

Project

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Material:

Pencil, clipboard, computer with good internet, globe, map of your state, map of your city, a printed map of your school garden

Preparation:

Divide the students into groups of 5-8. Assign a volunteer or teacher to each group.

Give each group leader a clipboard, graph paper, and pencil.



Activity:

1. Begin the lesson in the classroom by pointing out your city's location on a Google Map, Google Earth Application, globe, or world map. Ask students to describe how this location impacts the seasons, frosts, and the length of the growing season.
2. Next, zooming into or changing to a state-level map, have the students locate your city, and as a group, describe how the location and elevation impact what can grow there. For example, if you lived in Denver, Colorado, it would include the semi-arid climate, elevation's role on frosts and seasonal temperatures, as well as how the city's position east of the mountains gives Denver many sunny days.
3. Finally zoom into the school, or change to a local map, and use it to explain the position of the garden in the schoolyard and assign groups to specific locations for the outdoor exploration.
4. Have each group explore one quadrant of the school grounds and make a sketch or map of what they find. The sketch should include permanent structures like fences, play structures, garden beds, trees and shrubs, as well as the location of wet, shaded or sunny areas.
5. Meet by the garden and discuss the findings.
6. Repeat the investigation in the garden area, focused on what plants are growing there, areas with different soils or features, as well as sunny and shaded locations. If the garden is divided into plots, wrap up by exploring the characteristics of their garden plot. In the garden or classroom, begin a discussion exploring how the position of the garden impacts what will grow well there.

Discussion:

In the garden or classroom, begin a discussion exploring how the position of the garden impacts what will grow well there. The discussion should include:

- How your city's position on the globe impacts the seasons, planting and harvesting dates (frosts), as well as the specific geography of your location. For example, if you are located near the ocean or mountains how is the water cycle affected by your surroundings?
- How the school's position in the city impacts microclimates, exposure to wind, local temperatures and humidity.
- How the garden's position in the schoolyard impacts the amount of sun the garden gets, when the sunlight is available (all day, the morning, or afternoon when it is likely to be hot), exposure to wind and rain, and convenience to the building.