



Section 3

Water in my backyard



Activity A

Introduction to water in the backyard

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Water in my backyard

Objective

To extend the knowledge developed from earlier sections by exploring how water is used in the backyard.

Focus questions

- How is water used in our backyards?
- How can we save water in our backyards?

Instruction

1. Discuss the activities that require a lot of water and those which require less water. For example, filling a pool or watering the gardening requires a lot of water, topping up the dog's bowl or watering a pot-plant uses less water.
2. Initiate a brainstorm and discussion on the focus questions: How is water used in our backyards? How can we save water in our backyards?



Activity B Planting seed sticks

Section 3

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Objective

To explain that different plants have different water needs and that when planting natives you can have a Watersaver garden.

How

- Children prepare and plant their seeds. Children can then water, measure and watch their plants grow, which promote a sense of wellbeing and ownership.
- A few days before this activity – ask the children to bring in a used spare egg carton from home. This will also help involve the family and make them aware of the unit of work.

What you'll need

- Native seed sticks.
- Empty cardboard egg cartons.
- A packet of soil.
- Spoons to distribute the soil.

Instruction

1. Distribute the egg cartons and seed sticks to children.
2. Ask the children to collect their own soil.

Suggestion: We recommend placing the soil into a container that is easy for the children to access and get their planting pots ready.

Note: Always follow the manufacturer's safety instructions on the potting mix bag. We recommend opening the potting mix bag at arm's length in a well ventilated place, with gloves and with care to avoid breathing in airborne particles – please ensure the children are kept away at all times.

3. Ask the children to plant the seed sticks 2-3cm deep and discuss where the best place is to leave them to grow. Ensure children wash their hands on completion of use of potting mix.
4. Each week the children can measure and compare the growth of their plants.
5. Watering duties can be shared and the class can discuss why these plants are better than plants that use too much water.
6. To add further discussion, one plant can be chosen to be 'over-watered' and the teacher can discuss: 'What happens when a plant is over-watered?'. Relate this to watering larger plants in the garden with a hose or watering can.

Suggestion: In terms of making this activity more hands on and visual, it is recommended that the teacher plants a water thirsty plant. This will allow children to visually see that more water is needed for different plants. The water play activity in section two can also consolidate the concept of volume, i.e. the children only use a cup of water a week to water their plants, in comparison to the teacher who uses two cups of water.

Water-thirsty plants species are: Azalea, Bouvardia, Brunfelsia, Camellia, Daphne, Eucryphia, Hydrangea, Magnolia, Rhododendron.



Activity C Watering the sensible way

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Objective

To explain the importance of 'watering the sensible way'.

What you'll need

- Tommy the Tap colouring-in sheet (see next page)

Instructions

1. Explain to the children that watering correctly promotes stronger and deeper root growth making the plant more resilient to dry times.
2. Discuss with the class when they think it's the best time to water?

Answer: water before 9am and after 4pm.
During the day when the sun is brightest is when the highest rate of evaporation occurs.

3. Ask the children to colour in the Tommy the Tap colouring-in sheet.



Water the garden only early in the morning or late in the afternoon

