

May 11, 2020

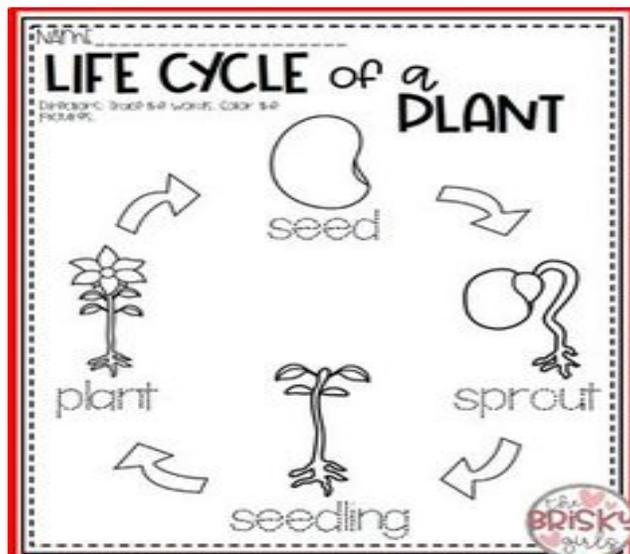
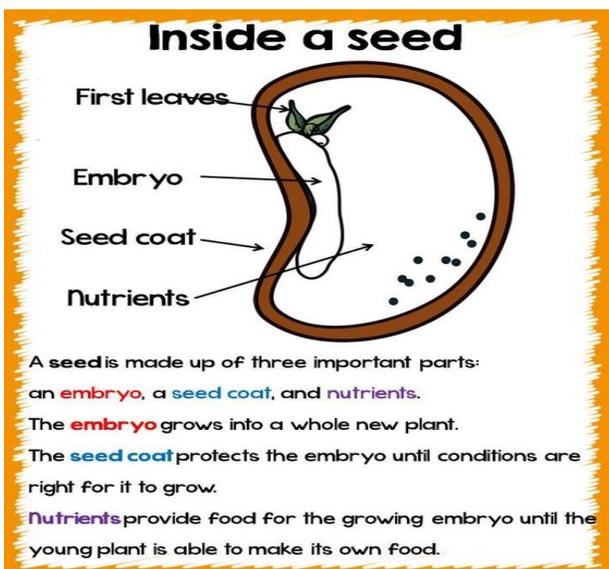
Hello Strongstart Families, we hope this newsletter finds your families healthy, and ready to play-to-learn together again. This week we are focusing on seeds and planting. We are mindful that access to resources are limited right now, so most of these materials can be found in and around your home. A simple way to practice language skills are through music and poems or rhymes. This week we have more for you to chant or sing along with your children.

Enjoy, and take good care

“virtual” hugs and distant “toe-taps”

Ms Marian, Ms Irina and Ms Laura

These pictures are terms for seeds and their growth cycle to promote language, and dialogue. Activities, songs, art and recipies to follow.....



## Seed or Bean germinating

No need for dirt! In this gardening activity, your child will "plant" a bean or seed in a plastic bag - then watch it sprout, in this simple experiment

Watching a sprout emerge from a dry seed is nothing short of miraculous! Put a bean in a plastic bag to watch roots form and leaves emerge before your very eyes. (germination) on page 2..

**Safety Tip:** Be aware! Dried beans can be choking hazards for small children.

**You'll Need:**

- Small plastic zip-lock storage bag
- tape
- Dried (raw) beans, peas, or seeds
- Paper towel
- Water



and fold it a

**What to Do:**

Step 1: Have your child cut a paper towel in half a few times so it can fit into the zipper storage bag.

Step 2: Soak the paper towel in water, squeeze out excess water so it's damp and slide it into the bag. Smooth it so that it's relatively flat.

Step 3: Let your child position two beans or seeds about three centimeters from the bottom of each bag, on one side of the paper towel. Don't worry if they don't stay in place, but if necessary, stuff a little piece of paper towel into the bottom of the bag so that the seeds aren't sitting in water.

