



Life Lab Garden Classroom Educational Elements

www.lifelab.org/classroom

1. Garden Treasure Mailbox

Where to put that snake skin, mouse skull, or one-of-a-kind dahlia that accidentally got picked? In the garden mail, of course! Our garden mailbox provides an exciting place for kids to place their treasures, where they know other kids will be able to check them out. This is a helpful outlet when kids are tempted to take treasures home.

2. Tree O' Tunes Fun recycled instruments do more than make sound; they also deter kids from climbing this brittle-branched tree (we have plenty of other good trees to climb!). View photos of creative elements for educational gardens at www.lifelab.org/gardenphotos.

3. Chickens Learn more at www.backyardchickens.com. Read about our chickens and download a plan for our nest box at www.lifelab.org/meet-our-chickens

4. Worms Learn how to worm compost in the Gardening How To appendix of The Growing Classroom. Or check out more worm composting resources and our video on composting with worms. Have you ever played a round of Worm Bin Bingo? Well, now you can, at www.lifelab.org/worms.

5. Compost Piles

Whether you are attempting to cut your school district's food waste by using municipal composting facilities, adding a compost bin to your school garden, or looking for compost curriculum, our Ultimate School Garden Compost pages are for you! See more at: www.lifelab.org/composting. Our Rot Zone sign designs are available for purchase at www.lifelab.org/garden-signs. If you have Life Lab's The Growing Classroom Activity Guide check out the "Let's Make a Compost Cake" lesson.

6. Sundial Directions to lay out your own sundial can be found at www.lifelab.org/human-sundial/

7. Circle Bench

An outdoor gathering area is a great addition to any educational garden. We've included many areas for groups to gather in our garden. Outdoor teaching tip: Face the sun when teaching outdoors so that your students have their backs to the sun. Make your own circle bench with straw bales or tree stumps. View outdoor classroom gathering area photos at www.lifelab.org/gardenphotos

8. Bee Hive Learn more about bees at www.greatsunflower.org, www.beegirl.org, and www.pollinator.org. We custom-made our observational beehive. Learn how to make your own or buy one at www.bushfarms.com/beesobservationhives.htm or www.bonterrabees.com

9. Themed Garden Area

In our main garden area we have the following theme beds: Tea Bed, Dried Flower Bed, Pollinator Beds, Plant Adaptations Bed (tropical, succulent, and carnivorous), Birds, Bees, Bats, Butterflies and Beyond, Zoo Bed, Apple Room. Most of the plants in our central garden are perennial plantings. Perennials serve as the foundation for our garden and provide habitat, pollen and beauty.

Other theme beds you can make: Soup Bed, Pizza Bed, MyPlate Bed, Salsa Bed, Salad Bed, Stir Fry Bed, History Bed, Literature Bed (grow plants you read about), Native Plants, Three Sisters Bed (corn, beans, & squash) Make your own zoo bed. This book will help: The Zoo Garden: Forty Animal-Named Plants Families Can Grow Together by Chris Hastings. View and read about our Zoo Bed at www.lifelab.org/construction

10. Apple Room The walls of our apple room are espaliered apple trees. Espalier is a formal tree training method that looks neat and saves space in your garden.

11. Weather Station What would you put in your weather station? Thermometer, barometer, anemometer, wind sock, weather vane, hydrometer? Have your class join the GLOBE weather program: www.globe.gov

12. Pond Papyrus is one plant that was once used for paper-making. It likes growing in moist places.

13. Tunnel

Our willow and bamboo structure is covered in the orange-flowered Thunbergia vine which is also known as the black-eyed susan vine. Other fast growing vines: gourds (annual, good in hot climates), potato vine, star jasmine, trumpet vine (it's on our fence behind the pond), morning glory (annuals and perennials).

14. Solar Bird Bath

Turn or cover the solar panel to stop the flow. Check www.solarschoolhouse.org; www.need.org (National Energy Education Development) or www.realgoods.com (a place to buy solar items).

15. Root View Box

There are plans to make root view boxes, big and small, in the back of The Growing Classroom Activity Guide. If you make a root view box, make sure no light can shine on the roots. Chard and Nigella ("Love in a Mist") are great plants to include because they have colored roots! Learn to make a root view cup at our Easy School Garden Activity Playlist at www.youtube.com/lifelabvideos

16. Kitchen Garden & Pizza Bed

Plant these ingredients: tomatoes, basil, garlic, onions, oregano, peppers, artichokes, oat grass for the cow (cheese) and pig (Canadian bacon, ham, sausage, pepperoni), and wheat around the edge for the crust. Want to learn how to make the garden beds in our garden? Visit www.lifelab.org/demobeds Learn how to install drip irrigation at www.dripworks.com

17. Garden Kitchen

Some of our favorite cooking activities with kids are making corn tortillas and salsa, grinding whole wheat and making mini pizzas or jumbo pretzels, garden herb omelettes, pickled summer squash, hummus, and solar baked treats. Buy a Sun Oven online (~\$250) or make your own www.solarcookers.org or check out The Growing Classroom Activity Guide lesson "A Shoebox of Sunshine". Amazon.com sells solar cooking books as well. View photos of educational garden kitchen and sinks at www.lifelab.org/gardenphotos

18. Rainwater Catchment System

Our rain barrel holds 1,000 gallons and the water can connect to our vegetable bed drip irrigation system. GrowNYC has a comprehensive guide for creating rain catchment systems for educational gardens: www.grownyc.org/openspace/rainwater-harvesting. www.harvestingrainwater.com is another excellent resource.

19. Orchard and Berries

Most of our trees are grafted on dwarf rootstock to keep them small. This is ideal for school gardens that don't have much space and the trees can be harvested and cared for without the use of a ladder. Learn more about growing trees in small spaces at <http://www.davewilson.com/home-gardens/backyard-orchard-culture>

20. Food, What?! Field Learn more about our awesome youth empowerment program at www.foodwhat.org

See more ideas to bring learning to life in the garden at www.lifelab.org/gardenphotos