



# Teachers' notes

supporting classroom resources and activities

## Plant Pest Investigation

### Pre-reading activity 5: Grow your own crop

#### Objectives

Students begin to understand that living things grow and need air and water to survive.

#### Resources

- trays or pots (1 per student or 1 per group)
- 1 - 2 packets of cress, bean or mustard seeds (or any other fast-growing seed)
- markers/pens
- potting mix or soil

#### Preparation

- pour potting mix /soil into the trays or pots and dampen with water

#### Lesson steps

1. Write 'living things' on the board and ask student what they know about living things. If students are having difficulty articulating what they know, ask some guided questions, "what do people do that other things can't eg plastic chair?" Guide students to think about moving, breathing, growing, eating and drinking.
2. Give each student a seed. Ask students if they think the seeds are living. Explain that the seeds can grow into plants. Discuss whether plants are living things. Review what the students know about plants from previous activities.
3. Planting the seeds:
  - 3a. give each student a tray or pot
  - 3b. ask students to place their seed into the tray (cress and mustard seeds can be sprinkled on top. To plant bean seeds, have students make a hole in the potting mix with the finger (0.5-1 cm deep) and place the seed in the hole. Then, cover the seed with potting mix.)
4. After planting, water the seeds and place them in a sunny part of the classroom. Sprinkle the trays with a little water everyday.
5. Ask students why they think we need to water the plants everyday? What would happen if we didn't water them? What else do the plants need to grow?
6. Check on the seeds everyday. They should sprout about 1 week after planting. Bean seeds will grow quite quickly and can grow 5 cm overnight!
7. Have students keep a diary, recording the growth of plants. Use a ruler to measure how tall the plants are. This can be done as a class, in small groups or individually.



**Extension activities:**

1. Conduct an experiment to investigate how sunlight affects plant growth. After planting, place some trays/pots in the sun and others in a dark cupboard. Ask students to predict what will happen. Discuss the results.
2. Conduct an experiment to investigate how water affects plant growth. After planting, put all the plants in the same place in the classroom but only water half of them. Ask students to predict what will happen. Discuss the results.