

THE **EDIBLE**
SCHOOLYARD
PROJECT

**EXPLORING A COMMUNITY
GARDEN**

Summary: What can our communities teach us about organic food and practices? In this lesson, students will visit a local garden to explore that question.

Time: 30-60 minutes

Materials:

- Something to write with OR a recording device
- [Garden Walk Observation Sheet](#) (attached below)

Teacher Notes:

- This lesson asks students to visit a community garden. It's good practice to encourage students to check-in with their parents or guardians to get permission to go on their own or have them go with a trusted adult.
- This lesson was developed for Edible Schoolyard Project's [Understanding Organic](#) curriculum and is part of the extension inquiries.



EXPLORING A COMMUNITY GARDEN

READ AND THINK: Think about the green spaces (parks, and other open areas), gardens, and community food areas in and around your community.

- Where are they? Are there many of them? What are they like?
- Do you know any individuals who are growing food?
- Are there public places in your community where people are growing food or engaging with interesting projects around food?

EXPLORE AND RECORD: Find a community garden, school garden, or green space close to where you live. Spend some time exploring.

Then use a pen and paper or a recording device to fill out the answers to the questions on the [Garden Walk Observation Sheet](#) (attached below)

ANSWER: Now that you have gone on a walk through the garden, find two to three plants that you are interested in observing more closely. For each plant, write down your answers to the following questions.

- Describe the plant. What does it look like? Smell like? How does it feel? Try to be as specific and detailed as possible in your descriptions.
- What kind of plant do you think it is? Support your answer with evidence.
- How is the plant planted? (*ie. directly in the ground, in a planter box, in a pot, etc.*)
- Are there other plants close by? Are they the same or different? Describe the plants' environment.
- Does the plant look healthy? Explain your answer and provide evidence.
- What potential reasons could explain whether the plant is healthy or not? (*Hint: think about the soil, sunlight, access to water, method of planting, appropriateness of care, etc.*)
- What questions do you still have about the plant?

Reflect on Connections:

Use your [Circles of Connections](#) worksheet to answer the following questions:

- What are the connections between community gardens and organic farming?
- What are the ways community gardens can have a positive impact on you, your community, and society?



GARDEN WALK OBSERVATIONS

Student Worksheet

Name: _____

move

First move around the garden. As you move, take in your surroundings. Use the following **sensory questions** to guide your observations.

see

What do you see?
Make some **observations**.

hear

What are some of the **sounds** you hear?

smell

What are some of the smells you **notice**?

feel

What are some of the **textures** in the garden? What do they feel like?

draw

Map the green/garden space. Draw a map of the space and the different plants that are growing. Do you know the name of the different plants?



GARDEN WALK OBSERVATIONS

Student Worksheet

Name: _____

A large, empty rectangular area with a dotted border, intended for students to write or draw their observations.

Directions: Write or draw your observations below answering some of the **sensory questions** from the first page. Also, notice how the garden is set up. Are the plants in rows or growing together? If the plants are labeled, what do you observe about the way the plants are named and organized?