

First Peas to the Table

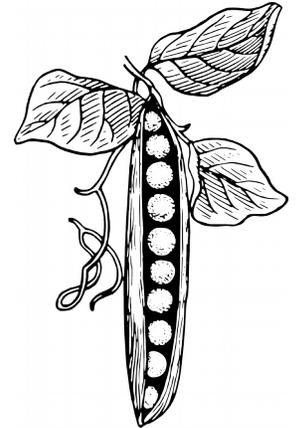
*A lesson from the New Jersey Agricultural Society
Learning Through Gardening program*

OVERVIEW: Thomas Jefferson, our third president, was an avid gardener. In this lesson, students learn about the life cycle of a pea while they learn about the yearly contest Jefferson had with his neighbors to see who could grow the first bowl of peas.

GRADES: K-2

OBJECTIVE: The student will be able to:

- Describe the life cycle of a pea.
- List plant needs.
- Sequence events.
- Write with the purpose of describing, informing, and/or explaining.



MATERIALS

8 1/2 x 11 piece of green construction paper for each student

Light green paper

Circle pattern (preferably 2 inches or less in diameter)

Glue sticks

Markers or colored pencils

Scissors

First Peas to the Table book by Susan Grigsby

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE:

Plants undergo a series of changes from the time the seed is planted to the time that the plant is full grown. First the seed must germinate or sprout. To do this, the seed requires moisture, warmth, air, and space. While the seed does not need soil to sprout, it does need the soil's nutrients in order to grow to maturity. After germination, the seed will grow roots down into the ground and shoots will begin to poke out of the ground. This is the seedling stage. Next, leaves and blossoms will appear on the young plant. After the blossom is pollinated, the plant will bear fruit. This process is the same whether the plant is growing in the wild, in a backyard, or on a farm.

PROCEDURE:

Read and discuss *First Peas to the Table* by Susan Grigsby. Discuss the contributions of Thomas Jefferson.

Discuss the life cycle of a pea plant as shown in the book. Include how long the plant takes to grow to maturity, the basic needs of the plant, and the planting season.

Create a model of a Ms. Garcia's class garden on the board or a large piece of paper. What plants might be grown in what sections?

Students draw or trace and then cut out 5-6 circles 2 inches or less in diameter. (Tracing a small bathroom disposable cup works well to create 2-inch circles.)

Then they list each step of the life cycle of a pea on a circle. Younger students can draw pictures of each step of the life cycle. (The teacher can model this on the board.)

Then, direct the students to: fold an 8 1/2 x 11 piece of green construction paper vertically in half. Draw a pea pod along the fold of the paper large enough to cover the entire half page. Cut out the pea pod around the fold creating a bi-fold pea pod model. Arrange the steps of the life cycle inside the pea model. Glue the "peas" down to create a bi-fold book illustrating the life cycle.

EVALUATION:

Correctly completed pea pod

EXTENSIONS:

Write a six-sentence summary of the life cycle of the pea.

Create a bulletin board with a trellis, pea vine, and attach the student's pea pods.

PLANT PEAS IN THE CLASSROOM

School milk cartons work well as containers for seedlings. Open the cartons and wash the inside. Poke a few holes in the bottom so excess water can drain.

Fill the cartons about three quarters full with soil. Have students plant 1-3 pea seeds in each carton about 1-inch deep. Place a tray underneath the cartons to catch excess water.

Water lightly and place on a sunny windowsill. Water when dry. Record growth observations.

Peas can be transplanted into the school garden in late March or early April in New Jersey. They will need a trellis to grow on as they grow larger.

New Jersey Learning Standards

Science: K:LS1.C 1:LS1.A 2:LS2.A

Social Studies: K-2:6.1.2.EconEM.1, 6.1.2.HistoryCC.3, 6.1.2.HistoryUP.1

English Language Arts: K:RL.K.1-10 1:RL.1.1-4,6 2:RL.2.1-7

