**Home Activities Unit 6: Growing Things**

**Making Bird Feeders**

*Material Needed*: Birdseed, lard or shortening, pinecones or cardboard tubes, string, plastic knife

Spread shortening on a pinecone or tube with a plastic knife. Roll the cone/tube in birdseed. Attach string and hang in a tree. Observe and talk about the birds that eat the seeds.

*Vocabulary:* lard, shortening, pinecone, birdseed, names of birdseed types (e.g. cracked corn, sunflower) names of birds.

*Extension*: Provide a book or pictures of local birds near the observation area. Supply paper (or a journal) and pencils to record birds.

Bird ID websites: whatbird.com, wildbirds.com

**Bean Seeds in Ziploc Bag**

*Material Needed*: 3 bean seed (lima beans work well), zip lock bag, paper towel, journal, tape.

Fold the paper towel multiple times and soak it in water. Place the folded paper towel in the zip lock bag and place 3 beans on top of the towel. Zip the bag shut and hang it with tape on a window. Watch as the seeds sprout. Encourage parents to help their child to observe and talk about the changes that take place over time and help him/her draw what they see in their journal.

*Vocabulary:* seed, sprout, root, stem, leaf, record, moist, warmth

*Extension*: Encourage children who are ready to write simple sentences about their bean seed.

See dropbox for bean growth pictures.

**Planting Flower or Vegetable Seeds in Cups**

**Over in the Meadow**

*Material needed:* Book *Over in the Meadow*

Show the book *Over in the Meadow* and read the title as you underline the words with your finger. After reading the book, ask children if there are any ducklings in this book. Review pages if needed to show that there are not.

Then ask if there are any baby birds in the book and find these pages. Help children to realize that all birds have beaks, wings, and feathers. Note that ducks have webbed feet, while the bluebird and blackbird have talons, or claws. Talk about the differences in their habitats (e.g., ducks swim in water and build nests on the ground; the other birds do not swim and build nests in trees).

*Vocabulary:* birds, webbed feet, claws, talons

**I’m Thinking of \_\_\_\_\_\_ Clue Game (And *The Ugly Vegetables):*** book: *The Ugly Vegetables*, Picture Cards: shovel, worm, wheelbarrow, hose

Concepts: oral vocabulary, beginning and ending sounds, modeled

Vocabulary: shovel, worm, wheelbarrow, hose

Procedure;

* Show children the book. Say, “*I am going to give you some clues about some of the words in this book and I want you to guess what words I am thinking about. Listen to all the clues, think what the word could be, and then raise your hand when you have an idea.”*
* After children guess a word you are thinking, show the Picture Card or an illustration from the book, to reinforce the word’s meaning.
* For *shovel,* use these clues: *This is the name of a tool you use to dig and move soil around in a garden. It has a long handle and a scoop* *at the end we use to dig in the ground*. If children need another clue, use this one: *Its name starts with* /sh/ *and ends with* /l/.
* For *worm,* use these clues: *This is the name of an animal that lives in the dirt. This animal has no legs*. If children need another clue, use this one: *Its name starts with* /w/.
* For *wheelbarrow*, use: *This is the name for a kind of cart that has one wheel in the front. It also has two handles for a person to hold when pushing it.* If children need another clue, use this one: *Its name starts with* /wh/.

For *hose*, use these clues: *This is the name of a long, hollow tube that water moves through. People often use one of these to water plants in a garden*. If children need another clue, use this one: *The name of this long, hollow tube that water moves through starts with* /h/ *and ends with* /z/.

Encourage parents to collect pictures and play the clue game with their children.

**Gone Fishing**

*Material needed: Fish* crackers, paper plate (lake)

* Tell children they will pretend to be dinosaurs that eat fish. Distribute fish crackers, and have children use paper plates (or blue construction paper) as their “lake” to eventually keep the fish.
* Ask children how many fish are in their lake right now (zero). Tell them three fish swam near the “dinosaur,” and have them put three fish in their lake.
* Say that two more fish swam near, and have children add two more fish. Ask children how many fish altogether are in their lake now (five). Tell them how happy the dinosaur is to have five fish so he or she eats them all! (Children eat the crackers.) Ask how many fish are now in the lake (zero).
* Continue the story, adding various amounts. When children are ready, do subtraction problems by having children eat only some of what the crackers they have and asking them how many are still in the lake.

Variation: Make a felt board and felt board fish & lake or make fish & lake from construction paper.

**Building Blocks News Letter activities:**

Pattern Blocks (to go along with BB newsletter 27). Print Pattern Blocks located in Dropbox - Home Activities – Pattern Block Puzzles

Tangram (to go along with BB newsletter 28). Print Tangram Shapes located in Dropbox – Home Activities – Tangram Templates

Compare Game – adding (to go along with BB newsletter 29). Print Numeral Cards located in Dropbox – Unit 4 Home Activities – Numeral Cards.

Number Pictures (to go along with BB newsletter 30). You will need toothpicks or flat straws.

**Reading 3 of unit 6 books**

**Reading of SWPL books**

**Individualized activities from Teaching Strategies Gold**