



Grass Artist



Purpose: Students will learn what a plant needs to grow by planting grass in different shapes.

Background:

Of all plants, grasses are the most important to the diets of humans. Corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley, rice, even sugarcane, are all grasses. Most people who live in Florida grows grass in their yards. Grass makes things cooler in the summer and keeps out dust in dry weather and mud when it rains. Grass will keep growing back after it is cut, as long as it is not cut too short. About 100 years ago most lawns were “clipped” by cows, sheep, or horses. Grass can be grown from seed or by transplanting strips of turfgrass. Turfgrass is grass that is grown on a turfgrass farm and then cut in strips and rolled for transporting. Rye is a kind of grass that grows quickly and can tolerate shade and is often planted in the winter here in Florida.

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.

Florida Facts:

- Florida ranks number one in the nation for turfgrass related industry.
- Florida’s turf industry revenues are estimated to be nearly \$8 billion.
- Florida’s turf industry employs more than 173,000 people.
- There are cool-season grasses and warm-season grasses. Each grows better during certain times of the year.
- Perennial grasses will stay alive for many years. They will become dormant during the cold parts of the year but will return when it warms up.
- Annual grasses last for only one growing season. They will have to be replanted every year.

Estimated Time: 30 minutes over 2 days, plus periodic observations

Materials per box: 5” X 5” piece of firm construction paper or cardstock, pencil, white glue, 1/8 cup of grass seed, tub or bin larger than the paper, Option: pot, potting soil

Activity:

Day 1 (20 minutes)

1. Draw a large shape or letter on the construction paper with a pencil. Examples: star, circle, initials, etc.
2. Apply glue to trace over the pencil.
3. Place the paper, glue side up, into a tub or bin. Sprinkle grass seed over the glue.
4. Tip the paper to let the excess seed fall back into the bin.
5. Let the glue dry.

Day 2 (10 minutes)

1. Plant the paper into the ground. Option: Plant in a pot using potting soil. Make sure it has sun and water.
2. Observe daily and watch it grow.