



Summer | Sun Sun Catchers: A Garden in Your Window

Summary:

One of the best reasons to cultivate a garden is all the delicious food you can grow. But gardens are also beautiful spots full of color and light. During this visit, we'll collect a few snippets of the garden beauty to preserve and hang in a sunny window.

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: Paper plates (1 per child), contact paper, scissors, hole punch, and ribbon.

Explore: Stained-glass windows. Look for them at a local church or library. If you can, look at the windows at different times during the day to see how the sun changes the view.

Read: *Sunshine on My Shoulders* by John Denver, Illustrated by Christopher Canyon

In the Garden:

We use the sun for light and heat, but it is also a great tool for creating art and helping us show off our garden bounty.

Questions to Explore:

- What do you find beautiful?
- When you are feeling sad, what helps you cheer up?
- Do you like sunny or stormy days? Why?
- Is there a spot in the garden you like to visit?

Activity:

As important as gardens are for providing food, it is also important to remember that we need gardens to be beautiful places where we can connect with each other. The garden is a great neutral spot where you can check in on everyone's physical and mental health. Today, we're going to do an activity that lets us bring a little corner of garden sunshine home.

1. Cut out the center portion of your paper plate, leaving the ribbed outer edge as a frame.
2. Trace the hole onto two sheets of contact paper and cut them out.
3. Wander the garden and find a few leaves, flowers, and whatever else you'd like to preserve.
4. Peel the contact paper open placing it on the center of the plate. Then design a pattern out of your materials—maybe a flower in the middle.
5. Place the other sheet of contact paper over your design, punch a hole in the top of the plate, string a ribbon through it, and hang in your window.

Beyond the Garden | Chasing Shadows, Art from the Sun

Play a little more with the sunshine by creating art from shadows.

- Grab a box of blocks and head to a sunny sidewalk. Construct different shapes with your materials.
- Do any fun shadows emerge on the sidewalk? You can trace your creation onto a piece of paper or try to capture a photo!

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

Sun science in action via NASA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XilneV3cJl>

Feeling the feelings: <http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/topics/feelings#>