

Lesson Plan Title

Sunflowers

Grade Level

4th Grade

Subject Area

Science

MSCCRS

L.4.2.1 - Compare and contrast life cycles of familiar plants and animals.

L.4.2.2 - Develop and use models to explain the unique and diverse life cycles of organisms other than humans (e.g., flowering plants, frogs, or butterflies), including commonalities (e.g., birth, growth, reproduction, or death).

Art Form

Visual Arts

MSCCR Creative Arts Standards

VA: Cr1.2.4 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

a. Collaboratively set goals and create artwork that is meaningful and has purpose to the makers.

VA: Cr2.1.4 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

a. Explore and invent art-making techniques and approaches.

VA: Cr2.2.4 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

a. When making works of art, utilize and care for materials, tools, and equipment in a manner that prevents danger to oneself and others.

VA: Cn11.1.4 Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

a. Through observation, infer information about time, place, and culture in which a work of art was created.

Duration

1 hour

Materials

Printable:

Student Journal Worksheet

https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/grade-3-4/sunflowers_student_journal_worksheet.ashx

Assessment Rubric

https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/grade-3-4/sunflowers_rubric.ashx

Slideshow:

Sunflowers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Zxe3W3XFPk>

Required Technology:

1 Computer per Classroom

Internet Access

Speakers

Projector

Objectives

Students will:

Observe the growth of a sunflower from seed to mature plant

Record the growth of a sunflower from seed to mature plant

Understand the life cycle of a sunflower plant

Journal their own life experiences over this growth period

Explore the sunflower-based artwork of Van Gogh and other artists

Create their own sunflower-based artwork

Write creatively in two voices about the sunflower and their personal life experiences

Vocabulary

Observe

Record

Growth

Life cycle

Art Vocabulary

Art museum

Charcoal

Pastels

Exhibit

Texture

Point of view

Lesson Description

ENGAGE

1. Talk about seed growth. If available, share a video with students. Ask students:

What does it look like right after seeds are planted?

What emerged first?

What do seeds need to grow? (water, sunlight, food source)

Share with students that the growth of a sunflower plant is just the same. Sunflowers have fascinated artists for many years.

2. Visit the Philadelphia Art Museum to view one of Van Gogh's sunflower paintings. Allow the docent to explain the artwork to the students (use audio).

BUILD KNOWLEDGE

1. If you have a copy, read 'Van Gogh and the Sunflowers' (Anholt's Artists Books for Children) by Laurence Anholt. Use the book to introduce Van Gogh and his artwork to students.

2. Explore sunflower artwork of Vincent Van Gogh using the slideshow listed above. Using a few pieces of Van Gogh's artwork, ask students:

What is similar in these paintings?

What is different?

Why do you think Van Gogh found sunflowers to be art-worthy?

Why do you think he painted similar pieces?

3. Discuss the life cycle of a sunflower. If available, read "From Seed to Sunflower (Lifecycles)" by Gerald Legg to explain the lifecycle or any nonfiction text on the life cycle of a sunflower.

APPLY

1. Plant sunflower seeds. In one or more containers suitable for the size sunflower selected, grow a few sunflower plants. Follow the instructions on the seed packet. Because sunflowers require space and deep soil, it is best not to have each student plant his or her own plant, unless there is an outdoor garden plot available.

2. Observe and record the growth of a sunflower. Using the Student Journal Worksheet located within the Resource Carousel, have each student observe, measure, and record the growth of the sunflower each day. Concurrently, have the student journal about his or her own activities each day.

3. Create a growth graph. Plot time on the x-axis and height on the y-axis. This can be created during the recording process or at the completion of recording growth.

4. Create sunflower artwork in the style of Van Gogh. Place a vase with several sunflowers (real or artificial) inside it in the center of the room. Arrange desks or tables in a circle around the vase. Have students fold a 12" x 18" piece of art paper in half, creating two drawing areas, each 9" x 12". Using pencils, colored pencils, charcoal, or pastels, have each student draw the vase and sunflowers from a location in the classroom. After a given period of time, perhaps 15 minutes, have students rotate to a new desk or location. From this new location, each student will create a second piece of artwork in the second area on the art paper. After the second drawing, ask the students:

How are your two drawings the same?

How are they different?

Did Van Gogh's work (or the work of another artist) influence your artwork?

REFLECT

1. Write a poem in two voices. Ask the students to use their 'Student Journal Worksheets' referenced earlier as a guide. The two voices will be the sunflower and the student. The voices will alternate with each line. For example:

The sun warmed my soil.

I grew impatient waiting for your arrival.

I emerged but was all alone.

I learned to dance on my toes today.

I danced in the sunlight.

I watched you reach for the sun.

I am growing quickly.

Today I measured you and me. We're both sprouting!

...and so on.

2. Create a sunflower exhibit. Post the artwork and poetry for students to view. Ask students:

How are the sunflower art pieces the same?

How are they different?

What similar things did you observe about the growing sunflower?

What different things did you observe?

What role did your personal journaling play in your creative writing?

How did it feel to write a poem in two voices?

What other living things could you observe and write about in a similar manner?

How does knowing scientific information about your subject make your artwork stronger?

Recommended Resources

Here are the resources you'll need for each activity in order of instruction.

Build Knowledge:

Sunflowers

<https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/multimedia/Galleries/grade-3-4/sunflowers>

Apply:

Student Journal Worksheet

https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/grade-3-4/sunflowers_student_journal_worksheet.ashx

Assess:

Assessment Rubric

https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/grade-3-4/sunflowers_rubric.ashx

Extending the Learning

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