

Design a mini 'No Adults Allowed' garden

Notes for Teachers

Introduction

Welcome to our **'No Adults Allowed'** garden design project. This can be run in a few sessions with your pupils as a class, gardening group or whole school. Activity sheets in the pupil booklet can be photocopied and digital versions of the booklet on the Campaign for School Gardening website.

This project is designed to be pupil-led, but depending on your pupils' age, they may need some help along the way so please adapt as appropriate for your class or group.

This project will guide your pupils through designing a garden space for children while also considering the other benefits a garden can have for other people, wildlife, and the environment. They will carry out some creative activities to help them think about the different purposes of a garden and what sort of garden they might like to explore.

They will then be asked to sketch some garden designs before choosing a design they would like to plant up in a recycled container. Their pack includes some seeds, which could be grown to represent grass or other plants. Mini plants, cuttings, natural items or models to bring their designs to life.

Gardens could be planted up individually or in a group. You could even have each class create a garden and have a competition to select a winner to put forward for our competition!

Curriculum links

This activity can be linked to multiple areas of the curriculum including:

- **Science:** identifying different plants and wildlife, sowing and growing seeds, understanding what keeps plants healthy, different habitats, the food chain and starting to understand aspects of climate change
- **Art and design:** exploring and using different materials and textures, using sketching to create ideas, exploring other designs and how they feel about them
- **English:** articulating their thoughts about gardens and plants in a group setting, reading and understanding seed packet instructions, conducting research on plants or the benefits of gardens

The competition

To enter, fill in the submission form linked on our website. We will send a link to the submission form to all registered schools when entries open.

You will be asked to include a photo of your chosen garden as part of your submission, as well as a short description from your pupils' point of view.

Closing date for entries is Friday 14 June 2024

Helpful hints: What else can a garden be for?

Use these examples to help prompt your pupils when they are completing the 'What else can a garden be used for?' discussions on pages 8 – 9 of their booklets.

Wildlife

Here are just some of the ways wildlife can help us:

- Bees are vital for pollinating plants, something that is needed to help us grow food
- Hedgehogs and birds love to eat insects and minibeasts such as aphids and snails, which can damage our plants if not controlled
- Worms help to dig the soil for us, allowing oxygen and nutrients to mix up and keep our plants healthy
- When small insects and minibeasts die, their bodies decompose into the ground and provide more nutrients for our plants

Here are some of the ways we can help wildlife:

- Planting a mix of plants that pollinators love
- Creating homes such as hedgehog houses, bug hotels and bat boxes
- Growing plants with seeds to feed birds
- Building a small pond to provide water for different creatures and to invite frogs and different insects to the garden

Growing food

Here are some ways to grow food and have less impact on the planet:

- Grow food in recycled objects such as potatoes in a bag for life, tomatoes in tin cans, or ask for some help to build raised beds or planters from recycled wood
- Make a seasonal plan so that you have home-grown food all year round
- Plan recipes and only grow the ingredients you need to reduce your food miles and food waste
- After you've picked your fruit and vegetables from the plant, make sure you compost the leftover plants so it can be added back into your garden later to improve the soil

Helping the planet

Here are a few ways plants can help to reduce the impacts of climate change:

- Creating rain gardens, in place of or instead of hard surfaces, can slow the flow of rainwater whilst limiting flood risk. The rain can be used by the plants and reduce the pressure on drainage systems
- Pollution can be bad for us but certain plants, such as hedges, can help protect us by trapping the polluting particles before we breathe them in
- Growing climbing plants or building green walls on buildings can help insulate them, keeping them warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer
- Plants can also keep our streets cool. In warm weather, trees release cooling water vapor from pores in their leaves, in a similar way to humans sweating. They can also help shade us from the sun's rays and reduce temperatures by up to 3°C
- Our trees protect future communities from climate breakdown by sucking up CO₂ and locking it away in their tissues – they can capture the equivalent of 810 car miles of carbon per tree

Improving Wellbeing

Here are some simple ways to feel help boost wellbeing in the garden:

- Grow plants for the five senses such as chives, rosemary, sage, mint or lavender
- Sit quietly outside and try to notice the small things. What do the plants smell or feel like? Close your eyes, what can you hear the longer you listen?
- Learn a new skill such as weeding, pruning, sowing seeds or making pots or watering cans from recycled materials
- Grow plants to give away to a local care home, hospital, charity or even to someone at home to brighten their day. Sharing with others can make us feel good too

