



Garden Learning Engagement

LE 8: Taking Action in the Garden: Applying the Garden Task Method

Background

In LE 7, learners discussed how there is some evidence telling us to take certain actions, and some evidence telling us that we should NOT take other actions in the garden. Now that you have made a final decision on your garden “Should We” question, you are ready to take action and apply the garden method with the group. There are many ways to take action(or NOT take action) in the garden. For example, the group may decide they want to harvest some of the sunflower seeds, but they also want to leave some seeds for the birds. Taking action may include harvesting some seeds and creating signs or communicating with the farm manager why they think it is important to leave the sunflower stalks up for the birds into the fall.

Purpose

Having space for learners to take action on their questions gives learners agency in the garden. The goal of the garden storyline is to grow ‘garden habits of mind’. An important part of learning to ask and answer questions in the garden is learning how to take action when decisions have been made. It is also important for learners to see that gardeners often need to take action even with partial information. Often gardeners will make decisions with uncertainty in order to try something out, knowing that another garden method might need to be applied if the other does not work well.

MATERIALS

Supplies for the garden method selected

- » Depending on the garden method the group selected, this could include: tools, seeds or transplants, baskets, hand lenses, scissors, rulers, stakes, fencing, remay or frost cloth, sign-making materials, repurposed sticks and leaves, compost sifting supplies, map-making supplies, paper towels, insecticidal soap that is not harmful to children, gardening gloves, hose and nozzle, wheelbarrow, tweezers, sprinklers, and so on
 - Make sure that all tools and supplies are appropriate for the ages and abilities of the learners
- » Garden journals, paper and pencil

LEARNING GOALS

Learners will...

- » Take action in the garden, even with partial information
- » Understand the details of applying a specific garden task
- » Develop agency through participation in decided activities

Connections to family and community gardening knowledges and practices

Learners have made a decision around the garden task and are applying that decision to the garden. This decision was based on a variety of sources, including investigations one in learners' neighborhood with their families and in their communities. Learners have considered what values, evidence, and relations drive their decision-making. These include family and community knowledge and practices, as well as family and community connections to place.

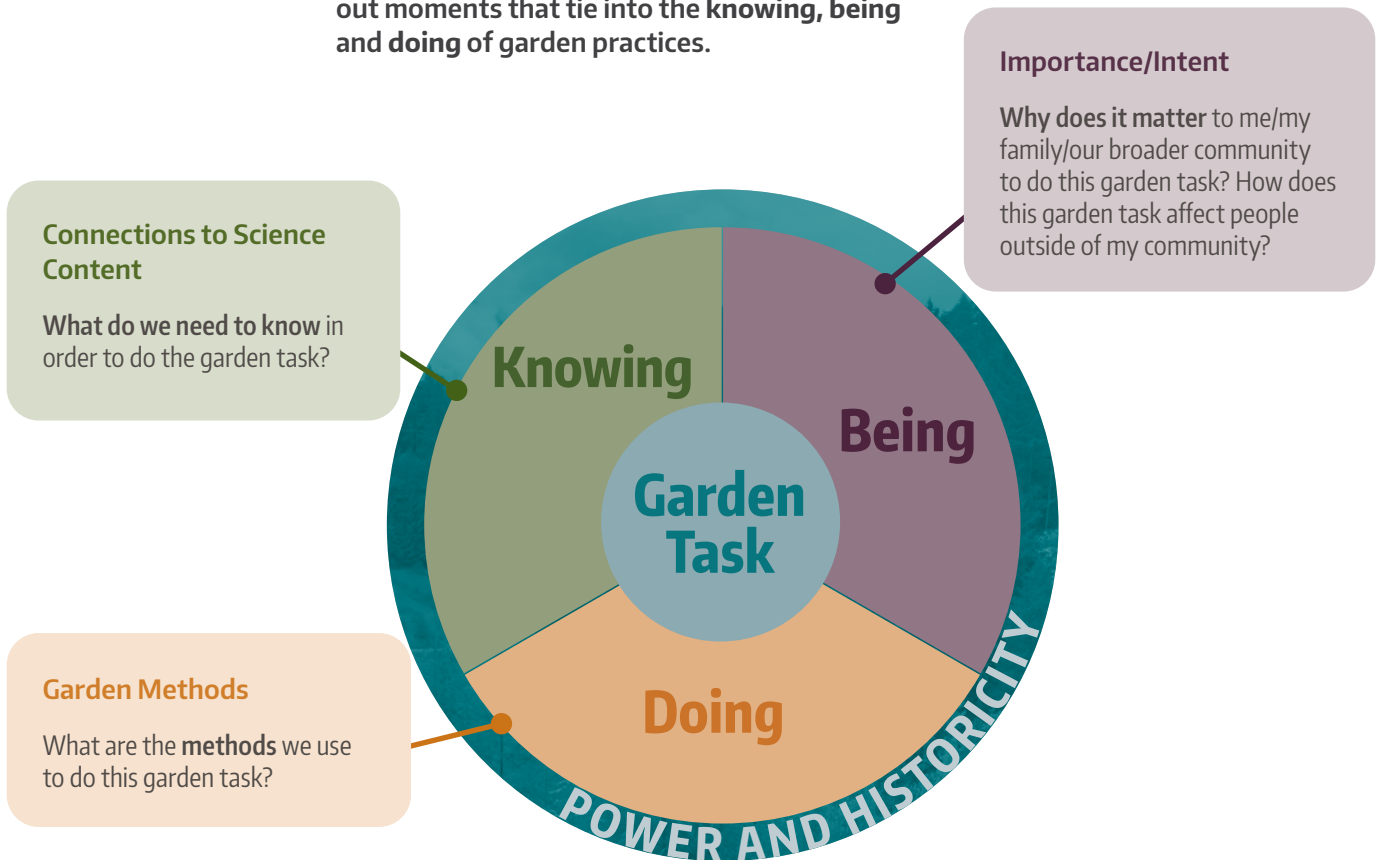
While you are doing the garden task, prompt learners to consider their own family practices:

