



Caring

We have a duty to teach our children to care about plants, animals and the natural environment. We can never start too early!

Planting Cress

One of the quickest and easiest plants to use. What do they need to grow? How do they feel, smell and taste like? Try planting them in eggshells. Adding faces also gives an opportunity to talk about how the eggs are feeling!



Vegetable Tops

This easy activity gives the opportunity for children to ask questions, notice changes and begin to understand growth and decay. All you need to do is add a layer of cotton wool balls to a dish and place a carrot top on top. Add enough water to the cotton balls so that they are damp but not flooded with water, then place your dish in a sunny spot like a windowsill. Make sure to check that your cotton balls stay damp throughout your growing period.

Beans in a Jar

Pop one dried kidney bean between a paper towel and the glass jar. What will happen? What can you see? Has the bean **germinated**? Can you see the root/shoot/leaves? Talk about what plants need to grow.



Plant Dissection

Take the opportunity of cut flowers that have died or roses with dead heads, for children to fully dissect what's there. Talk about the petals, stalks etc.

Strawberries

This is a fairly easy plant to cultivate and creates a wonderful opportunity to see the stages in a strawberry's life cycle.



Sunflowers

Planting a sunflower seed, caring for it as it grows, taking measurements and collecting seeds to plant again, is another ideal opportunity to teach a child about a plant's lifecycle.



Tomatoes

A further opportunity for growing and can be done inside if you don't have access to a garden.

Growing Vegetables

If you do have access to a garden, growing vegetables provides opportunities not only in learning about plant lifecycles, but also physical development, new vocabulary and even measurement.



Caring for Animals

We may not all have the opportunity for a real pet at home, but imaginary/pretend ones can be just as good a learning opportunity. Making a bed, feeding, watering and cleaning them out, can all be done this way too.

Farms & Zoos

Farms and zoos often include hands-on activities for children to feed and interact with the animals.



Butterflies at Home

Home 'butterfly gardens' are available to buy on-line and give a hands-on opportunity to watch a caterpillar turn into a butterfly. If you are feeling really adventurous, you can also get living chicken or duck eggs on a short-term basis.