



My Edible Garden

Description

Children use their imaginations to create miniature "gardens" of vegetables and herbs on a cracker.

Background Information

Children are far more likely to try new things, and like new things, if they have a hand in the growing, harvest, or preparation of the food. They are especially likely to try and like new things if they are presented in a spirit of fun and adventure. This activity fosters creativity while encouraging children to try new vegetables and herbs.

Materials

Large crackers, such as Ak Mak or Ryvita (one or two per child, depending on how much you want them to eat)

Hummus or lowfat cream cheese

A variety of herbs from the garden or a store, such as oregano, basil, rosemary, sage

A variety of vegetables, such as broccoli, cucumber, carrot, lettuce

Edible flowers (if available) such as nasturtium and borage

Sunflower seeds

Butter knife for spreading

Sharp knife for chopping vegetables

Cutting board

Plates

Paper towels

Preparation

If you are using any herbs and vegetables from your garden, ask some or all of the children to help you harvest ahead of time. Slice the herbs and vegetables into small pieces and arrange on plates, perhaps at several stations so all children can reach them. Set out bowls of seeds. Spread hummus or cream cheese on each cracker.

Activity

Take a walk to the garden together and ask the children to describe what they see there. *What are the parts of a garden? Plants, rocks, pathways, trees, soil... We're*

going to use our imaginations to create our own miniature gardens today-- and then we get to eat them!

Back at the classroom, make sure everyone washes hands. Show the children a cracker with spread and demonstrate how to stick bits of vegetables and herbs into it to create a pretend garden. Show them all the vegetables, herbs, and seeds available to use and then give each child a cracker (on a paper towel if desired). Have extras ready for children who drop their crackers.

As the children are creating their gardens, stop by and ask questions. Encourage them to describe their "garden" and what is growing in it.

Tying it Together

In a circle, ask for volunteers who will show and describe their garden to the class.

Since the eating will be messy, you may want to invite the children outside to eat their "gardens" over the grass or even in their real garden!