Plant Lifecycle Hunt
3rd & 4th Grade

Students discuss the plant lifecycle and plant part functions. They identify plants at different stages in their lifecycle.
20-30 minutes

Lesson Objectives:
- Students are able to name the six plant parts and describe their functions
- Students identify and categorize vegetables based on plant parts
- Students describe the plant life cycle

What You Need
- lifecycle sequence cards
- Plant part cards
- Flip chart or paper and clipboard

What To Do
Tell students we are going to learn about lifecycles. Have them get in partners and pass each pair a set of lifecycle sequence cards. Ask them to arrange them in order without talking to each other.

What is a lifecycle? Why would it be important for a farmer or gardener to know about the lifecycles of the plants and animals he or she raises?

Next, pass out the plant part cards. Lead a discussion about the plant lifecycle by talking about the plant parts. Ask students to share their plant part, think of what the particular job of the plant part is for the plant. (listed below)

Root: The root has two main jobs, to deliver water and nutrients to the plant and to help stabilize (hold up) the plant. (Roots we eat: carrots, radish, turnip—be careful, potatoes are not roots, they are tubers which are underground stems storing up energy for the plant)

Stem: The stem’s main task is to provide stability and to transport water and nutrients throughout the plant. You may want to mention that xylem (water transport) and phloem (food transport) are the main highways in the stem, like our veins in our bodies. (Stems we eat:
celery, asparagus, broccoli, chard, kale)

**Leaf:** Leaves soak up sunlight and are the places where sunlight is transformed into food for the plants. This is called *photosynthesis*. (Leaves we eat: spinach, lettuce, cabbage)

**Flower:** Flowers have very important jobs; they attract pollinators to insure that a viable seed is made by mixing pollen from different plants of a given species. (Flowers we eat: nasturtiums, broccoli, calendula, cauliflower)

**Fruit:** A fruit is technically seeds contained in a fleshy body. This means that many vegetables we eat are technically FRUIT. Can you think of some examples? (Fruits: zucchini, tomato, peach etc)

**Seeds:** review what seeds are. (Seeds we eat: peas, beans, corn, wheat)

Have students go out into the field in pairs, and see how many edible plant parts they can find, come back and share with the group. 

---

1 Adapted from *Eat, Think, Grow* curriculum & *Cultivating Joy and Wonder* ©Shelburne Farms