

# Garden Treasure Hunt An Introduction

**Maine Learning Results:** Science:J1

**Purpose:** Use the Garden Treasure Hunt to introduce students to the vegetables, fruits, flowers, and herbs growing in your school garden. The first step of plant identification is actually interacting with the various plants, making observations about their color, size, shape, texture, smell and taste. It also involves looking at the conditions in which they grow.

**Key Concepts:** All the items that grow in a garden have a unique sensory appeal. In order to garden effectively, we need to be able to identify the plants we grow and know the conditions in which they thrive.

**Activity:** Introduce the lesson by asking the class why it is important to properly identify the plants growing in the garden. Once this key concept is understood, explain that each plant also appeals to our senses. If we know a plant's unique color, size, shape, texture, smell, and taste, we will be more knowledgeable gardeners. Explain to the class that they will accomplish this by completing a Garden Treasure Hunt.

Pass out the treasure hunt [Attach:GardenTreasureHuntWord.doc](#) and have students read the directions to themselves. Then review the directions out loud and give students the opportunity to ask questions about the assignment. Read through the items on the scavenger hunt, taking the time to explain key vocabulary words. What does serrated mean? How does a plant "vine up" and "vine out?"

Before going outside, make sure students are clear how to behave in the garden (voice level, movement throughout the space, how and when they can sample the food) and distribute clipboards. It is suggested that the lead teacher interrupt the scavenger hunt at appropriate times to have students take a small taste test (example: cherry tomatoes, pull up a few carrots, pick a cucumber). If you take a small knife and cutting board with you, these items can easily be cut up and shared with the class. You can also pull off a few leaves, for example, from a Lemon Balm plant. Walk around with it and ask students what they think it smells like. Repeat this for a variety of herbs.

Once the class is outside, check responses and assist with students who are stuck. If students complete the scavenger hunt early, encourage them to find another answer that fits each category. They will learn that many vegetables, fruits, flower, and herbs fit in the same category. This will encourage students to see the similarities and differences that exist amongst the plants.

If there is time, have students compare answers with a classmate, or share as a whole class.

**Time:** 55 minutes

**Materials:** Garden Treasure Hunt, clipboards, pencils, knife and cutting board