

Planning the School Garden

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1: Garden Planning

 Overview	Students will brainstorm as a class what plants to grow, who to share the produce with, and how to teach each other about crops. Local Elders and Knowledge Keepers could be interviewed or invited as guest speakers.
 Materials	Garden Planning tools may include computers, paper, pencils, posters, etc. There is a lot of flexibility in these activities.
 Time	15 minutes. This activity could be framed as one class-wide discussion, or happen over a longer time frame that involves small groups conducting research and sharing with the class.

SEASONALITY:

This lesson would be very effective in the late winter or early spring, before the garden is planted; this activity is focused on crop planning in a school garden.

1. As a class, discuss the following:

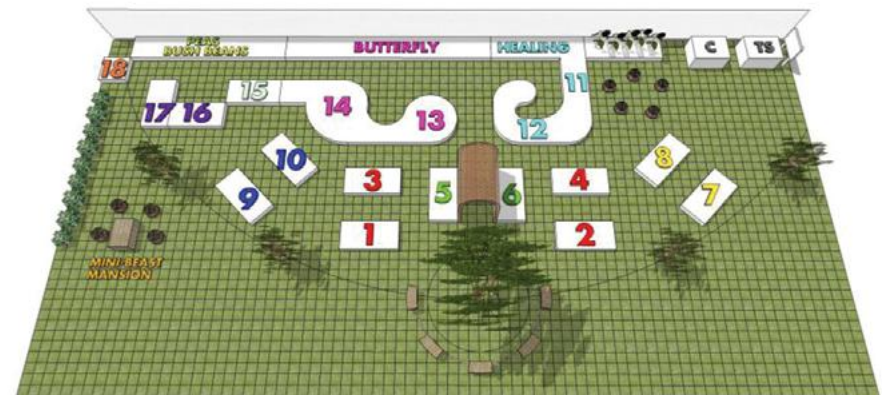
Who will use the garden? Who will eat the food? Can we grow excess and give back to our community or Elders? How can we show our respect for the land, food and medicine that we produce?

2. Decide what crops and traditional plans should be grown.

- Are there important traditional plants we can grow? What other plants are native to this area? See Native Plant Resources section for more information.
- Which edible native plants could we plant? Which are used for food, and which for medicine? What are some other plants that have other uses (like feeding pollinators, ecosystem services, etc)?
- What non-Indigenous crops can we grow here?
- Which plants grow well together (companion plants) or are complementary in their uses?

3. Create individual plant signs for traditional plants, or one large sign to inform people about the space and its plants (see Lesson #5).

4. Create a list of plants to grow that would work well given the space, infrastructure and ecosystem that exists (connect to Lesson #2). In your list, include crops, native, and culturally-significant Indigenous plants, any supplies needed, budget considerations, etc.



 **NOTE:** The teacher should have a clear idea of what the garden budget is, supplies on hand, and an action plan for garden maintenance (during the school year and the summer). Seedlings can be purchased to plant directly into the garden space. Refer to [Farm to School BC's School Crop Planning Guide](#) for crops to grow during the school year.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #2: Garden Planning

Curricular Connections

The K-12 curricular connections listed below are not exhaustive, but reflect the main subject areas that align with this lesson. Extension activities could also be included in PHE (healthy living), Math (counting, measuring), ADST (food studies), Art (visual representations like drawings), and Science (plant growth, experiments).

ADST	6-9: Applied Design - Understanding context, Ideating, Sharing
ELA	Kindergarten: Explore oral storytelling processes Grade 3: Develop awareness of how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to land Grade 9: Recognize the influence of place in First Peoples and other Canadian texts
Social Studies	Grade 2: Diverse characteristics of communities and cultures in Canada and around the world, including at least one Canadian First Peoples community and culture Grade 5: First Peoples land ownership and use Grade 7: Social, political, legal, governmental, and economic systems and structures, including at least one indigenous to the Americas BC First Peoples, Grade 12: Traditional territories of the B.C. First Nations and relationships with the land
Science	Questioning and predicting: Demonstrate curiosity about the natural world; Observe objects and events in familiar contexts (K-9) Processing and analyzing data and information: Experience and interpret the local environment; Identify First Peoples perspectives and knowledge as sources of information (K-9)

CREDITS

This lesson was developed by Shelaigh Garson and Maureen Zutz.

Shelaigh Garson is a Permaculture Educator. She is a 5th generation settler of mixed European ancestry and was involved with the Skeetchestn Community Food Forest at its inception as the Indigenous Food Sovereignty School Garden Liaison.

Maureen Zutz is a teacher at Skeetchestn Community School. She is a 15th generation settler on her mother's side and a 1st generation settler on her father's side, and is of Scottish, French and English ancestry. She has been working at the school and the garden since 2013.

They both reside on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwepemc Nation.

This lesson was originally taught on the traditional and unceded land of the Secwepemc Nation, and the language and story shared here are from these people. By highlighting the language and stories of different Nations, we celebrate the long history and current relationships with the Indigenous people in BC. Connect with your school's Indigenous Education Coordinator for more information on your local Nation's stories/language if desired.

LANGUAGE: To incorporate language into the lesson, visit the [Secwepemc language page on First Voices](#).