predict what they think the tomato will taste like. Once they eat the tomato, give the students a few minutes to describe the taste and texture. Give students the opportunity to make a page in their garden journal about tomatoes.

Make 3-D Tomatoes

Steps

1. Ask students to select the variety of tomato they would like to make. Do they want a ripe tomato (red or yellow) or a green tomato?
2. Guide the students in making their strips – demonstrate the different methods while counting out the number of strips that you make.
 - *To make round fruits and vegetables, turn your paper horizontally. Fold the paper in half, open and fold the edges to the middle, then fold the outer edge to the middle again. Use your finger to press firmly along each of the folds. Open the paper and you should see eight equal sections. Cut along the folded lines to make 8 strips.*
 - *For longer veggies, fold the paper vertically, into six equal strips. Cut along folded lines to make 6 strips.*
3. Invite the students to draw on the strips. Are they making a “Mr. Stripy tomato (yellow with orange stripes)? Or a sungold cherry tomato (yellow with dark yellow or orange spots)?
4. Guide the students in punching holes half an inch from the top and bottom edges of each of their strips. Students can stack two or three strips together and punch several holes at once.
5. Show the students examples of green tops. Demonstrate how to cut a simple leaf shape. Guide the students in cut out the green tops or leaves. Ask the students to punch a hole in the middle of the green leafy part.
6. Next, students should stack all of their strips together with the holes lined up, adding the green leaf to the top stack.
7. Demonstrate how to put a brad through both the top and the bottom holes. Show them how to secure the brads by flattening the ends. Guide the students in completing this step. Some students will be able to easily do this. Others will need help from students who find the step easy and from the teacher and teachers’ assistant.
8. Ask the students to guess how they think a stack of paper strips can make a round tomato?!? Before the kids try (and tear their strips), demonstrate how to make the stack of paper into a 3-D object by gently pulling one piece of paper out at a time until the object is round. The green leaf should be on the outside and top of the tomato.
9. Attach a piece of string to the top brad so that students can display their crafts.

