

CURRICULUM PLAN



CONNECTING JUNIOR GARDENERS PROGRAM

The Connecting Junior Gardeners Program is a four-part educational gardening resource developed by the Victorian Schools Garden Program (VSGP) for primary aged school children. The Program consists of a suite of videos, fact sheets and activities, developed to inspire and excite children to discover the joys and benefits of gardening together. As well as learning some of the foundations of gardening, children will be able to enjoy physical exercise, a connection with nature, being mindful and sharing the whole experience with their peers.

The Connecting Junior Gardeners Program has been funded through the Victorian Government's Let's Stay Connected Fund.



This resource was created by Grassroots Sustainability. The Program is managed by Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria.



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James McLennan, founder of Grassroots Sustainability, guides students and educators through three fun and educational activities. The program finale is a virtual excursion for the whole class to experience together as they discover an exciting Victorian micro farm.

As well as learning some of the foundations of gardening, children will be able to enjoy physical exercise, a connection with nature, being mindful and sharing the whole experience with their peers. For the educator, be sure your students will be exposed to fantastic learning outcomes which are particularly valuable in today's society.

We hope that this resource is embraced by schools and enjoyed by children across the State for many years to come, inspiring the next generation of gardeners in Victoria. The Connecting Junior Gardeners Program can be downloaded from the VSGP website.

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CURRICULUM

Taken from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)

Sustainability addresses the ongoing capacity of Earth to maintain all life. Sustainable patterns of living meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Actions to improve sustainability are both individual and collective endeavours shared across local and global communities. They necessitate a renewed and balanced approach to the way humans interact with each other and the environment.

Education for sustainability develops the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary for people to act in ways that contribute to more sustainable patterns of living. It enables individuals and communities to reflect on ways of interpreting and engaging with the world.

Sustainability education is futures-oriented, focusing on protecting environments and eating a more ecologically and socially just world through informed action. Actions that support more sustainable patterns of living require consideration of environmental, social, cultural and economic systems and their interdependence.

The Sustainability priority has been developed around the three key concepts of systems, world views and futures. These three organising ideas reflect the essential knowledge, understandings and skills for the Sustainability priority.

ORGANISING IDEAS

SYSTEMS

- Explores the interdependent and dynamic nature of systems that support all life on Earth and our collective wellbeing

- The biosphere is a dynamic system providing conditions that sustain life on Earth.
- All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival.
- Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems.

WORLD VIEWS

- Enables a diversity of world views on ecosystems, values and social justice to be discussed and recognised when determining individual and community actions for sustainability

- World views that recognise the dependence of living things on healthy ecosystems, and value diversity and social justice are essential for achieving sustainability.
- World views are formed by experiences at personal, local, national and global levels, and are linked to individual and community actions for sustainability.

FUTURES

- Aimed at building capacities for thinking and acting in ways that are necessary to create a more sustainable future

- The sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community action that values local and global equity and fairness across generations into the future.
- Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments.
- Designing action for sustainability requires an evaluation of past practices, the assessment of scientific and technological developments, and balanced judgments based on projected future economic, social and environmental impacts.
- Promoting reflective thinking processes in young people and empower them to design action that will lead to more a more equitable and sustainable future.

Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.

GARDENING AS A SUSTAINABILITY LEARNING TOOL

All learning areas within the Victorian Curriculum, from F-10, have the potential to contribute to the sustainability cross-curriculum priority. Gardening is a fantastic medium that can engage students and meet objectives that are consistent with the content and purpose of the learning area.

The Connecting Junior Gardeners Program is suitable for children from Foundation to Level 6 and covers a number of learning areas and contributes to the sustainability cross-curriculum priority; its key knowledge, concepts and skills. While some areas do not address sustainability directly in their content descriptions, they may still contribute to learning that is essential for understanding sustainability issues by providing the analytical, measurement and persuasive skills needed to advocate effectively for sustainability.

Most importantly, all four sessions of the Connecting Junior Gardeners Program are aimed to engage, inspire and transform the student's connection to themselves, others and the environment through gardening.

The four interactive sessions and accompanying worksheets that make up the Connecting Junior Garden Program are as follows:

Part 1 - HOW TO BUILD A WORM TOWER

1. **Worm fact game**

Students will gain some background knowledge on worms

2. **How to make a Worm Tower**

Each student will get to make their own Worm Tower

3. **Decorating** (*optional*)

Students can decorate as a part of art class

4. **Installation & Set-up**

Students can either take towers home to set-up, or use within the school garden

5. **Research**

Students are to research the composting worm

Part 2 - THREE WAYS TO START A GARDEN

1. **Whole class - How to make a self-wicking pot**

2. **Group work:**

Group 1 - Planting from Seed

Group 2 - Planting from Cuttings

Group 3 - Planting from Roots

3. **Observation**

Students are to observe their plants over the following few weeks

Part 3 - FROM KITCHEN TO GARDEN

1. **Individual research**

Students are to gain some background information on their chosen plant

2. **Renegade Food Growing** - Small group work (2-3 students)

Each group chooses a plant/scrap to work with

3. **Observation**

Students are to observe their plants over the following few weeks

Part 4 - VIRTUAL EXCURSION - MICRO FARM

1. **Individual research**

Students are to gain some background information on types of gardens

2. **Design a 'Micro Farm'**

Using information gained from the class, students are to design their own Micro Farm

The below table provides a summary of learning which is directly related to the four sessions of the Connected Junior Gardeners Program, as described in the content descriptions of the Victorian Curriculum F-10. Most are covered within the worksheets and activities, while others would be addressed in follow up lessons. The direct links to the content descriptions are included. By following these content description links, the elaborations can be easily accessed.

