



Propagation 1 - Divide and Transplant

Overview/Description: Students will dig up living plants to see how they propagate themselves. Students will divide and transplant a variety of plants.

Big Idea: Living things make new living things - there are different ways that we can grow new plants.

Grade Level: All

Lesson Time: 30 min

Season: Fall, Winter, Spring

Type of Activity: Science, General Garden Task

Materials Needed: A variety of Living Plants: thyme, chives, grasses, raspberry plants, strawberry plants; Soil, Planting Pots, Table, Scissors, Pencils, Old Window Blinds (for labels).

Preparation: Set up work table. Set out trowels, planting pots, labels. Have potting soil in large tubs or wheelbarrows near the table. For large groups provide multiple tubs of soil.

What to do:

TEACHING/DISCOVERY:

- In the Opening Circle, ask: *do trees and plants live forever?* “No..” *So if all the plants and trees are dying, why aren't they all gone by now?* “Cuz they grow new ones...” *Yes, and this called Propagation. What are different ways plants propagate themselves?*
- Walk around the garden to look for examples of plants that reproduce asexually (that is, not by flowers, pollen, seeds). Stop by an escaping raspberry and ask: how did this happen? The raspberries are planted in that raised bed, but here is another plant popping up 3' away! Kids offer possible explanations. Then investigate using a shovel or digging fork. This is discovery. Hey, look at this! The main plant sent out a root, secretly (oh, those rascally raspberries - I think they want to take over the world!) and now is sending up shoots all along the root.
- Runners: go to the strawberry bed and look closely at what is happening. There is the parent plant, the home base, the mother ship, and it sends out these runners...and where they touch down, look! What is this growing out of the bottom? “Roots!” And then this one will send out more runners, and... How far do you think these strawberry plants could spread?
- Chives are a great example as well - they spread like crazy by producing new bulbs. You can also dig up tulips, lilies, daffodils, to see the new baby bulbs being created around the parent.

HANDS-ON WORK:

- After seeing examples, **kids can now divide and transplant** into planting pots or into the ground.
- **Dig up some plants** to divide - use digging forks and shovels. Take plants to the work table.
- Kids **pull apart plants**, making sure there are roots for each new plant. This is called Dividing.
- **Transplant** into pots w potting soil, or in the ground.
- Always **label!** Students can cut up old window blinds with scissors to make labels. Pencil won't fade like Sharpies do.
- Lots of things can be done with your new collection of potted plants: Send home with students, have a plant sale for a garden fundraiser, give to another school garden...

Teaching Points:

- How do plants make more plants?
- Definition: Plant Propagation = the process of creating new plants.