Step 4: Seal the bag part way, leaving an opening near the top so the growing plants can get some air.

Step 5: Tape the bag in a window with the beans facing indoors, so that your child can watch them as they grow.

Step 6: Read the section below, on the science behind the fun, to your child so that she knows what to look for as the seed germinates and grows.

\* For this experiment, choose a window where the seeds will get plenty of light, but won't be blasted by intense sun all day. If your windows are freezing cold, tape the bag to a clear glass or vase in a sunny spot indoors, rather than a window.

**Creative Enrichment** Record the beans' germination by drawing and measuring them each day. Have your child make a science notebook and use it to record his observations. What happens if you do the same experiment, but put one bag of beans in a window, and another one in a dark closet? Plant more than one type of bean or seed to compare how quickly they grow.

## Harvesting seeds from the vegetables and fruit we eat

### Beans and Peas

*Using beans and peas from our own garden to use as seeds*

Choose a healthy plant and let some pods grow full out completely before picking. The pod will begin to turn pale green or white. Let the pod dry, do not remove the seeds! When the pod is dry and brittle the seed is ready to use. If there is still two months before frost you can plant the seed. If not the seed can be stored for next year's garden.

Store the seeds in a clean dry jar and store in a dark, dry cool place until ready for next Spring seeding.

### Dried Bean and Peas from grocery store

Plant a large healthy-looking dried bean and/or peas one inch deep, directly in a full-sun garden. While seeds are germinating make sure soil is moist 6 inches below surface.

## Tomatoes

Cut a tomato and scoop seeds into a sieve to lightly press away juice of tomato. Let dry for 5-7 days before planting. Fill container with soil and plant seeds. Place in a sunny spot and moisten.

## Peppers

Remove seeds from pepper and place on soil, lightly cover with soil. Keep in a sunny spot

### *Hint for Tomatoes and Peppers:*

Plant seed in an eggshell filled with soil. When plant is growing, gently crack the shell and plant into a pot. The eggshell is a natural fertilizer

## Cucumber

Scoop seeds out of cucumber and stir into a glass of water. The good seeds sink to the bottom of the glass. Plant seeds in garden and water. As cucumbers grow, the plants will need lots of water.

## Onion

Cut onion to create a core, keeping both root and top intact. Plant root side down with top slightly covered with soil, water

## Strawberries

Remove tiny seeds on the outside of the strawberry. Plant seeds into a pot of soil and water lightly. Keep out of direct sunlight and water regularly. Without damaging the roots, plant when the strawberry plant is large enough to handle.

## Pumpkins and Squash

Scoop out and rinse seeds. Dry the seeds in the sun before planting. Plant in a sunny area and wait one month for growth \* Fertilized soil allows the pumpkin to grow larger and sweeter.

## Watermelon

Remove seeds from watermelon and place in container with lined with paper towel.

Place another paper towel over seeds and spray with water. Cover with plastic, poke holes with a toothpick and wait for 4 days. This allows seeds to soften and will be better for germination.

Place seeds on top of soil and lightly cover with soil. Water and place in sunny, warm area. Plant in a hot, sunny part of the garden.

## Oranges

Plant an orange seed in a pot and water. Watch and wait for the seed to germinate. Transplant to a bigger pot as the tree grows. Take outdoors only when it is hot outside

### Just for fun:

#### Avocado

Place three toothpicks into the avocado pit so the pointed end will face upward. Suspend the pit over a small container using the toothpicks to hold the pit in place. Fill the container so the bottom of the pit is in water. Be sure to keep water level up so bottom is always in water. The seed can take one to eight weeks to germinate. In the Spring, the seed grows better and faster. When a strong root has formed, plant into a pot indoors.