- As we are doing this garden task, what does it remind you of?
- What will you share with your family about the garden task we are doing today?

Centering equitable practices

Acknowledge learners' intellectual leadership and agency: Learners have conducted much work around wondering and noticing, exploring their "Should We" question, collecting data and discussing methods with their families and communities experts. This process positions learners as change-makers with the agency to affect the places and communities that are important to them. This is an important opportunity to build learners' science as scientists and decision-makers.

Throughout the instructional sequence we call out moments that tie into the **knowing, being and doing** of garden practices.



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Instructional Sequence

TIME

45 minutes



1. Set up the materials for the garden method and consider:
 - How to describe and demonstrate the details of the garden method application to the learners.
 - Will learners work in groups or independently?
 - How will you distribute the supplies and materials?
 - Will some garden methods need an adult to make the actual application, such as pruning back a thorny plant?
 - If so, what are other comfortable and safe actions that learners can do to assist with the application of the garden method?
2. Work together to apply your chosen method to the garden.
3. Take before and after photos or make a short film as part of the documentation
4. Have learners document or make notes in their garden journals about the garden method you applied. You will write up a more detailed description in LE 9: Communicating

LE8 Educator Backpack Field Guide

TIME	ACTIVITY
30 min	Garden Method Application
10 min	Document the garden method applied (garden journals, photos, etc)

Our "Should We" Question:

Connection to Knowing/Being/Doing:

Return to the garden bundle and identify connections to the knowing/doing/being of the garden task to make visible the gardener 'habits of mind'.

- How are Indigenous presence and future possibilities considered as we do this task?
- How is this garden task connected to other garden tasks?
- As I do this task I notice...
- (example: connect to weather, seasons, timing)
- As I do this task I wonder...
- As I do this task I am thinking about... (example: succession planting, if I should water, etc.)

Connections to Families and Communities:

- As we are doing this garden task, what does it remind you of?
- What will you share with your family about the garden task we are doing today?

Focus on Decision Making:

- Incorporate learners' lived experiences and ways of knowing.
- Create opportunities to ask questions and make decisions. This positions learners as change-makers with the agency to affect the places and communities that are important to them.
- Prompts: What do you think this place will look like in the future? How will this garden method help the garden?

Future Planning:

- Does this garden method application need to be monitored and adjusted? Who will do this? How often will this need to be done?
- How will we observe the results of this application or applied garden practice over time?
- How will we document any changes in the garden: Adverse effects? Positive changes? No changes?