

Plant Maze

This activity accompanies “The Seedling,” from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, record number 4981.

Activity Title: Plant Maze

Description: The students will work together to create a plant maze and keep track of the plant’s growth as it works its way to the light.

Subject: Science

Skill: Life Science – Seed growth

Behavioral Objective:

- The student will explain the basic needs for a seed to germination.

Materials:

- “The Seedling” poem, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Paper and pencils
- Plant maze materials per group (3-5 students):
 - One shoebox
 - Black construction paper, full sheets
 - Strips of black construction paper about an inch wider than the depth of the shoebox
 - Glue
 - Scissors
 - A paper or plastic bathroom cup
 - Dirt (such as miracle grow)
 - 1-2 Seeds (lima beans work well)

Procedures:

Read the poem with the class, or have the students read it on their own. Discuss with the students what a plant needs in order to germinate (sunlight, water, air, nutrients, time, temperature, and room to grow). Create a class list of all of the things the students can come up with, and then fill in anything they leave out.

Next, have the students work in small groups to create a shoebox maze for their plant (directions below).

Over the next couple of days check on the plant growth and have the students draw a picture of what is happening, and a short response explaining why the plant is growing towards the light, through the maze.



Plant Maze Directions:

1. Hand out the following materials to each group: shoebox, construction paper (full sheets and strips), glue, scissors, paper cup (filled with dirt) and seeds.
2. Have the students prepare the box with dividers like a maze (using the strips of construction paper) by gluing down the paper to the inside of to box. The box can be horizontal or vertical. Make sure they leave enough room on one side of the box to put the cup with the dirt.
3. Carefully cut a hole in the side of the box opposite from where the cup of dirt is (this is the end of the maze). You may also wish to cut holes randomly in the dividers.
4. Place the bean in the cup of dirt and water it before placing it in the box (on the opposite side of where the hole is).
5. Cover the box with the full sheet of construction paper (except for your hole)
6. Make a trap door in order to water the plant and check its progress.
7. Watch it grow!

