

Focus on: Inherited Character Traits in Plants

This lesson is meant to support the unit on Structures & Functions of Living Organisms. This lesson can be done prior to the unit to establish background knowledge, during the unit to reinforce concepts or as a follow up to the unit to increase the retention of information. How you guide your students will depend on the information you have already taught and the information you want to introduce. Please remember that many gardens run on a yearly cycle and it will be easier to find more components of that ecosystem when it is at its peak season. You can, of course, utilize the garden at different times of the year, but the components of the ecosystem will be most evident during the peak growing season.

Clarifying Objectives:

5.L.3.1 Explain why organisms differ from or are similar to their parents based on the characteristics of the organism.

5.L.3.2 Give examples of likenesses that are inherited and some that are not.

Focus Question(s):

How are plant organisms different from and similar to their parents?

Key Vocabulary:

Definitions can be found at <http://learnersdictionary.com>

- Organism
- Characteristics
- Differ
- Similar
- Likenesses
- Inherited

Materials:

School Garden

Science Notebooks

Garden Gloves to wear while exploring the garden especially if touching plants, lifting pots, etc.

Activities:

1. Have students watch the following video on Brain Pop Jr:
<http://www.brainpop.com/health/geneticsgrowthanddevelopment/heredity/>
2. Discuss the video being sure to include key vocabulary.
3. Take a trip to the garden to look at several different plants of the same species.
4. Have students record in their science notebooks all of the ways the plants are the same. (ex. Leaf color, leaf shape, plant height, flower color, etc.)

Guiding Questions:

- How did this investigation relate to the concept of inherited traits.
- How are organisms different from their parents? Provide evidence to support your response.

5. Have students record the ways the plants are different.
6. If you have plants that have produced offspring, be sure to compare the actual offspring to the parent plant. (This is easy to see with plants such as strawberries.)



7. Discuss: Why are so many of these plants the same? Where did they get their traits?

- How are organisms similar to their parents? Provide evidence to support your response.