

TEATOWN SUMMER CAMP — WEEK 1

Week 1: Planting

Growing & Carbon Capture

Station Setup

At each table station (shared by a small group of 4–5 kids), set up the following:

- Containers: One small container at each child's seat.
- The Dirt Tray: One shared tray or large bowl of potting soil in the center of the table.
- The Spoons: One spoon per child for scooping soil.
- The Seeds: A small cup containing a variety of seeds (like quick-growing beans, sunflowers, or marigolds) in the center of the table.
- The Labels: One popsicle stick per child.
- Note: Keep all paper, pencils, and markers at your main instructor table to keep the workspaces clear of soil and prevent early distractions while planting.

Lesson Plan

1. Introduction & Hook (5 Minutes)

- Introduce Yourself: "Hi everyone! My name is Avika, and I am so excited for our activity today."
- The Question: "To start us off, look around outside. Who can tell me: what is one thing plants do for us or for the planet?" (Take 3–4 quick answers from the kids).
- Explain: "Those are amazing answers! Today, we are planting our very own seeds. Plants are like the planet's superheroes. They fight climate change in two cool ways:
- They are Oxygen Makers: They take in the air we breathe out and turn it into fresh, clean oxygen for us to breathe in!
- They are Carbon Catchers: They scoop up carbon dioxide—which makes the Earth too warm—and store it safely in their roots and the soil. By planting a seed today, you are helping to build a healthier ecosystem!"

2. The Instruction Walkthrough (3 Minutes)

- Hold up an empty container, a spoon, and a seed, and say: "To make our mini-garden, we are going to scoop some soil into our cups, gently tuck our seeds into their cozy dirt blankets, label them with our names, and give them a tiny sip of water. Let's get started!"

3. Planting (17 Minutes)

Walk the kids through the steps altogether:

- Step 1 (The Soil): Instruct the kids to use their spoons to scoop soil into their cups until it is nearly full (about an inch below the rim). Remind everyone to keep the cups flat on the table to avoid spills.
- Step 2 (The Planting): Have each child choose 2–3 seeds. Show them how to poke a small hole in the dirt with their finger (about as deep as their first knuckle), drop the seeds in, and gently pat the dirt over them.
- Step 3 (The Sip of Water): Walk around with a small watering can or spray bottle and help them give their soil a light misting or a very small splash of water so the soil is damp but not muddy.
- Step 4 (The Name Tag): Have the kids use the markers to write their name and the name of their plant on the popsicle stick, then slide it into the edge of the soil.

4. Reflection & Future Steps (10 Minutes)

- The Drawing Question: "On the piece of paper, I want you to draw a picture of what your plant will look like when it is fully grown, and if you'd like, draw at least one way it is helping the Earth around it (like making clean air, giving a bug a home, or catching carbon in its roots)!"
- Future Steps & Charting: "When you take your plant home, put it in a sunny window and give it a tiny splash of water whenever the dirt feels dry. At home, you can make a chart to measure your plant's height and see how rapidly it changes over the next few weeks!"

5. Clean-Up (2 Minutes)

- Collect the spoons, remaining seed cups, and markers.
- Have the kids brush any stray dirt on the tables back into the central shared trays.
- Stack unused popsicle sticks and move the dirt trays away so the tables are clean.