

GREAUING GARDENS LSU AG CENTER + CHILDREN'S COALITION

LESSON OF THE MONTH

Lesson Title: Observing Insects & Other Creatures in Our Garden

Objectives:

- Create Binoculars to observe the garden
- Identify insects and other creatures in the garden
- Observe and compare various "garden friends"
- **Book:** Over in the Garden by Jennifer Ward
- **Vocabulary:** pounced zipped/zoomed, slide/slither nibble, soldiers, glow/flash, pounced (advanced language)
- **CLASS Focus:** Language Modeling, Quality of Feedback, and Concept Development

CLASS TIPS

Concept Development: Why do you think bees like flowers? How do you think they eat from flowers?(analysis and reasoning) Do you think all the insects in this book will fly or walk?(prediction) Why do you think ants walk in a line? Why do we walk in a line? (real world application) Does this insect look like any of the ones we saw in the book? Or is it different? (comparison and contrast)

Quality of Feedback: Child: "The spider has a lot of legs!" Teacher: "Yes the spider has a lot of legs, and actually it has 8 legs." (Specific feedback and expansion) Child: So bugs have 8 legs." Teacher "Spiders are the only insects that have 8 legs, all other insects have 6 legs. (Clarification) So if spiders have 8 legs and all other insects or bugs have 6 legs, how many legs does a bee have?" (follow-up question) Child: "Six legs!" Teacher: "And how do you know a bee has 6 legs?" (quires response, persistence) Child: "Because it's not a spider!" Teacher: "Right! A spider has 8 legs while all other insects, like bees, have 6 legs!" (Recognition and Reinforcement, entire exchange is a feedback loop)

Language Modeling: Tell me about the insects in the book? Which ones do you think we will see in the garden? (open ended questions) Child: "A ladybug!": Teacher: "Yes, it is a ladybug, and it is red and black" (repetition and extension)





ENCOURAGING VEGETABLES

Many preschoolers don't eat enough vegetables each day. Many children this age can be "picky" eaters. It can take children 10 or more tries before they like a new food. Keep trying! Your efforts will help your child have healthier eating habits later. Eating a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables and getting at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily can help children maintain good health, a healthy weight, and lower risk for other serious health problems.

Preschool gardening engages children by providing an interactive environment to observe, discover, experiment, nurture and learn. Child care gardens are living laboratories where interdisciplinary lessons are drawn from real life experiences, encouraging children to become active participants in the learning process.

Studies have shown that childcare and school gardens encourage intake of fruits and vegetables, increase parental support and involvement, and improve childrens' enthusiasm about preschool/child care, teamwork skills and self-understanding.

Source: usda.gov; farmtopreschool.org

GARDEN TIPS

What's growing? Our 2 Early Childcare Center Model garden beds at 117 Hall St. are going strong. On May 18, we planted seeds for southern peas, okra, & snap beans. We also transplanted into these beds the following starts from our greenhouse: eggplant, squash, cucumbers, marigolds, tomatoes, and peppers.

Watering: Our irrigation system is set to water daily for 10 min. This will vary depending on your location, water pressure, etc. It is hot and dry, so keep an eye out for yellowing or wilting leaves - signs that your plants need water. Remember to water early in the morning and water the roots only (not the leaves--the sun will scorch them if wet). Kids love to water, so this is a fun activity to involve them. Teach them that the roots are the mouths of the plants, and the leaves are like the arms, and ask them: "Which part of your body do you drink from?"

There's still time to plant! What you can still plant from seed in this heat: *purple hull peas, snap beans, okra, & basil.*

