

# ZEKE'S FUN AT HOME ACTIVITY CORNER

April 17 2020

Dear Zoo-Friends,

We are still **celebrating Spring** through the theme, “**Backyards, Bugs and Botany!**” enjoy these **S.T.R.E.A.M.S.** activities! Today, we are going to discover **the life-cycle of plants**. **Next week: Earth Week!**



**S.T.R.E.A.M.S.:** **science, technology** (looking up science topics online, viewing pictures, learning new information), **recreation** (movement and fitness – free and structured physical activities), **engineering** (little hands building with blocks, Legos®, scissors, stirring, transferring, lacing – anything that uses the hands and fingers), **the arts** (art/music), **math**, and **socialization** (learning about family, self, community, world).

*Let's see how many things you can discover in your yard, in books, and online this week. See lessons for “Older Children” below.*

**Language Arts** – Here are two critical every day:

- 1) Signal and sound the “**a – z’s**” every day. Use your *Zoo-phonics Animal Alphabet Cards* and Safari Sid’s YouTube video for fun practice.
- 2) Read a wonderful **literature book** aloud every day (fiction or non-fiction). Signal and sound the first letters in important words in the book as you read (have children Signal too!). Clap out the syllables in these important words.



**SUGGESTED LITERATURE BOOKS:** *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle, *Plant Life Cycles* by Mara Grunbaum, *The Amazing Life Cycle of Plants* by Kay Barnham and Maddie Frost, *See to Plant* by Lisa M Herrington, and *I Can Grow a Flower* by DK (Life Cycle Books).

- 3) Read aloud this **poem** and Signal the underlined letters:

## **From a Seed to a Flower**©

Take a seed, drop it in to dirt.  
Press it gently so it won't hurt.  
Cover it with soil so it hides away.  
Sprinkle with water until a couple of days.

Soon a tiny green shoot will appear.  
Let it feel the sun, ever so near.  
Give it water – that hits the spot!  
A flower will grow if it's not too hot.

**S.T.R.E.A.M.S.** (Don't forget to Signal letters that are underlined as you talk with your child!)

- 1) **Science:** (*Materials you will need:* seeds, a magnifying glass, small, plastic cups, soil, water and a permanent marker)
  - a) **Look, Compare, Discuss.** Look at, compare, and discuss seeds today. Open many packets of seeds and pour out a few of each on a sheet of paper. Keep separate. Some are tiny. Some are bigger. Look at the colors and shapes.
  - b) **Grow Seeds.** In small, clear plastic cups, place a little soil. Press in a few seeds in each cup (different), cover with more soil and give a little water. Label the cups with the type of flower or herb seed. Put in the indirect sunshine and watch them grow. (Re-read the poem above.)
  - c) **Predict and Experiment.** What will happen if you leave the new plant in the hot sun? (It will might die because the new plants is fragile.) What happens if you don't water your plant? (It will die.) What happens if you put your seeds in a dark place? (It may grow but be very pale and sickly; or it will not grow at all. Plants need sunshine just like children and adults do!)



**RESEARCH:** Plant seeds need soil, sun and water in order to grow. For young preschoolers, that's all they need to know at this point. For your older children, YouTube has many good videos on the life cycles of plants and photosynthesis. Explaining photosynthesis isn't easy but it is important to understand!

- 2) **Math:** Use the seeds for these easy toddler and preschool math activities:
  - a) Mix the seeds altogether. Have your child sort them by color, size and shape. (And then plant them!)
  - b) Using larger seeds, do addition and math problems. "If I have 3 sunflower seeds and two daisy seeds, how many seeds do I have all together? Write the equations. Review + - and = signs and concepts.
  - c) Subitize. Drop several seeds on the table. Have your child guess quickly how many the see. Try it again with various numbers. "Subitizing" is the process of immediately addressing a number to a number of items.
- 3) **Recreation:** Under **movement and sensory-drama, act out the life cycle of a seed.** Your child is the seed. Cover him or her with a brown towel (soil). Sprinkle (pretend or real) some water on the soil. The parent or an older sibling can be the sun that shines down on the little seedling. Now s/he will come up, out of the soil, and grow up, up, up, spreading its leaves. Does a beautiful flower pop out? A delicious vegetable?
- 4) **Life Cycle of a Plant.** Color and then discuss the **life cycle of a plant.** See below for the diagram and coloring page.

#### *Activities for Older Preschoolers and Kindergartners*

**Read a chapter book.** How about *The Secret Garden*? (It is presently **FREE** in Kindle Books.) Write down CVC (short consonant-vowel-consonant) words and blend words. **Think, analyze, evaluate, predict, verbalize thoughts** Remember to use **adverbs** and **adjectives** to make sentences more exciting.

- 1) **Do Activities Above!** Do all of the activities above but broaden them for older children.
- 2) **Word-Play:** Look at the following words. Write them for your child to see (lowercase letters, please!) or spell them with the Zoo-phonics Animal Letters. Pronounce them slowly and carefully: "sun," "soil," "water," "stem," "plant," "seeds," "trees," "weeds." Remember: 1) When two consonants ("st," "pl," "nt" for example) are together, you Signal and sound them quickly together. They are called "blends." 2) When two "ee's" are together, it says the long /e/ sound: "eeeeeeee"! Review these words from yesterday: buzz, fuzz; puzzle; bee, fee, see, hee hee (giggle!) **Signal and sound each.** Syllabicate the words by clapping.
- 3) **Math with Bees!**
  - a) **Skip count by 3's!** 0, 3, 6, 9, 12! **Can you skip-count to 21?** 0, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21!
  - b) **Try some story problems!** Pretend you want to landscape your yard. You need to buy plants! Plants in 3" containers cost \$3.00 each. Plants in 6" containers cost \$5.00 each. *Try these problems:*
    - 1) How many 3" plants can you buy for \$10.00? (3) How much money would you have left over? (\$1.00).
    - 2) How much does one 3" plant and one 6" plant cost? (\$8.00).  $\$3.00 + \$5.00 = \$8.00$ .
    - 3) How much money would you need if you wanted to buy three 6" plants? (\$15.00). This is why skip counting (leading into multiplication tables) is important to learn: 5, 10, 15!
- 4) **Physical Fitness:** Dig (really!) some holes for seeds or plants today. Digging provides big and natural muscle movement. Using a tool takes strength and dexterity! Use those arm, hand and finger muscles as you dig. Smell the earth. Look around! Take deep breathes. Taking care of plants is like being a parent: You can never forget that you are responsible for your plants. You must water them consistently and pull any weeds from around them that would steal their water and sunlight. Protect them! Relax and enjoy as you watch your plants grow! Measure them daily for an extra math and science experiment!

# Parts of the Plant