## Vegetable Scrap Gardening

There are so many possibilities to grow food from your food scraps. If you have a small balcony or an outside garden, you can create a garden from the vegetables in your fridge. Gathering and planting the fruit and vegetables

Here are some basic things you will need to create your garden

- Potting soil
- Pot or container that will let water drain from base
- Small plate/saucer/ plastic lid for under base of pot or container



### Vegetable scraps

- Lettuce \* Green onion \* Bok-choy \* Beets \* Carrots \* Celery

Cut the base of the vegetable leaving 3cm above the base (“Basal Plate”).

Place base of” Basal Plate” in soil, water it, then place it in a sunny place and keep moist

Carrots and beets will not grow but the greens are edible and can be put in a salad.

### Potatoes

You will need a large container with drain holes on the bottom.

Fill with rich loose soil. Best would be light and fluffy soil

2 potatoes (which began to sprout (eye) small shoots)

Plant 4-6 inches deep with eyes up in soil

It will take 100 days to mature water deep, and soak once or twice a week.

When the leaves of the plant begin to yellow and drop the potatoes are ready f

### Observations with children

Place the cut base off (celery, carrots, lettuce or bok-choy) on a plate with wet paper towel and let sit for one week. Keep the paper towel moist. Observe over the week for any growth or changes.

Place green onion in a glass and fill with water until the base of the green onion is submerged.

Place in a window. The next day you should be seeing the roots growing in length and changes in the top of the cut onion

Place in a pot with moist potting soil. Water well.

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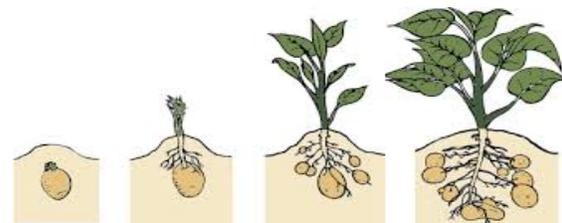
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## SONGS

### **The Planting Song** (Tune: "Farmer in the Dell")

\*Let's all plant some seeds, (Pretend to dig with a shovel.)

Let's all plant some seeds.

Hi, ho, it's spring you know,

Let's all plant some seeds.

*Repeat* with these verses:

\*The rain begins to fall... (Have fingers fall like rain.)

\*The sun warms the earth... (Hands over head in a circle.)

\*The seeds begin to grow... (Make a fist with one hand and bring the other hand up through it.)



### **Little Seed (chant)**

(Everyone crouch-down as low as you can get, and say)

"little seed, little seed, lying so low,

Here's some rain and some sun (fingers fall like rain, hands open like sun)

So you can GROW GROW GROW!" (stand up tall

slowly, arms stretched up to the sky)

### **Songs continued....**

#### **Dig a Little Hole**

Dig a little hole, (*pretend to dig*)

Plant a little seed, (*pretend to drop in seed*)

Pour a little water, (*pretend to pour*)

Pull a little weed. (*pretend to pull up weed*)

Chase a little bug, (*flick hand to one side*)

Oh! There he goes! (*cup hand over eye*)

Give a little sunshine, (*circle arms overhead*)

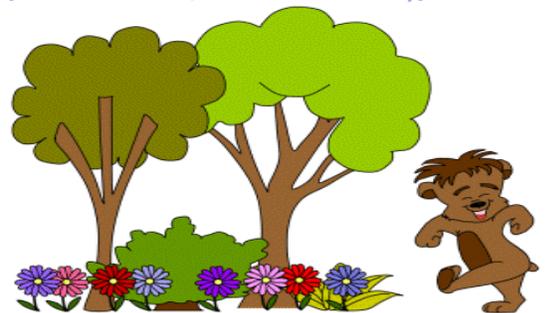
Grow a little rose! (*pretend to smell sweet flower*)

#### **Teddy Bear Rhyme**

Round and round the garden, like a Teddy Bear.  
(*gently trace finger in a circle around child's palm*)

One step, two step  
(*walk your fingers up child's arm*)

Tickle you under there!  
(*tickle under chin, under arm or tummy*)



#### **Five Fat Peas**

Five fat peas in a pea-pod pressed (*Clasp one hand over the other to make a ball*)

One grew, two grew, (*Extend thumbs together then index fingers*)

And so did all the rest (*Raise middle, rings, and little fingers in turn*).

