

# Photosynthesis in Action: A Growth Study



This activity takes a pretty long time to complete, but not very much time each day. I usually try to start it early in April, and hope to wrap it up in May, by Mother's Day.

The plant that I usually grow are Marigolds, which are then given to the students' mothers as part of their Mother's Day Gifts.

Let's get started!

Things you'll need:

- Potting Soil – Enough to fill 34 cups.
- Plastic cups – these allow the students to observe the growth of the roots and make for an easy way to transport their plants home.
- Marker – use this to write the conditions the plants will be growing under on the experiment cups, as well as the students' names on their cups.
- Marigold seeds – usually one packet will be enough for the class. I let the each have about 5 seeds.
- Diagram of the different parts of a flower, as well as what each part does to help with photosynthesis.
- Observation sheet – use this to record daily observations of the plants to see how they are growing!

Directions:

1. Discuss plants and their parts with the students. Explain that photosynthesis is the way that plants use air, water, and sunlight to make energy for themselves to grow.
2. Have each of the students assist you in setting up their cups, as well as the experimental cups. They each need to fill their cups about two inches from the top.
3. Have the students place their seeds in the cups so that the seeds are not touching each other.
4. Add about one more inch of potting soil to the top.
5. Water the plants that are allowed it and place each plant in its proper place for the experiment.
  - a. Sunlight cups on the windowsill, non-sun cups in a classroom cabinet AWAY from the opening. This is to insure it is in as much darkness as is possible.
6. Each day, water the plants that require it and make observations with the class as they fill in their observation log.

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7. After the thirty days, come to a conclusion as a class as to what situations help the plants to complete Photosynthesis, and which do not.
8. Allow the students to take their cups home to their mothers!

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