## PLANTING AND GROWING

## Root View Cups

Time: 45 minutes Any Season Indoor/Outdoor

While plants grow stems, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds that we can see above the ground, they also grow roots hidden down below the soil. Some roots are short and wide, while others are long and wispy; some are brown or gray, whereas others are brightly colored. In this activity, you'll make a special container that allows you to see the hidden plant roots grow!



## Let's Gather:

scissors

2 clear, plastic cups that are the same size

a marker

a piece of dark paper

for an adult helper: a nail and hammer, or a drill

seed-starting mix

seeds of 4 different plants with roots that interest you!

tape

ALWAYS ASK A GROWN UP BEFORE YOU START

## Let's Cet Started

- Ask an adult to help you cut straight down one side of one cup. Once you reach the bottom of the cup, cut the entire bottom out.
- Lay the remaining part of the cup flat on the piece of dark paper, where it will create an arc shape.
- 3. Trace this arc onto your paper. Add about 1 inch (2.5 cm) to one end, and cut out the arc shape.
- Ask an adult to use the nail or drill to poke 4 holes in the bottom of the second cup. This will be your Root View Cup.
- Fill your Root View Cup with seed-starting mix.
- Plant different seeds along the very outer edges of the cup, so that you will be able to see the roots as they grow. Use the information on the seed packet to decide how deep to plant your seeds.
- Wrap your cup in the dark paper cover that you created and tape it closed. This cover blocks the light inside the cup so that your roots can grow. Give your seeds some water.
- Every few days, pull the paper cover down off of the cup and see what the plant roots look like. You can try this with different seeds to compare how their roots look and how they grow over time.
- Water your seeds regularly and watch your plants grow, both above ground and below!

