

What is a Weed?

Lesson Description

In this lesson, students will learn where weeds grow, why they grow, and how to identify them.

- Time required: 60 minutes
- Location of lesson: Classroom and garden

Learning Objectives

- Explore where and why weeds grow.
- Learn how to identify weeds.

Materials and Preparation

- Ziploc bags (1 per student)
- Blank paper (1 per student)
- Markers
- Optional Activity: Weeding materials (shovels, gloves, etc.)
- Prepared vegetable snack of the week – 1 for each student
- Water to drink during the Class Warm-up – water dispenser in the classroom and 1 cup or a water bottle for each student

Class Warm-up: Champion Cheer and Veggie Taste Test (5-10 minutes)

- Give each student a cup of water or ensure that they have a filled water bottle in front of them.
- Give each student the prepared veggie snack of the day.
- Lead the students in enthusiastically reciting the  **Champion Cheer**.
- At the end of the cheer, drink water and eat the veggie snack together.
- Have students complete their  **Taste Test Observations** about the vegetable snack of the week.

Review of Last Lesson (2-3 minutes)

- Review the evaluation questions from last week's lesson. Evaluation questions from all lessons are listed at the end of the  workbook.

Class Discussion (2-3 minutes)

Today we will be learning about weeds! Ask the following questions and record the students' ideas on the board:

- *What do you think the word “weed” means?* (Answer: a plant growing in an area where it is not wanted and has a harmful impact)
- *Can you name some weeds we have in our garden?*

Activities (40 minutes)

- **“Weed Quiz” (10 minutes):** As a class, students will take a quiz to learn about weeds.
 1. *As a class, we are going to take a quiz to see what you already know about weeds. I am going to read each question out loud. After I read the questions, I am going to ask you whether you think the correct answer is true or false. Once you all have raised your hand to share what you think the answer is, I will tell you the correct answer.*
 - a. Make sure the students understand the answer to each question.
 - i. *There are weeds that take water away from garden plants.* (Answer: **TRUE**)
 - ii. *Weeds never have flowers.* (Answer: **FALSE**)
 - iii. *Weeds can grow large and take sunshine away from garden plants.* (Answer: **TRUE**)
 - iv. *Weeds grow in the garden.* (Answer: **TRUE**)
 - v. *Weeds grow on mountains.* (Answer: **TRUE**)
 - vi. *Weeds grow in rivers.* (Answer: **TRUE**)
 - vii. *Weeds spread by being eaten by a bird.* (Answer: **TRUE**)
 - viii. *Weeds spread by catching a ride with the wind.* (Answer: **TRUE**)
 2. Review with the students: *Weeds can come in any shape and size and can be any type of plant including trees, shrubs, annuals, or vines. Weeds can invade anywhere that plants can grow including gardens, native bush, beaches, streams, rivers, lakes, and farmland. Weeds can be spread by people dumping garden trimmings, gardeners planting them in their backyard, and even by birds eating them! When looking for weeds, look for plants that have some or all of the following characteristics:*
 - a. *They produce a lot of seeds*
 - b. *Can grow from just pieces of roots, stems, or leaves*
 - c. *They grow fast!*
 - d. *They are hard to control.*
- **“Identifying Weeds” (30 minutes):**
 1. Pass out 1 Ziploc bag to each student.
 2. *Using these bags, you have 5 minutes to collect weeds from around the school and the garden. Try and find different weeds than your friends.*
 3. Once the students have collected their weeds, have them compare their weeds. Ask volunteers to answer the following questions (or discuss as a class):

- a. *What are 3 things that are similar among the weeds you picked?*
 - b. *How can you tell that a plant is a weed?*
 - c. *What is the difference between these weeds and the plants you planted in the garden plants?*
 - d. *How do you think the weeds got to the places they did?*
 - e. *Why do you think the weeds grew where they did?*
4. Pass out markers and 1 piece of paper per student.
- a. *We are going to draw one of the weeds you found on your exploration! After you draw your weed, write where you found the weed and label the stem, leaves, roots, and flowers.*
 - b. As the students are drawing, write the following questions on the board:
 - i. *How did you know this was a weed?*
 - ii. *What is the difference between this weed and other plants in the garden?*
 - iii. *How do you think this weed got to where it was?*
5. Once the students are finished drawing and labeling their weeds, discuss the above questions as a class.

Optional Activity

- If time permits, spend the left-over time weeding the garden.

Evaluation Questions (5 minutes)

1. *What is one thing that most weeds have in common? (Answer: they grow fast, produce lots of seeds, and are hard to control)*
2. *Why is it important to know the difference between a weed and a plant that we planted in our garden? (Answer: so we can pull out the weeds and leave the plants we want to grow)*
3. *How do weeds get where they are? (Answer: just like other plants, their seeds can travel by wind, birds, etc.)*
4. *How much water should you drink every day? (Answer: at least 6 cups of water a day)*
5. *How many fruits and vegetables should you eat every day? (Answer: at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day)*
6. *Does gardening connect you to your culture and help you learn new words in your language? (Answer: yes)*

Preparation for Future Lessons – Reminder for the Instructor

- Review the materials and preparation needed for the next lesson.

Notes