They grew, and they grew, they grew so fat and portly

That the pea-pod POPPED! (*Finish with a LOUD CLAP!*)

## Bean sorting

You will need ....

Tray

2 or 3 types of dried beans (ie: black beans, pinto beans, navy beans)

about ½ cup each type

3 Small bowls

Spoon (optional)

Place assortment of beans in one small bowl on a shallow tray with two small empty bowls and a spoon.

Adult: talk about what materials your using, and model for the child how to transfer the different colored beans to different bowls. Be sure to explain the purpose of this activity, which is to strengthen their fine-motor skills (finger and hands) and to practice their sorting skills.

\*keep the tray with contents on an appropriate shelf in your home for child to use independently



## What are they learning by sorting?

\* analyzing similarities and differences in each bean / grouping by attributes

\*Pinching skills (fine-motor): this activity is perfect for working on pinching with two fingers

\*Problem solving: what's the best way to tackle this task?

\*Teamwork: working together to complete the sort

\*Organization

\*Language development

\*Mathematics (count them!)

\*Concentration

\*Hand-eye coordination and contro



## Bean Counter (ruler)

Place a 12" piece of clear packing tape on a table. place ten beans end to end. Fold the tape up, press down, seal, and then trim off the ends. (to look like a ruler) Have a box of small items that the children can measure with a bean counter.



\*challenge the child to hunt around the room and find something 2 beans long, 5 beans long, 7 etc..

**Seed Hunt** Set up children to hunt a few seeds in their kitchen at home. Collect and plant them in plastic cups filled with potting soil. Put them in a sunny windowsill. Be sure to label. Water and watch.

### Seeds in Snacks?

Popcorn, sunflower seeds, pickles, and strawberries! What do they all have in common? They could all be part of a seedy snack. Talk with your child about all the things they eat that may contain seeds.

### Eating Plants

Discuss what parts of a plant you eat. What roots do you eat? What leaves? What stems? What flowers? What seeds?

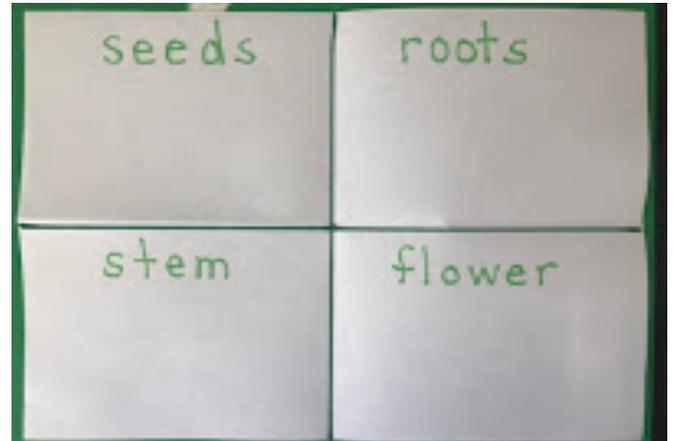
\*Divide a sheet of paper into four parts labelled seeds, roots, stems and flowers adults can write or draw different foods they eat from each category.

Examples: Flower = broccoli crown

Stem = asparagus

Roots = carrot

Seeds = sunflower

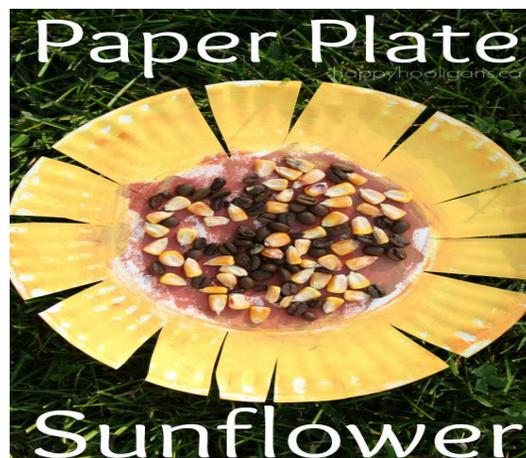


### BEAN / SEED ART and exploration

Materials: dried beans or seeds, liquid glue, paper.

