

Introduction: Welcoming Autumn (10 mins)

Begin by discussing the transition from summer to autumn. Ask: What changes do you notice outside? (e.g., cooler air, different sunlight, leaves changing color). Explain that just like seasons change, the types of plants that grow well also change. Introduce the idea that some plants love the cooler weather of fall. Ask the student what they know about gardening or if they've planted anything before.

Activity 1: Cool Weather Plant Detectives (15 mins)

Guide the student to research plants that thrive when planted in autumn in your specific region. Use books or kid-friendly websites. Focus on questions like: What temperatures do these plants like? How much sun do they need? How long do they take to grow? Help the student choose 2-3 types of plants they'd like to grow.

Activity 2: Getting Our Hands Dirty! (25-30 mins)

Move to the planting area (pots or garden bed). Discuss the basic needs of plants: soil (nutrients, anchor), water, sunlight, and space. Guide the student through the planting process for the chosen seeds:

1. Fill pots or prepare the garden bed with soil.
2. Read the seed packet instructions for planting depth and spacing.
3. Use the trowel or fingers to make small holes for the seeds.
4. Place the seeds in the holes.
5. Gently cover the seeds with soil.
6. Water the newly planted seeds gently.
7. If using labels, write the plant name and date and place them near the seeds.

Emphasize careful handling and following instructions.

Activity 3: Planting Day Descriptions (15 mins)

Open the notebook. Ask the student to write 3-5 sentences describing the planting experience. Encourage using sensory details: How did the soil feel? What did the seeds look like? What sounds did you hear? What did the watered soil smell like? Review the sentences together, focusing on vivid word choices.

Activity 4: How-To Plant Guide (15 mins)

Explain that writing instructions helps others learn how to do something. Ask the student to choose one plant they seeded and write simple, step-by-step instructions on how to plant it. Encourage using sequence words (First, Next, Then, Finally). Review for clarity and correct order.

Activity 5: The Observation Journal (Ongoing)

Set up the first page of an observation log in the notebook. Create columns for: Date, Observations (What do you see?), and maybe a small space for a Drawing or Measurement (height). Explain that they will check their plants regularly (every few days), water as needed, and record what they see happening in their journal. Make the first entry together, noting that the seeds are planted.

Wrap-up & Assessment (10 mins)

Review the lesson: What plants did we choose for our autumn garden? Why are they good choices for this season? What do our seeds need to grow? Look over the descriptive sentences and instructions the student wrote, offering positive feedback. Discuss the importance of observation for taking care of the plants. Ask: What are you most excited to see happen with our seeds?

Differentiation Note:

For a single student, adjust the pace based on engagement and understanding. Provide more scaffolding for research or writing if needed, or encourage more detailed writing and independent research for a more advanced learner. The observation journal can be adapted in complexity (e.g., adding measurements, detailed drawings, hypotheses about growth).