

Garden Observations Mini-Activity

Rev 07/29/19



The Eldergrow garden offers a therapeutic connection to nature where residents engage in meaningful ways with the garden – cognitively, socially, spiritually, emotionally, physically and more.

Summary: Observing and measuring plants in the garden.

Activity Objectives:

Objective 1: Resident will engage in sensory stimulation (SS)

Objective 2: Resident will engage in use of motor skills (MS)

Objective 3: Resident will socialize in garden club (S)

Supplies:

1. Pen or pencil
2. 1 or 2 rulers
3. Your garden journal

Set-Up:

- Move garden into central location so residents can gather around it - *don't forget the brakes!*
- Set out new plants on a table or at edge of garden
- Have garden journal ready for any comments or observations.

Directions:

Step 1: Initial Observation (You can enter any observations into your garden journal).

As residents gather, encourage them to look at their garden closely.

Q: How are the plants doing in the garden?

Step 2: Detailed Observations

- Look at what plants are growing in the garden- check to see if they have a tag to identify them, or if you recognize them.

Q: *Which ones are growing the best?*

Q: *Which ones are doing the worst?*

- Make a list in the journal of each plant and a note about how well it is doing.
 - You can rate them from 1 - 5, for unhealthy-looking to big healthy and growing well (1 as the worst, 5 being the best).
- Make sure to note if any plants have pests on them like aphids or white flies so they can be sprayed later (**see Pests Activity**)
- For more detailed observations, use the rulers to measure how tall the plants are. Measure from soil level up to the top of the plant.
 - Measure any ones you want to keep track of for future measurements of progress.
- You can also note the coloration of the plants.

Q: *Are the ones that are normally purple still a deep rich purple, or is the color fading?*

Q: *Are the green plants still a healthy, dark or bright green?*

- Mottled yellowing in normally green plants is a sign of pest or malnutrition issues.
- Suggest that residents think up fun descriptors for the plant colors, like “plum purple”, and “jungle green”.
- Ask residents to think of anything else they’d like to see in the garden: new plants, garden art or even starting plants from seeds.
- Wrap up by reviewing observations made in journal previously. Have the plants changed over time?
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Step 3: Closing

Record in journal.

Q: *What did you learn today?*

Q: *What was your favorite part of today’s activity?*