Use your imagination, challenge your 4 or 5 year-old to “stay in the lines”

Younger children can glue beans down freestyle, without direction.



## Create beans or seeds sensory bin

Materials:

a large plastic container, box or bowl

small shovels or spoons to scoop

small cups

any small figurines or small trucks

Let your child experience the feel and sound the beans as they play, pour and plow thru



## SNACKS with raw (or steamed and chilled) vegetables

- when you wash and cut up your vegetables after you purchase them, it's makes for simple, quick way to have a healthy snack ready to go.
- Have your kids create a person/animal/shape with the vegetables.
- Kids will more likely eat a lot more vegetables if there was a dip to go along with them.

### Vegetable Dip

Homemade Ranch Dressing

½ Cup Greek Plain Yogurt

1 teaspoon Cider Vinegar

¼ Tablespoon Salt

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon dried dill weed

\*\*Whisk all ingredients together, adding salt or more vinegar to taste

### Hummus – serve with raw vegetables, crackers or breads

1 (15 oz) can chickpeas or 1 ½ cups cooked chickpeas

¼ cup fresh lemon juice (1 lemon)

¼ cup well-stirred tahini

1 garlic clove, minced

2 Tablespoons extra virgin oil

½ teaspoon ground cumin

Salt and pepper to taste

2 to 3 Tablespoons water

Directions

- Combine tahini and lemon juice, minced garlic, olive oil and seasonings in food processor and process for 1 minute, scrape the sides and bottom with spatula
- Drain and rinse chickpeas
- Add chickpeas to food processor and process for 2 minutes, scrape sides and bottom of bowl, process again 30 seconds, turn processor on low and slowly add water until smooth and desired consistency If hummus is too thick or still have tiny bits of chickpeas
- Add salt and pepper to taste, store in sealed container in fridge.



### **Story: “The little red hen” ( by Mary Mapes Dodge , 1874)**

Once there was a little red hen who decided to grow some wheat. She asked the other animals in the barnyard, “Who will help me plant my wheat?” “Not I!” said the dog. “Not I!” said the cat. “Not I!” said the pig. “Well, then,” said the little red hen. “I will do it all by myself.” And she did.

The wheat grew tall and was ready to be harvested. The little red hen said, “Who will help me pick my wheat?” Not I!” said the dog. “Not I!” said the cat. “Not I!” said the pig. “Well, then,” said the little red hen. “I will do it all by myself.” And she did.

Next, the wheat had to be taken to the mill and ground into flour. “Who will help me grind my wheat?” asked the little red hen. “Not I!” said the dog. “Not I!” said the cat. “Not I!” said the pig. “Well, then,” said the little red hen. “I will do it all by myself.” And she did.

Finally, the flour was ready to be made into bread. “Who will help me make my bread?” asked the little red hen. “Not I!” said the dog. “Not I!” said the cat. “Not I!” said the pig. “Well, then,” said the little red hen. “I will do it all by myself.” And she did.

The bread smelled so good when it was baking. All the animals’ mouths started watering as they gathered around hoping to get a piece of bread. “Who will help me eat my bread?” asked the little red hen. “I will!” said the dog. “I will!” said the cat. “I will!” said the pig. “No!” said the little red hen. “You did not help me plant my wheat. You did not help me pick my wheat. You did not help me take it to the mill to be ground into flour. And you did not help me make my bread. I did it ALL BY MYSELF! And my little chicks and I will eat it all by ourselves!” And they did! **THE END**

\*\*Children can enjoy making their own puppets for this story. Have them color the animals on the following page, cut them out, and then attach them to sticks.



# Little Red Hen

