



Fifth Grade Spring Lesson

Colonial Kitchen Garden

Objective:

Students will learn about the various plants the Early American settlers and Native Americans used for food, medicine and home life during the time of colonization and the Revolutionary War.

California State Content Standards:

1) Social Science.

5.3 Students describe the cooperation and conflict that existed among the American Indians and between the Indian nations and the new settlers.

2. Describe the cooperation that existed between the colonists and Indians during the 1600s and 1700s (e.g., in agriculture, the fur trade, military alliances, treaties, cultural interchanges).

5.4 Students understand the political, religious, social, and economic institutions that evolved in the colonial era.

1. Understand the influence of location and physical setting on the founding of the original 13 colonies, and identify on a map the locations of the colonies and of the American Indian nations already inhabiting these areas.

5.6 Students understand the course and consequences of the American Revolution.

4. Understand the personal impact and economic hardship of the war on families, problems of financing the war, wartime inflation, and laws against hoarding goods and materials and profiteering.

Lesson Outline:

A. Lesson

- a. Agricultural needs of Colonists—food, medicine, housewares
- b. Use of a kitchen garden
- c. Plants of Native Americans vs. plants brought by Colonists

B. Garden Rules

C. Planting Plans

D. Plant

Seeds/Supplies:

Seeds:

Beans—Lima beans (important crop brought by colonists), Romano or Kentucky Wonder pole beans

Squash—Black Beauty Zucchini or yellow summer squash variety

Onions—bulbs

Corn—any hybrid, short season variety

Carrots—Nantes

Medicinal herbs—basil, dill, cilantro, bee balm, lemon balm

Transplants:

Medicinal herbs--rosemary, thyme,

marjoram, rue, chamomile

Lesson:

Lesson:

Even after many years of living in the colonies in America, families had to grow most or all of their own food to eat. Although they could purchase grains and certain shelf stable foods (like flour or dried beans) by the time of the Revolutionary War, most homes had a small kitchen garden in which they grew fresh vegetables as well as herbs for culinary seasoning and for medicinal use.

- 1) There was no refrigeration for keeping food fresh or markets for purchasing fresh vegetables. So, families seeking fresh foods needed to grow them themselves. This became particularly important during the time of the war when much of commerce was disrupted and the currency had little value so people could not buy many things that may have been previously available.
- 2) Families had their own small kitchen garden next to their home that they used to provide fresh vegetables and herbs for flavoring foods and medicinal uses.
- 3) The vegetables being planted today (beans, corn, carrots and onions) were the basic vegetables used to make Succotash, a common meat stew eaten during these colonial times.
- 4) There were few doctors and pharmacies, especially in rural areas, so most remedies were created from common herbs grown in the garden—treating upset stomach, headache, cuts and sores, etc. The colonists brought seeds for herbs with them from Europe, and they also learned from the Native Americans how to grow and use some native herbs for seasonings and medicines.

Planting Directions:

1) Seeds

- a. Carrots--make rows 6 inches apart and ¼ inch deep. Place seeds 1 inch apart in row. Do not let students dig holes for seeds. Have student pinch and pat to cover rows after they place seeds.

b. Onions—plant in rows 6 inches apart. Bulbs must be planted 3 inches deep. Use unsharpened pencils or small dowels marked at 3 inch depth to make holes. Instruct students about the top and bottom of the onion bulb (top is pointy, bottom is dried roots) and be sure they are planting them right side up.

c. Corn and Beans--plant seeds two inches apart in rows 1 foot apart. Beans must have support from trellis or support fence between rows of beans. Seeds should be planted 1 inch deep. Have students insert their finger down to first knuckle to make hole. Do not have them cover seeds until all have been planted in row.

d. Squash--plant in two foot diameter circle, with circles two to three feet apart. Seeds should be planted six to a circle, one inch deep. Have students insert their finger down to first knuckle to make hole. Do not have them cover seeds until all have been planted in circle. Squash may also be grown up trellis or fence like beans.

2) Herbs

a. Seeds (cilantro, basil, dill)--make rows 6 inches apart and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep. Place seeds 1 inch apart in row. Do not have students dig holes for seeds. Have students pinch and pat to cover rows after they place seeds.

b. Nursery transplants—assign 2-3 students to each transplant. Plant transplants one foot apart. Students take turns digging hole, as deep as a seedling and one inch wider, removing transplant from pot (turn upside down and tap, catching plant as it falls out, not by pulling out of pot by neck of plant), planting in hole and patting down dirt around it.

Teacher Information



Fifth Grade Spring Lesson **Colonial Kitchen Garden**

Today your class will plant vegetables and herbs that would commonly be grown by families for food, medicine and home life during the later Colonial and Revolutionary War periods. They will learn:

- 1) Because there was no refrigeration or markets, families needed to grow much of their own fresh food. This was also important during the Revolutionary War when commerce and trading was interrupted and currency had uncertain value so that it was difficult to buy items that might previously have been available.
 - 2) Because there were not many doctors or pharmacies, families also grew many medicinal herbs to treat common illnesses such as stomach ache, headache and cuts.
 - 3) Students will grow the basic ingredients for Succotash—corn, lima beans, carrots and onions—which was meat stew very common in Colonial America.
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Please visit the garden regularly to see your garden grow! Hold an Open House in June to talk to your students about their garden.