



Garden Drama

Introduction

In the book *Jo MacDonald Had a Garden*, author Mary Quattlebaum introduces children to the plants and creatures in a garden and shows how to create gardens that benefit people and wildlife. In this activity and its connections, children do the movements of the song, create pictures of the creatures, and explore seasonal changes.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Paper
- ◆ Markers or crayons
- ◆ Large brown blanket or fabric (optional)

Key Concepts

- ◆ Environments are the space, conditions, and factors that affect an individual's and a population's ability to survive and their quality of life.
- ◆ Plan and conduct a simple systematic observation.
- ◆ Communicate or analyze investigations that might be drawn or spoken as well as written.
- ◆ Weather changes from day to day and over the seasons.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Read the book, with children doing the dig, wiggle, pat and other movements of the song. Point out the shovel for digging and the watering can for sprinkling in the pictures. Guide children to find the plants and creatures that are not part of the song but are included in the illustrations. Assign each student to one of the fourteen plants and creatures in the book (shrub, cardinal, butterfly, etc.).
2. Have students draw a picture of their creature using the book's illustrations as a guide or provide a large photo of each plant/creature.
3. Spread the blanket on the floor and have each child place her picture in the garden.
4. Now, sing the song again, with all the children doing the movements. What a wild dance! Explain that they have created a garden that helps people (provides food) and benefits wild creatures (provides food, shelter, and places to lay eggs).

Nature Connections

◆ At the end of the book, there is a picture of all 14 creatures and plants. See if students can find them, and then ask them to draw their own gardens.

◆ The book shows how a garden changes over the course of a year. How does it and weather change over the four seasons? Which plants and animals are seen during each of the seasons? Which animals stay during the winter and which ones migrate? Guide children to look for seasonal changes in the natural world that surrounds them. Every month have children examine a tree close to the school and its surroundings within a radius of five feet and discuss/record the changes in the tree and surroundings over time.

Additional Resources

Seasonal Changes and Crafts

Young Gardener by Stefan and Beverley Buczacki.

