

Grade Level: 2

Title: The Strawberry Life Cycle (May-June)

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to understand the life cycle of a plant.

Subject Area(s) Addressed:

English Language Arts and Science

Common Core/Essential Standards:

ELA:

W.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Science:

2.L.1.1 Students know that animals experience a cycle of life which begins with birth, then a period of time in which the animal develops into an adult. At adulthood, animals reproduce in order to sustain their species. In nature, all animals are programmed to age and eventually die. The details of the life cycle are different for specific animals.

Vocabulary:

crown
flower
fruit
leaves
roots

seed
seedling
sprout
stem
trifoliate

Materials Needed:

computer
clip art for strawberry book

Teaching Strategy:

This lesson should be taught at the completion of the year when you are picking your strawberries, or at the end of your unit on life cycles.

Show students the pictures of fruit- and vegetable-bearing plants

<http://brobichaud.pbworks.com/w/page/27565767/Life%20Cycle%20of%20a%20Plant> and animal lifecycles www.schoolrack.com/mcisek/task/. Students should be able to compare and contrast the lifecycle of an animal and a strawberry plant. Use a Venn diagram to record the similarities and differences, making sure students see that plants and animals have similar lifecycle stages.

Activity:

To show what they have learned about strawberry plant life cycles, students will create a digital book, or presentation of the lifecycle of the strawberry. To begin, students will create a flow map (see resource below) to show the stages of the lifecycle:

- seedling stage - daughter plants are propagated (or root themselves)
- growing stage - roots, stem and leaves begin to develop
- flowering stage - blooms and flowers develop
- productive stage - crowns and fruits develop
- mature stage - daughter plants and runners develop.

Students should be able to provide some details and sequence each stage. They will need to draw a picture or use clipart to show each stage. (If the strawberry is reproduced from its seeds instead, as a plant breeder might do, how is this sequence different?)

Background Information:

Strawberries are perennial plants -- the same plant can survive and bear fruit many years, spreading out by adding new plants near it from its runners. This is how many home gardeners and some commercial growers, mostly in more northern areas, raise their strawberries. Among commercial growers, this practice is generally called “matted row”.

Strawberry farmers in the Southeast (as well as in Florida and California) raise their strawberries as annual plants, fruiting them for only one year. North Carolina farmers set out their plants in the fall (September/October), harvest them in the spring (April-June), and then turn the plants under and start all over again the next fall with new plants. Planting on black plastic helps keep the plants growing during the winter so there can be a good harvest the following spring. These first year plants are very productive and have large fruit; those growers who choose to keep plants for a second year of harvest find that berries tend to be much smaller; in addition, plants that are carried over through the summer don't do well with our summer heat and are much more likely to get diseases in the heat and humidity that will then affect the next summer's crop.

“Strawberry Farming through the Year” (See “Resources” folder) and prior lessons provide some background information.

Growing your own strawberry plants from runners:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=akqO7Re91NQ

Multi-flow map: <http://www.eisd.net/domain/599>

Assessment:

Final presentation of digital book or presentation.