

# **The KCK Community Gardens Initiative: Workshop Menu**

## **The Garden Play** (The Storytellers/VISTA/Rolling Readers)

Children's Garden Books come to life onstage when students from all grades, K-5 from each garden school, create an imaginary garden on stage. African Drums from The Storytellers Inc. "Distant Drummers" provide the beat for this special performance featuring "Tiny Seeds," "Vegetable Soup," and "Hip Hop Crop." Families and the Community are welcome. The Garden play embraces our community's multicultural characteristics. Our production this year, at M.E. Pearson Elementary School, was performed in English and Spanish Languages, to an audience of over 400.

## **Trees and Tree Planting**

An Interactive workshop that combines a "Read Aloud" of "The Giving Tree" By Shel Silverstein and information about the tree to be planted in the workshop. Students learn about geographical weather "Zones" for planting. Students learn how long trees actually live and their importance in our world in providing us with clean air. Math is involved when students determine how many inches their tree will grow per year X the number of years until each student graduates from High School. A step-by-step guide to planting "bare root," or "burlap ball" or "potted" trees is followed resulting in a planted tree adopted by the group who planted it. This group or class is then held responsible for that trees care and watering.

## **Worms and Worm Box Composting**

Students learn why are worms good for the garden? This interactive workshop allows students to create their own worm bin. Students learn that worms eat our garbage and recycle it into valuable fertilizer. Students identify the different parts of worms and observe living specimens. Student conduct two experiments to determine what environment worms prefer to live. Based on the data from these experiments students create their own worm bins that will stay in their class room and create valuable organic material to be added to their school's gardens.

## **The Seed**

Students dissect a peanut to identify the three main parts of a seed and what these parts do for a plant. Students plant bean seed in little green houses for growth observation. Students identify all the different foods that we eat that are made from seeds. Students make peanut butter in class.

## **Fruits, Shoots and Roots**

This interactive workshop defines the different parts of a plant with different examples of vegetables. What plant parts do we eat when we eat tomatoes, carrots and lettuce. What is the "fruit" of the plant? This workshop is a continuation of "The Seed" workshop. Students use their peanut butter in combination with a cracker and different "plant parts" to make an edible "Plant Part Art" piece.

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## **How Plants Grow**

Students learn about “Photosynthesis,” how the parts of the plant help it to reproduce and develop. What do plants need to grow? Experiments are conducted to learn more about how plants take water and food into their roots, up through their stem to the flower. How does a plant produce fruit? Students participate in a “Read-a-loud” playing different parts in a story called “Fran’s Flowers.”

## **Composting**

Students learn how to create their own “Black Gold.” Students learn that a compost bin is simply doing what nature already achieves all around us. With adult mentors, students construct a compost bin with the needed materials. This interactive workshop will allow students, parents and teachers the opportunity to work together to create a working compost bin for each garden site. Ingredients such as leaves, chicken manure and water are added immediately start the compost cooking at the garden site.

## **Bulbs and Bulb Planting**

Students learn about bulbs we plant for flowers and bulbs we plant to eat. Students learn about bulbs that need to be planted in the fall. The Students break into small groups and research information about one or two specific bulbs they will plant in the workshop. Each group is required to record important bulb planting data. Students take measurements of their bulbs, and learn measurements for depth and spacing of their bulb. Students then make predictions about when the bulb will bloom into a flower, based on their group research, from garden articles pulled off of the internet and from garden books. The students then plant their bulbs in the garden and wait until late winter and spring to finish their science experiment and to finish the data collection. It is hoped that we can report our garden blooming data to weather reporters and meteorologists at local news stations.

## **Soil**

Students learn that soil is alive and breathes and provides a home to billions of micro-organisms that have lived on this planet before long before animals or plants. Students learn what elements make soil and what is organic content. Students examine results from soil tests conducted of their garden sites. Students identify the qualities of their soil and the PH levels. Students examine and compare soil samples from their garden and representations of other types of soil matter. Student conduct experiments to learn what types of soil offer the best drainage and what types of soil hold moisture.

