



# CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

## Early Childhood and Lower Elementary:

### Soil Recipe

Connections to Standards:

**Science** K.3S.1, 2; 1.1E.1; 2.3S.2

**Social Sciences** G K.10; HT 1.5; SSA 1.20

### Materials:

- Several leeks, look for ones that have visible soil in the outer leaves
- Freshly harvested potatoes, carrots, or other items from the garden, farmers market, or grocery store that have visible soil on them
- Cutting board
- Knife with sheath cover
- Soil Recipe lesson plan and materials

Invite students to explore the vegetables you have brought. What do they notice? Why are they “dirty” and what do students think about that? What do plants need to grow (soil, sun, water, air, and space)? Why is soil so important? Explain that many fruits and vegetables purchased had soil on them, but the farmer, processor, or merchant has washed them prior to selling them. Usually we wash them again right before we eat or cook with them. Even though we do not directly eat soil, it is necessary to meet our nutritional needs.

Adapt the lesson from *Shelburne Farms Project Seasons*, to introduce students to the composition of soil. As they become garden or nature chefs and mix up the ingredients for a batch of soil, they will understand that time is a necessary ingredient in the formation of the soil we depend on to grow our food. Extend the lesson by making an action plan outlining ways to appreciate, care for, and conserve soil.

*Shelburne Farms Project Seasons* Soil Recipe  
LINK (see attached PDF from Shelburne Farms)

## Upper Elementary: Plant Families

Connections to Standards:

**Science** 4.1L.1

**English Language Arts** 4.L.6; 5.L.4; 6.L.4, 6

### Materials:

- Garlic bulb
- Leek
- Chives
- Onion
- Photos of each item growing in the garden or on the farm and/or flowering (optional)
- Cutting board
- Knife with sheath cover
- Chart paper
- Markers

Scientists classify all living things as a way to organize, understand, and make connections between like things. They start with huge categories called Kingdoms. There is a kingdom for all animals and a kingdom for all plants. Based on characteristics of plants or animals, the kingdoms are then separated into smaller and smaller groups, until finally we get down to one species. One way to think of this organizational system is like a tree. The trunk is the Kingdom; main branches are larger subcategories or phylum that continues to branch into small and smaller groups, called orders and families.

When it comes to food, we can learn a lot about fruits and vegetables by getting to know their family—how they grow, the plant part we commonly eat, where to find the seeds, and what the plants generally look like. Plant families can be compared to human families. There are parents, close relatives, and distant relatives. While each plant may be different in some ways (just like you are unique) plants share key characteristics with others in its family.

Continued on reverse

Explore the Alliaceae Family (onions or allium) as a whole class. Look at garlic, leeks, chives, and onions. Discuss similarities and differences. Pass them around to explore more closely. Cut into each one to reveal a cross section. Compare. Why do you think these vegetables are in the same family? How do they smell, look, feel? How do they grow in the garden? What part of the plant do we eat? How are members of this family typically prepared and used in cooking?

Use this as a springboard for an exploration of plant families in the school or community garden. See the lesson plan from *Eat. Think. Grow.* for details.

*Eat. Think. Grow.* Getting to Know Plant Families  
[www.eatthinkgrow.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/4F11.pdf](http://www.eatthinkgrow.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/4F11.pdf)

Resources/Literacy Connection:  
*Stinky and Stringy: Stem and Bulb Vegetables (Plants We Eat)* by Meredith Sayles Hughes

Garden Investigations: Testing Partnerships  
[www.kidsgardening.org/classroom-projects/growing-garden-companions/curriculum-connections](http://www.kidsgardening.org/classroom-projects/growing-garden-companions/curriculum-connections)

### Middle School: From Foraging to Farming

Connections to Standards:

**Science** 7.2E.3; 8.1L.1

**Social Sciences** SSA 6.22

Foraging for wild foods is popular again. A relative of cultivated leeks, commonly called ramps or wild leeks (*Allium tricoccum*), can be found at some local farmers markets in the spring. Though they typically grow in the eastern United States, their allure—and an enthusiasm for wild edibles—has not escaped Oregon.

Working in pairs or small groups, invite students to conduct research comparing the two species and issues specific to their growth and harvest. Students can research other wild edibles in Oregon. What wild foods are harvested in our state? What specific conditions do these plants need to thrive? What special considerations are surrounding their cultivation and consumption? How do farmers and scientists decide which species or cultivar is best suited

for agricultural production?

Resources/Literacy Connections:

When Digging for Ramps Goes Too Deep

[www.nytimes.com/2011/04/20/dining/20forage.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/20/dining/20forage.html?pagewanted=1&_r=0)

*Stinky and Stringy: Stem and Bulb Vegetables (Plants We Eat)* by Meredith Sayles Hughes

### High School: We Go Together Like Leeks and Potatoes

Connections to Standards:

**Social Sciences** G HS.16; SSA HS.63

**English Language** 9-10.SL.1, W.10; 11-12.W.10

**Literacy in History/Social Studies** 9-10.WHST.10

Many of our favorite recipes combine foods that naturally complement each other. Potatoes and leeks are a delicious combination in fall and winter. Why do these two vegetables work so well together? Potatoes can be harvested later in the growing season and many varieties can be stored throughout the winter. Leeks can withstand colder temperatures and can often remain in the garden or farm field over the winter and harvested before they flower in spring. Common preparations include soups and gratins—both also contain dairy, which is generally available year round.

Explore this culinary combination by preparing and tasting recipes. What are other common food combinations, both in our daily lives and at special occasions such as holidays and other seasonal celebrations. What do these food traditions tell us about eating seasonally? Using the activity “Food Traditions” from *Nourish: Food + Community*, students will interview each other about food traditions in their family. Be sure to find out as much about the key ingredients as possible—where they are grown, when are they harvested, how are they stored, how the meal is prepared, and when is it traditionally eaten.

*Nourish: Food + Community* Food Traditions

[www.nourishlife.org/teach/curriculum/](http://www.nourishlife.org/teach/curriculum/)