



Dirt Babies



Purpose: Students will learn about the effects of apical meristem on the growth of grass plants while creating a wonderful craft.

Background:

Why is it that you can cut grass with a lawn mower? The interesting thing about grasses is that their apical meristem, or point of growth, is below ground. Therefore, you can cut the above ground portion of grass and it will continue to grow. So, you can cut your dirt baby's hair and it will grow back!

Materials: knee high stockings (1 per student), grass seed (~2 cups), potting soil, baby food jars or small plastic cups (1 per student), spoon, googly eyes, glue, red felt or foam

Activity:

1. Wash and dry baby food jars.
2. Turn the top of the stocking down until the toe is exposed.
3. Place several pinches of grass seed in the top of the stocking.
4. Add one large scoop of potting soil on the top of the seed. (About one cup.)
5. Gently shake the stocking to settle the grass seed and soil firmly in the toe. Knot the stocking to hold the soil in place. (The toe of the stocking becomes the top of your baby's head.)
6. Cut a mouth from red felt or craft foam.
7. Attach googly eyes and mouth to the dirt baby's head.
8. Allow time for eyes to dry. Gently water the top of the dirt babies head and the rest of the stocking.
9. Place the top end of the stocking in a clean baby food jar or cup so that the dirt baby's head rests on the rim of the jar. Add water to the jar and place it in a well-lit spot. Fill jar with water as needed.
10. Your dirt baby should begin to grow hair in about seven days. It really grows fast, so be ready to give your baby a haircut.

