

Newspaper Pots for Starting Seeds

Objectives: This lesson is designed to introduce students to the basic fundamentals of gardening and plant growth. Students will learn about how organic materials break down in soil and how to repurpose materials to reduce trash/waste.

Examples of Foundations Covered in Lesson: ELA.4.14 Distinguish print from pictures; ELA.4.149 Understand and follow a one-step direction; ELA.4.150 Use new vocabulary learned from experiences; M.4.11 Move objects from one container to another; M.5.6 Pour substances out of containers; SE.3.25 - Stay with an adult-directed activity or story for 10-15 minutes; SE.3.38 - Make simple cause/effect predictions; SC.1.57 - Compare characteristics of living things; SC.1.65 - Express ideas and share observations with others

Materials:

Black and white newspaper cut into strips (approximately 22 x 5.5 inches)
An assortment of empty soda cans or small jars
Seeds of choice
Potting soil
Markers

Activity:

1. Prepare strips of newspaper to be made into pots. Older students can help with measuring and cutting to make the strips. A standard sized newspaper can be cut into quarters to get strips that measure 22 x 5.5 inches. Do not use colored or glossy newspaper. Black ink is soy-based and safe for the soil and food.
2. Snugly wrap a single newspaper strip around a soda can or small jar. You will want at least 2 inches of paper to extend past the bottom of the can.
3. Fold the excess paper over the bottom of the can, starting at the seam where the paper overlaps and folding paper over the seam to seal it. This will create the bottom of the pot. You can tape the flap closed, but the tape will need to be removed before the pots are planted.

4. Once the bottom has been folded, gently pull the pot off of the can. You may need to hold the pot and twist the can out to separate them.

5. Fold over the top 1/2 inch to 1 inch of the pot to stabilize the pot.

6. Fill the pot with soil (potting mix, seed starting mix, top soil, etc.).

7. Plant your seed of choice (based on seasonality) according to the directions on the back of the seed packet. Keep soil moist and pots in a south or west-facing window. Once seedlings are hearty enough and the risk of frost has passed, plant seedlings outdoors.