## **Native Prairie Communities**

Students learn about the native prairie communities that exist around us. Students learn about the “independence” of the living organisms in these

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communities. Students create a food web to discover what happens when just one part of the community is eliminated from the community.

## **Garden Salsa!**

Students learn how to grow a Salsa Garden! Students learn how to make Salsa! Students learn how to dance Salsa? Why not? This interactive workshop not only warms our tummy but also heats up our feet as Miss Jennifer teaches us the dance steps! Each stop represents various ingredients of the Salsa recipe. While students mix the Salsa ingredients they also mix their salsa dance steps. English/Spanish translations are explored with food, music and literacy providing a celebration of African and Spanish cultures.

## **Green House Gardening**

Meet a real Green House gardener. Find out why we call it a Green House even when it's not green? Students learn the advantages and challenges of greenhouse gardening. Heating, ventilation, temperature control, raised beds, these are many of the topics addressed in this workshop.

## **Humming Birds and Feeders**

Students identify the various types of humming birds that live in our area. Students learn about the amazing characteristics of these birds and what types of flowers attract them to our gardens. Students put together humming bird feeders from special kits and books about this special bird with amazing flying talents.

## **Insects**

This workshop examines the role insects play in the life of a garden. What are beneficial insects? What are pests? Why are bees, ladybugs and butterflies so important to the survival of the garden? In this workshop we examine eight specimens, six insects: Honey Bees, Lady (Bug) Beetles, Praying Mantids, Caterpillar/ Butterfly, Aphids, Grasshopper. We also look at one arachnid: The Spider and one mollusk: The Slug.

## **Honey Bees**

Students learn more intimately about the Honey Bees when they make their own "Honey Bee Puppet" out of everyday objects found at home: a sponge, a wire hanger, cardboard, wire, electrical tape, glue. Student actually create the three parts of an insects body and the six legs. Students then join in an activity that demonstrates the complex world the Honey Bees live in. Students elect a Queen Bee and divide into Drones and Worker Bees. Students do the Worker Bee Dance. A special treat with honey is served as a snack at the end of the workshop.

## **Butterflies**

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The Butterfly Lady visits your school to “show and tell” the fantastic story of the butterflies. Living examples of each stage of the butterfly's life are available for observation.

## **Lady Bugs and Aphids**

This workshop is another extension of our insect studies. Students learn more intimately about Lady Beetles and their favorite food: Aphids. Students perform scenes playing Lady Bugs, giant plants, and praying mantis.

## **The Garden Spider**

Students learn that spiders are different from insects. How do they build their webs. How do they lay their eggs? Why are spiders good for our garden? What are the dangerous spiders we should be aware of? Students build a web (literally) of information.

## **Organic Vegetable Gardens**

This workshop demonstrates why organic gardening is safer for kids and families and communities and the world. Learn more about organic farmers and organic farms in our area. What does organic mean? Organic methods will be demonstrated.

## **How To Start Planning For an Organic Garden**

Theme gardens, Ideas, small groups, diagrams, garden plots, how would you design your garden beds? Students read garden books about vegetable gardens and flower gardens. Students create their own garden maps with crayons, markers and artwork. Students also draw pictures to represent them for poster and program cover art, used for their Garden Play Production.

## **Planting a Garden**

Students look at seeds and pictures of the plants they will plant. Students use measurements to carefully place seeds at the right depth and spacing between seeds. Students create signs to mark the plants they have planted. Students discuss the process of growth for their plants and number of days before the plant is mature.

## **General Maintenance**

Caring for plants and trees in our gardens is the focus. Weeding and watering methods are discussed. A plan to maintain gardens through the summer is designed.

## **Harvesting a Garden**

This workshop deals with crops, canning, storage, recipes, dinners, and herbs. How will we share our harvest? How do we collect seeds? How can we prepare our beds for the winter season and beyond?

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**You can also reach Garden Director, Mark Manning  
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