

AIM: To help children, through simple experiments, to learn a basic characteristic of all living things which is that: living things grow and that seeds are living things.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON

You will need:

- Some watercress seeds
- Water
- Some empty yogurt pots (or similar)
- A few small pebbles or gravel
- Compost
- Some fingernail clippings (children might volunteer these).

DISCUSSION

- What does the word 'grow' mean?
- Name some things that 'grow' . . . babies, grass, flowers, hair, nails, feet, puppies, kittens, trees etc.
- What helps you to grow?
- What helps animals to grow?
- What helps flowers grow?
- Can you think of anything which doesn't grow?
- Sort and group what the children offer into things that grow/things that don't grow.

LET'S EXPERIMENT

Depending on numbers and manageability, children may set up experiments in groups or one experiment for the whole class. If the pots holding the watercress seeds were yellow and given a 'Bart Simpson' look, the watercress as hair would be a novelty to take home at the end.

- Give each group three pots and a spoon.
- Fill each pot with compost.
- Place a sample of pebbles, seeds and fingernails in the separate pots.
- Water all pots.

The teacher should set up two sets of control pots – one where none of the pots get water and one where the pots are covered i.e. deprived of light. Since these will not grow, it might be best if they are seen to be the teacher's. Organise a table/area of the classroom to accommodate whatever number of experiments you have.

LET'S GUESS

- Speculate about which samples will grow and why.
- Draw a picture of each pot with its contents, putting a 'correct tick' beside it if they think it will grow and an X if they think it will not grow.

RECORD

Observe, record by drawing and water the experiments at a particular time each day for the next few days.

EVALUATION

Discuss the results of the experiments.

LET'S DO IT

- Have the children do the actions in the poem *I'm A Seed* indicated in italics on the accompanying poster.
- Let the children take the watercress home so the whole family can see it and taste it.

