

## Community Garden Classroom Activity

The Classroom Activity introduces students to the context of a performance task, so they are not disadvantaged in demonstrating the skills the task intends to assess. Contextual elements include: an understanding of the setting or situation in which the task is placed, potentially unfamiliar concepts that are associated with the scenario, and **key terms** or vocabulary students will need to understand in order to meaningfully engage with and complete the performance task. The Classroom Activity is also intended to generate student interest in further exploration of the key idea(s). The Classroom Activity should be easy to implement with clear instructions.

Please read through the entire Classroom Activity before beginning the activity with students to ensure any classroom preparation can be completed in advance.

### Resources needed:

- Each student should have access to a piece of paper and writing tools<sup>1</sup>
- Some method of displaying images<sup>2</sup>
- Whiteboard or some manner of recording student responses
- Pictures of fencing, planter boxes, tool shed, path and plants

### Learning Goal:

- The student will understand the context of the key ideas related to the topic:
  - Gardening
  - Plants
  - Examples of plants that are used as food (The initial part of this classroom activity asks students to think of examples of parts of plants that are used in their favorite foods, e.g. tomatoes in tomato sauce or ketchup. This is intended to engage students.)
- The student will understand the following vocabulary:
  - **Garden:** a piece of ground, often near a house, used for growing flowers, fruit, or vegetables.
  - **Planter boxes:** wooden boxes used to grow plants above ground
  - **Tool shed:** a small building for storing tools
  - **Walkway or Path:** clear and open area for walking (no plants to block walking)
  - **Fencing:** wall surrounding the garden, usually made of wood or metal
  - **Weeds:** unwanted plants that invade the garden

Definitions are provided here for the convenience of facilitators. Students are expected to understand these key terms as they arise in the context of the task, not to be able to recite the definitions.

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<sup>1</sup> Students who need an accommodation may use their preferred tool for writing.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of displaying Figures 1 and 2, handouts can be given to students if the facilitator chooses.

## Community Garden Classroom Activity

**[Purpose:** The facilitator’s goal is to help students understand what a garden is and what a community garden is. The activities are presented with suggested text for the facilitator.]

**Facilitator says:** “Today in preparation for your performance task, we are going to talk about a community garden. To get ready for this task, we are going to look at the parts of a community garden. Who can describe what a garden is?” [Allow for student responses. If they are unable to describe, provide the meaning of garden. *A garden is a piece of ground, often near a house, used for growing flowers, fruit, or vegetables.*]

**Facilitator says:** “What do you think we mean by a ‘community garden’? Talk with your neighbor for two minutes.”

[Students should talk in pairs. The following section can be modified to accommodate various teacher-student interaction types such as a teacher-led discussion with the entire class, teacher-student discussion for remote locations with a single student, or small groups.]

**Facilitator says:** “Who would like to share?” [Call on two or three students to share and record answers on the chalkboard/whiteboard/poster paper. After recording responses, summarize student thinking to arrive at the definition of a community garden. If necessary, provide this definition: “A community garden is a garden that many people in a community or neighborhood create and take care of together to grow plants such as fruits and vegetables.”]

**Facilitator says:** “If you were going to grow a garden with other people, you would want to be sure it would contain things that you would like to eat. What might you grow in a garden that could contribute to some of your favorite foods?”

**Facilitator says:** “Talk with your partner for two minutes about what you would like grow in the garden as a part of your favorite food. You may list more than one food. Tell your neighbor why this is your favorite food.” [Students should talk in pairs. Allow student partners two minutes to discuss their favorite foods. You may walk around to monitor and listen to student discussions.]

**Facilitator says:** “Who would like to share?” [Call on three to four pairs of students to share and record their responses about what they would like to grow in the garden on the chalkboard/whiteboard/poster paper.]

**Facilitator says:** “Now that we have some ideas about what we would like to grow in a community garden, let’s discuss some things that are often found in a garden.”

[Facilitator should display **List 1. Parts of a Community Garden** on whiteboard or other method.]

### List 1. Parts of a Community Garden

- Garden
- Planter boxes
- Tool shed
- Walkway or Path
- Fencing
- Weeds



**Facilitator says:** “Talk with your neighbor about what you think these things are and why you might want them to be part of your garden. You will have three minutes before we come back as a whole class.”

**Facilitator says:** “Who would like to share?” [Call on one pair of students for each of the four items beginning with planter boxes. A basic description for each item is provided in the resource documents.]

**Facilitator says:** “What are some things you would **not** want to have in your garden? [Discuss **weeds**, or unwanted plants that invade the garden. Tell students that removing weeds from a garden is called ‘weeding’.]

