

# DIG ART!

CULTIVATING CREATIVITY  
IN THE GARDEN



## Visual Art & Performance: Garden Songs

<b>Overview</b>	Students craft songs that express, and reflect upon, their experiences learning in the garden.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• write a poem or song about a gardening experience or related topic.</li><li>• explore creative expression and performance as part of a group.</li></ul>
<b>Time</b>	1.5 hours (time for song creation and performance)
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• notebooks</li><li>• pencils</li></ul>
<b>Instructions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Challenge students to create a song about a gardening experience or special topic, such as plant development, composting, or the water cycle.</li><li>2. As a group, brainstorm all of the concepts we consider important to our understanding of the garden. Your list may yield results such as soil preparation, seed germination, plant propagation, photosynthesis, the sun, water cycles, harvesting, nutrition, biodiversity, insects, and more.</li><li>3. Weather permitting, have students go in small groups and sit in the garden quietly to observe and gather inspiration. Ask each group to weave their understanding of the garden concepts they came up with into a song, which they will then present to the rest of the class.</li><li>6. Give students the opportunity to read songs created by other students and songwriters, in order to get them thinking creatively and 'outside the box'. This activity is widely adaptable and can use familiar tunes such as Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and Freres Jacques set to your own lyrics.</li><li>5. Based on the success of this activity and the enthusiasm of the students, consider creating regular opportunities for musical performances and creative reflection in the garden.</li></ol>
<b>Resources</b>	<i>Singing in our Garden</i> and <i>Dirt Made My Lunch</i> music by the Banana Slug String Band

## Resources

\* Note: Here are two garden-inspired songs and poems which can serve as a good example for your students. They are written by high school students in Florida for the 2007 Fairchild Challenge.

The Fairchild Challenge is designed to promote environmental awareness, scholarship and stewardship in teenagers and pre-teens through a combination of hands-on research, creativity, and a variety of competitive projects. For more information, check out their website at: [www.fairchildgarden.org/education/fairchildchallenge](http://www.fairchildgarden.org/education/fairchildchallenge).

### **The Power of Plants**

~ from Doral Middle School

Look around, your neighbors are plants.

Not just ornaments, they are alive.

Refrain: Open your eyes, open your heart.

They are slow but they seek, search, and avoid.

Darwin told us, our grandparents knew:

With a slow ticking clock, plants live and move.

Refrain

Sun's energy they give us, a gift of photosynthesis in chloroplasts.

A soundless work for life, great is the power of plants.

Refrain

Breathe, breathe, breathe, oxygen is a present

From plants to all of us

A-ni-mals.

Refrain

They can grow in places you don't expect them to.

They can embrace a truck; they can outgrow your home.

### **Such is The Power of Plants** (an excerpt from the Nature's Crew Rap)

~ from South Miami Senior High

... We are killing the trees,

You didn't know, that's what gives us energy.

Without it, you can't breathe.

When instead of cutting trees,

We should be planting seeds.

Stop taking everything, even the leaves.

You probably think this is all a tease,

But it's serious, can't you see?

Ready or not, here we come, you can't hide

We are gonna find you, and make you help us.

Ready or not, here we come, you can't hide,

We are gonna find you, and make you help us.

Wake up in the morning, "O" is in the air,

I know without plants, none of it would be there.