

Companion Planting Lesson

Grade: K

Season: Spring

IGS Unit: Gardens

Objective: Students will understand the relationships between different plants and how plants help each other grow.

Materials:

- Six packs (one per pair of students)
- Potting soil
- Tomatoes (and marigolds, if not already started)
- Watering cans
- Labels and markers

Introduction:

Ask students what it means to be a friend. Explain that humans are not the only living things that have friends. Ask students what other living things have friends. Ask students if they think that plants might have friends.

Pair up students and ask them to stand in a circle. Guide students through this exercise (students may act this out, or share their ideas)

- If your friend was hot and needed shade, how would you help?
- If your friend was hungry, and you had some food, what would you do?
- If your friend was thirsty, and you had some water, what would you do?
- If your friend needed to lean on something, how would you help?

Explain that plants are very good friends to each other, and they do a lot to help each other grow. One of the greatest friendships in the garden is between the tomato and the marigold.

Lesson:

Ask students to describe the steps to planting seeds. Explain that now you will be starting some tomato seeds to work together with the marigolds we already planted. This time, you will be working with a friend, sharing a six pack and planting the seeds together. See how you can best work together to make sure these seeds grow to be happy and healthy tomato plants!

Assist students as they plant their tomato seeds, and set them out onto the table in the sun.

Wrap Up:

Ask students to guess what they think the tomato plants will look like when they grow? How long will it take for them to grow?

Ask them to explain some of the ways that tomatoes and marigolds help each other.