

Garden in a jar

What children should learn

Knowledge and understanding of the world – to observe plants grown in a garden jar.

What you need

Plastic sweet jars or round fish bowls (you'll need to make a lid for these); clean gravel; barbecue charcoal; potting compost; clean fine soil; dessertspoons and teaspoons (to use as shovels); small house plants such as maidenhair fern or polka dot plant.

Activity

Using your hands or a dessertspoon, thinly layer the gravel, then charcoal, then potting compost and finally a slightly thicker layer of soil in the bottom of the jar (the jar can be upright or laid on its side). Press them down lightly. Using the teaspoon (perhaps tied to a stick to make it easier), plant a couple of plants in the jar. Press the soil down as firmly as possible and water the plants. Put the lid on the jar. If it gets cloudy, take the lid off for a short period. Do not overwater!

Extension

Draw the garden in a jar. Make a graph of how long the plants take to grow. If you have more than one jar, place them in different areas and observe the difference in the growth of the plants.

Talk about

Why does the jar mist up? What colour leaves does your plant have? How are the leaves shaped?

