

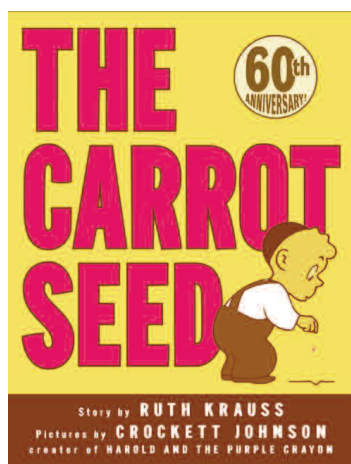


# CRAFT CONNECTION

## Seeds to Veggies

### Lesson Overview

Children will learn that many of the foods we eat come from plants. They will listen to the classic story *The Carrot Seed* and then participate in a simple planting activity where they grow a radish from seed and decorate their plant container. To reinforce lesson concepts, the children will be served radish slices and carrot strips at snack time.



### Key Concepts

- Many foods come from plants. Examples are vegetables, fruits, beans, herbs, and grains.
  - Plants need soil, sunlight, and water to grow.
  - We can grow some of our food in a garden.

### Materials Needed

To teach the lesson:

- Book: Krauss, R., & Johnson, C. (2004). *The Carrot Seed (60th Anniversary Edition)*. HarperTrophy.

For the craft activity:

- Peat pellets\* (one per child)
- Clear, 9 ounce plastic cups (one per child)
- Warm water
- Radish seeds
- Stickers and/or colored tape to decorate the plant container; masking tape
- Optional: Carrot seeds to plant outdoors

For the snack:

- Thinly sliced radishes and thinly cut carrot strips for tasting
- Reduced fat ranch dressing
- String cheese

\*Available at most garden centers



## Lesson Background

Simple gardening activities are a great way to educate children about where food comes from. Studies show that children who participate in fruit, vegetable, and herb gardening are more likely to try these foods.

If you already have a garden, allow children to help with garden tasks such as planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting. If you do not have space for a garden, an easy way to start is by using containers that you can place on your patio or deck.

## Teach the Lesson

- Ask the children where does the food you eat come from? Allow children to share their ideas.
- Explain that many of the foods we eat come from plants that farmers grow. Offer examples such as specific vegetables, fruits, herbs, and grains.
- Read the book *The Carrot Seed*. Ask the children if they have ever planted seeds before. Did it take a long time for the seeds to sprout?
- Introduce the craft activity. Explain that the children will plant a radish seed, care for it, and observe it as it sprouts and grows.
- Before planting, children can decorate their plastic cups with stickers or pieces of colored tape. Place a small piece of masking tape with the child's name on the cup.
- Place peat pellet, hole side up, in the clear plastic cup. Add about 2 inches of warm water to the cup to hydrate the pellets. The pellets will grow to a height of about 2 inches. Children will enjoy watching their planting pots “grow.”
- Once the pots are hydrated, place 2–3 radish seeds in the small hole. Gently squeeze the sides of the pot until the seeds are covered with soil.
- Set the pots in a sunny window, south-facing is the best.
- Water the pots from the bottom only. Do this by adding water to the cup. Add a little water at a time, until it is all soaked up and the pots are damp.
- Check on the pots daily. Water as needed but don't over soak the pots.
- It normally takes just 3–5 days for the radish sprouts to appear. Ask the children if they know which part of the plant will eventually become a radish (the root).





- Be sure to send the child's radish plant home at the end of the week. Encourage parents to place the entire peat pot in the home garden or an outside container filled with planting soil.
- Optional: With the children, plant carrot seeds in an outdoor garden space. Carrots normally take 2 weeks or more to germinate so this is a good exercise in patience (a lesson presented in the book, *The Carrot Seed*.)
- To reinforce lesson concepts, serve radish slices and carrot strips at snack time.

### Snack Time

- Clean and sanitize the table where the children will eat snack. Make sure all children wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
- Offer the children a snack tray with radish slices, thinly cut carrot strips and reduced fat ranch dressing for dipping.
- To ensure the snack is reimbursable, serve with string cheese.

### CACFP Food Components

Offer at least 1/2 cup total of radish slices and carrot strips for children ages 3–5 and 3/4 cup for children ages 6–12. Offering 1/2 ounce of string cheese (1 ounce for ages 6–12) will result in a reimbursable snack.

### Going Further

Children:

- Books to Read
  - ◆ Ayres, K. (2007). *Up, down, and around*. Candlewick Press.
  - ◆ Cherry, L. (2003). *How groundhog's garden grew*. Blue Sky Press.
  - ◆ Ehlert, L. (1990). *Growing vegetable soup*. Voyager Books.

Leader:

- For more information on gardening with children, check out the following web sites:
  - ◆ My First Garden, located at <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/firstgarden/index.html>
  - ◆ Kids Gardening, located at <http://www.kidsgardening.org>

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