

Garden Drawing Evaluation

Objective:

Use drawings as an effective way to gather information with young children. This activity is an example of how you can use drawings to uncover what children have learned about gardening through your program.

Time:

- 30 minutes during the program pre-session
- 30 minutes during the program post-session

Materials:

- Blank pieces of paper
- Crayons, colored pencils, and markers

Instructions:

This pre- and post-test activity will help to highlight the children's changes in perspective. Do this activity on the first day of program, before any other activities, and one week after the program has finished.

Pre-Session:

- Provide children with blank pieces of paper, markers, crayons, and colored pencils.
- Ask them to write their first names and ages on the back of each paper they draw on.
- Ask children to draw a garden, any garden.
- Say something like: "It can be a garden you've seen before or a garden that you imagine. It's your garden, so can include whatever you'd like."
- Note: You must be very careful not to influence participants when introducing the activity or during the activity. Be careful not to use leading examples or questions (e.g. "you can draw a vegetable garden or a flower garden", "are there any animals in your garden?", "who visits your garden?").
- Give children between 15 and 30 minutes to draw before the drawings are collected.

Coding:

Set aside some time when you are not working with the children. Code drawings based on the presence or absence of ecological and social aspects of gardens:

<i>Ecological</i>	<i>Social</i>
Flowers	People present
Different types of flowers (e.g. daisies, tulips, sunflowers)	People gardening
Vegetables	People interacting (e.g. gardening together, playing together)
Vegetables growing appropriately (e.g. carrots and potatoes underground)	People of different generations (e.g. adults, children)
Fruit	Structures (e.g. shed, picnic table, house, school)
Fruit growing appropriately (e.g. apples on trees, blueberries on bushes)	Signs
Soil	Activities other than gardening (e.g. playing, eating, bike riding)
Sun	The time it takes to garden
Water (e.g. water source, hose, watering cans, rain)	Commitment, caring, ways of expressing feelings about the garden
Different Colors	
Insects or animals present	
Trees, shrubs, or other plants near garden	

Post-Session:

One week after the program ends, ask the children to draw a garden.

It can be any garden they would like.

Code the drawings again based on the presence or absence of the ecological and social aspects.

Compare:

Compare and contrast the children’s pre- and post-drawings to determine if any change in understanding of gardens is expressed.

Modify:

If you are working with younger children (5-6 year olds) or with special needs audiences whose drawings aren’t easily interpreted, you may have facilitators visit with children toward the end of the drawing exercise. Ask facilitators to carry a post-it note pad and denote the participants’ name. They can simply ask the participant to “tell me about your drawing.” Once again, caution your facilitators to be careful not to ask leading questions (e.g. is that an apple tree?).

Ask facilitators to record the participant's response to the question. After you collect the drawings, attach the post-it note to the drawing for reference when coding.