

You Are the Expert

GARDENING ACTIVITY #1

Summary:

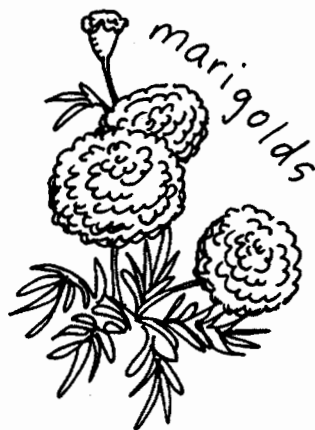
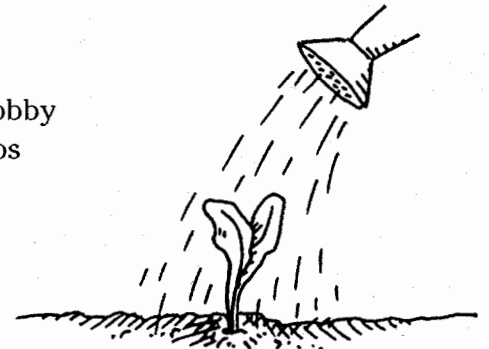
Groups will pick a gardening topic to research. They will put together a "show and tell" so the others can see what they have learned.

Why Do This?

It is empowering to acquire knowledge and share it. Everyone will be an expert on one part of gardening. This information will be used throughout the gardening projects. Whatever phase or part of the garden is being worked on there will be someone who can answer questions or who will know where to look for answers.

Some Helpful Information:

Gardening comes right after TV and shopping as a favorite pastime or hobby in the United States. This means there are all sorts of books and videos out there that teach about gardening. There are many theories and planting schemes to follow depending on which person or book you believe. We all develop our own gardening style with time and experience.



Used bookstores almost always have some books on gardening that are less expensive than new ones. Nurseries can sometimes be talked into donating books (and other supplies as well) to your group. Often there are newsletters and pamphlets available for free. If there is a local gardening club (your reference librarian can probably help you find them) it can be a source to find gardening information for your garden library as well. Check with the library for videos they have to lend about gardening or one of the topic areas listed in the preparation section.



Time:

2 hours or over a week

Materials:

reference materials, books, magazines, pamphlets, videos
paper and drawing materials

Preparation:

1. Collect as many references as possible. Look at the topics and decide which ones will provide the best information for each group.
2. Decide on how many topics and groups to assign. You can make groups small (2-3 people) and give only one topic or divide into a few groups each with a couple of topics. Groups will require an older, accomplished reader to be paired with a youngster.

TOPICS:

Soil
Compost
Watering
Winter Crops
Summer Crops
Transplanting
Harvesting
Starting and Transplanting Seedlings
Pest control

3. Be sure no one is overly pressured. The experts know where to *find* answers; they don't have to *know* all the answers!

Step by Step:

1. Explain that they are going to be experts so everyone can ask them questions as the garden project progresses. They will learn about their topic and show-and-tell what they found out with everyone. They can do a skit-type demonstration or show pictures and talk, or use any other method they like.
2. Assign partners. Have them choose or assign topics.
3. Distribute materials.
4. Help folks determine what are the important concepts to relate to the rest of the group and determine how to share that information.
5. Have everyone do their information sharing.

Extensions:

- Have groups call an expert. You can find out who they should call and provide a number or let them search out an expert. They should share the information with the rest of the group.
- Take a field trip to a local farm or a farmer's market and ask lots of questions!

Handout • Gardening Activity #1

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Good Sources of Information on Gardening

Sunset Western Garden Book, Lane Publishing. Encyclopedia-style book that covers many aspects of gardening and answers basic questions. There are editions for all parts of the country. Often available used.

The Encyclopedia Of Organic Gardening, Rodale Press. This is a comprehensive guide formatted like an encyclopedia. Just look up whatever you are interested in, from a particular plant or insect to intensive gardening or compost. Often available at used bookstores.

Golden Gate Gardening, by Pam Pierce, Agricultural Access, Davis, CA, 1993.

U.C. Farm and Garden Publications Catalog, available through the University of California Cooperative Extension office. Check the phone book for the office near you or phone within California (800) 994-8849 or Phone (510) 642-2431, FAX (510) 643-5470. This is a source to check for the following and more books on gardening.

- 21444 *Home Vegetable Gardening*, 72 pp \$5.00. Facts about vegetable gardening and information on specific vegetables.
- 21496 *Natural Enemies are Your Allies*, 17" x 24" poster \$5.00. Shows 20 photographs of beneficial insects that help control pests in your garden.
- 21385 *Wildlife Pest Control around Gardens & Home*, 96 pp \$8.00. Identification and control of pests, birds and mammals common in California.
- 3332 *Pests of the Garden & Small Farm: A Grower's Guide to Using Less Pesticide*, 286 pp \$30.00. Practical, useful techniques to help backyard growers use less toxic pesticides, more biological controls, and other approaches to reduce pests.
- 21495 *Children's Gardens, A Field Guide for Teachers, Parents, and Volunteers*. 192 pp \$10.00. Covers all aspects of gardening.
- 21251 *The Rapid Composting Method*, 4 pp \$1.50.
- 2642 *Growing Tomatoes*, 8 pp \$1.00.
- 2219 *Growing Strawberries in Your Garden*, 6 pp \$1.50.
- 2641 *Growing Zucchini and Other Summer Squashes*, 4 pp \$1.50.
- 2160 *Citrus Fruit for Home Planting*, 20pp \$2.00.
- 21469 *The Kiwifruit: Home Gardener's Guide*, 16pp \$2.00.