**Possible class discussion questions (*unscripted*):**

- What’s the benefit of using planter boxes?
- Why would you want a walkway in your garden?
- Why would you want fencing around your garden?
- Why would you remove weeds?
- Why would you have a community garden rather than an individual garden? Who might you share the garden with?

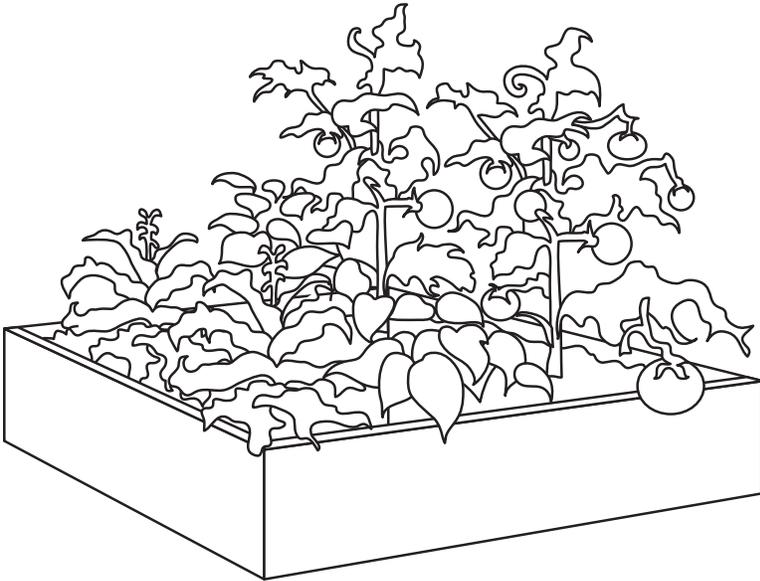
[No resolution is needed for these questions. Questions are to increase student interest and to promote discussion regarding the topic.]

**Facilitator says:** “Today, we learned about community gardens and items found in a garden. These ideas may help you when you complete your performance task.”

**Facilitator says:** “Are there any questions?” [Allow for student questions.]

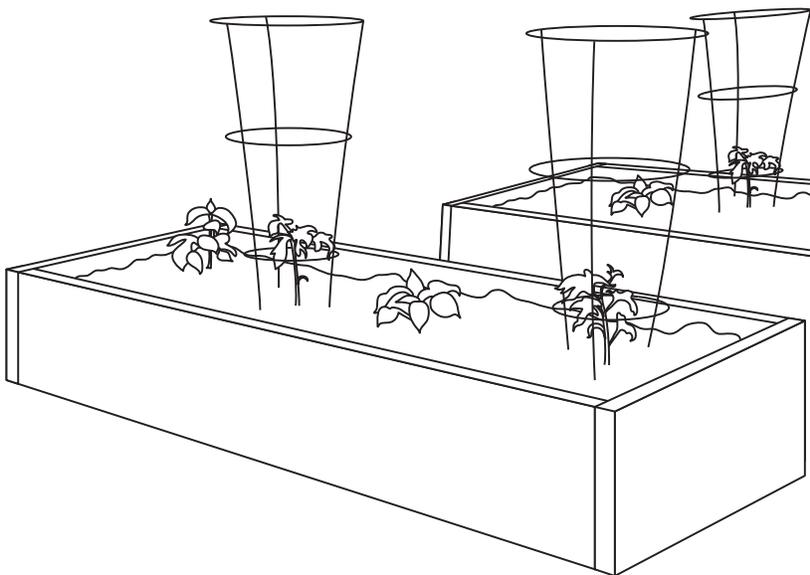
**Facilitator says:** “You are ready to complete the Community Garden Performance Task.”

**Figure 1. Planter Box Image**



**[Picture Description:** Figure 1 shows a tomato plant with many leaves and tomatoes on it. The plant is growing in a planter box made of wood. Some of the soil that fills the planter box can be seen on the corners of the box.]

**Figure 2. Planter Box Picture**



**[Picture Description:** Figure 2 shows two wooden planters filled with soil. Several different plants are being grown on the planters.]

### List 1. Parts of a Community Garden

- Garden
- Planter boxes
- Tool shed
- Walkway or Path
- Fencing
- Weeds

### Descriptions for Parts of a Garden

- **Planter boxes:** wooden boxes used to grow plants above ground
- **Tool shed:** a small building for storing tools
- **Walkway or Path:** clear and open area for walking (no plants to block walking)
- **Fencing:** wall surrounding the garden, usually made of wood or metal