



FALL | Air Identify That Cloud

Summary:

Bugs are a natural part of our garden. Some live under ground where it is damp and dark, the perfect environment for them to thrive. Other bugs live above ground on the leaves of plants where they can rest in the nice, warm sun.

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: Images of clouds, cotton balls, glue, crayons, and construction paper

Explore: “Weymouth Bay” by John Constable: Do you see the cumulus cloud in the picture?

Read: *Little Cloud* by Eric Carle

In the Garden:

Clouds come in all shapes and sizes. Weather scientists, also known as meteorologists, break clouds into three main types: cumulus, stratus, and cirrus. Let's take a look at the clouds we have today.

Questions to Explore:

- Do you see any clouds today?
- Can you count how many there are?
- What color are they?
- How big are they? Can you describe their shape?

Learning to “read” clouds can help you as a gardener to know what kind of weather to expect. If you see a stratus cloud, it might mean that rain is in the forecast and you might not have to water your garden today.

Activity:

Grab your cotton balls, blue sky construction paper, and start illustrating the different cloud types:

1. Cumulus clouds are nice and puffy. They mean the weather will be nice unless they move together to form a big thunderhead. Gently stretch your cotton ball making it big and pillow-like. Glue your cumulus cloud to your sky.
2. Stratus clouds look a bit like our garden rows; they are long flat clouds that grow together to form a blanket over the sky. In the spring they mean rain and in the winter, snow! Stretch and flatten your cotton balls into a comfy looking blanket. Glue your stratus cloud to your sky.
3. Cirrus clouds are the highest clouds in the sky. They look like feathery scarves blowing across the atmosphere. In a blue sky, a cirrus cloud tells us it's going to be a beautiful day. Take your cotton ball and stretch it to make it as wispy as you can. Glue your cirrus cloud to your sky.

Beyond the Garden | Shaving Cream Clouds:

Try this fun experiment/art project:

1. Gather a clear bowl, 4 small clear glasses, food coloring, a medicine dropper or syringe, water, and shaving cream
2. Fill your bowl two-thirds full and glasses half-full with water
3. Add a few drops of food coloring to each glass of water
4. Spray shaving cream on top of the water in the big bowl
5. Use your syringe to drop colorful water on top of the shaving cream and watch your clouds “rain” the rainbow.

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

Cloud quizzes and info from NASA: <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/cloud-scramble/en/>