Teacher Resource

Edible Schoolyard Weeds

Overview: This activity involves learning about edible weeds in the schoolyard, and thinking about the ecosystem services they provide, and incorporating Indigenous principles.

Curricular Connections

Exploring plants can be connected to many Big Ideas in the Science curriculum; these activities could be integrated into larger conversations about environmental responses, natural resources, internal systems, and natural selection.

Big Ideas	
Science	All living things sense and respond to their environment. (gr. 4) Earth materials change as they move through the rock cycle and can be used as natural resources. (gr. 5) Multicellular organisms rely on internal systems to survive, reproduce, and interact with their environment. (gr. 6) Evolution by natural selection provides an explanation for the diversity and survival of living things. (gr. 7)
ADST	Skills are developed through practice, effort, and action.

Indigenous Connections

One principle practiced in this unit is, "Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)." This hands-on lesson can invite walks outside into natural spaces and discussions about native plants, traditional uses of them, and discuss First Peoples concepts of interconnectedness in the environment (gr. 5).

Lesson Design: Edible Schoolyard Weeds	
Student Learning Outcomes:	
1. Learn about weeds and their role in our ecosystems. 2. Learn how to safely forage for edible plants.	
Driving Questions:	
1. What weeds are growing around the school, and how can we eat them? 	
Materials (for 25 students)	**Costs**
• Edible Weeds handout • Coloring pencils, pencils • Video access and screen	Free
Lesson Design:	**Classroom Set-Up:**
Edible Schoolyard Weeds (45 minutes) 1. **Introduce weeds.** a. *What are weeds?* Weeds are plants that grow on their own and were not planted. They are often considered undesirable, but can play important roles in the ecosystem. *b. What are the benefits to weeds?* All plants (including weeds) build soil, bring deep nutrients up to the top of the soil for other plants, provide more flowers for pollinators, and many are edible (you can eat them). 2. KWL Chart - What do you know and wonder about wild foods like weeds and foraging? Fill in the K and W sections. 3. **Show Common Schoolyard Weeds Presentation:** a. Chamomile b. Chick Weed c. Clover d. Dandelion e. Lamb's Quarters f. Mallow g. Pansy h. Plantain	**Hand out KWL charts.** **Show presentation.**

4. **Reminders before going outside:** a. It is not recommended to eat anything on the school grounds, as it is unlikely to be safe to ingest. b. Only the teacher should harvest any of the plants, students can point to the plants. 5. **Outside as a class:** a. As a group, harvest several of the weeds that you find, pass them around, point out distinguishing features of the plant (noted in the Common Schoolyard Weeds presentation). b. Calling out different plants, have students find plants, point them out to you (no need to harvest). c. *Assessment:* Have a checklist of students, assess if they were able to correctly identify a range of weeds. 6. **Reflection Circle:** a. *What do weeds tell us about the soil?* Some grow in poor soil, e.g. Dandelions grow in magnesium-poor soil, and they bring Magnesium up from the deeper soil. b. *What roles do weeds play in the schoolyard?* Food (pollen and nectar) for pollinators, improve the soil, provide food for insects and animals. c. What is one plant that you can now confidently identify? d. Would you eat this on a hike or camping? 7. **KWL Chart** - What did you learn? Fill in L section. Color in drawings of plants (on the back of the sheet).	**Outside in the schoolyard field or nearby wild area, look for edible weeds.** **Outside, make a circle and reflect on these questions as a group.** **Back inside the classroom, finish the KWL chart and color.**

Secwepemc Resources and Activities

Secwepemc Plants:

- Learn about the Secwepemc uses of plants
- Show these documents about Tranquille River plants
- More resources: https://sd73aboriginaleducation.weebly.com/science.html