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM: CONNECTING JUNIOR GARDENERS PROGRAM

- CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

Note: List is not exhaustive

| | Foundation to Level 2 | Levels 3 and 4 | Levels 5 and 6 |
|------------------------|---|--|---|
| Science | <p>Earth's resources are used in a variety of ways (VCSSU047)</p> <p>Observable changes occur in the sky and landscape; daily and seasonal changes affect everyday life (VCSSU046)</p> <p>Living things have a variety of external features and live in different places where their basic needs, including food, water and shelter, are met (VCSSU042)</p> | <p>Science knowledge helps people to understand the effects of their actions (VCSSU056)</p> <p>Earth's surface changes over time as a result of natural processes and human activity (VCSSU062)</p> <p>Different living things have different life cycles and depend on each other and the environment to survive (VCSSU058)</p> | <p>The growth and survival of living things are affected by the physical conditions of their environment (VCSSU075)</p> <p>Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in the environment (VCSSU074)</p> <p>Scientific understandings, discoveries and inventions are used to inform personal and community decisions and to solve problems that directly affect people's lives (VCSSU073)</p> |
| Geography | <p>Weather and seasons and the ways in which different cultural groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, describe them. (VCGGK067)</p> | <p>Collect and record relevant geographical data and information from the field and other sources (VCGGK074)</p> <p>Types of natural vegetation and the significance of vegetation to the environment, the importance of environments to animals and people, and different views on how they can be protected; the use and management of natural resources and waste, and different views on how to do this sustainably (VCGGK082)</p> | <p>Environmental and human influences on the location and characteristics of places and the management of spaces within them (VCGGK096)</p> |
| Economics and Business | | | <p>Identify the types of resources (natural, human and capital) and explore the ways societies use them in order to satisfy the needs and wants of present and future generations. (VCEBR003)</p> <p>Consider the effect that consumer and financial decisions of individuals may have in themselves, their family, the broader community and the natural, economic and business environment. (VCEBC005)</p> |
| Civics and Citizenship | | <p>Investigate why and how people participate within communities and cultural and social groups (VCCCC006)</p> | <p>Examine the concept of global citizenship (VCCCC017)</p> <p>Investigate how people with shared beliefs and values work together to achieve their goals and plan for action. (VCCCC016)</p> |
| Digital Technologies | | | <p>Explain how student-developed solutions and existing information systems meet current and future community and sustainability needs (VCDTCD034)</p> |

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|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Design and Technologies | <p>Identify how people create familiar designed solutions and consider sustainability to meet personal and local community needs (VCDSTS013)</p> | <p>Recognise the role of people in design and technologies occupations and explore factors, including sustainability, that impact on the design of solutions to meet community needs (VCDSTS023)</p> <p>Investigate the suitability of materials, systems, components, tools and equipment for a range of purposes (VCDSTC027)</p> <p>Evaluate design ideas, processes and solutions based on criteria for success developed with guidance and including care for the environment and communities (VCDSCD031)</p> | <p>Investigate how and why food and fibre are produced in managed environments (VCDSTC035)</p> <p>Investigate characteristics and properties of a range of materials, systems, components, tools and equipment and evaluate the impact of their use (VCDSTC037)</p> <p>Negotiate criteria for success that include consideration of environmental and social sustainability to evaluate design ideas, processes and solutions (VCDSCD041)</p> |
| Ethical Capability | | <p>Discuss the ways to identify ethical considerations in a range of problems (VCECU006)</p> | <p>Examine how problems may contain more than one ethical issue (VCECU011)</p> <p>Explore the significance of 'means versus ends' by considering two ways to act when presented with a problem: one that privileges means and one ends. (VCECD012)</p> |
| Health and Physical Education | <p>Explore actions that help make the classroom a healthy, safe and active place (VCHPEP078)</p> <p>Identify and explore natural and built environments in the local community where physical activity can take place (VCHPEP079)</p> <p>Participate in play that promotes engagement with outdoor settings including aquatic and the natural environment (VCHPEP063)</p> | <p>Describe strategies to make the classroom and playground healthy, safe and active spaces (VCHPEP095)</p> <p>Participate in outdoor games and activities to examine how participation promotes a connection between the community, natural and built environments, and health and wellbeing (VCHPEP096)</p> | <p>Explore how participation in outdoor activities supports personal and community health and wellbeing and creates connections to the natural and built environment (VCHPEP113)</p> |