



WINTER | Soil

The Winter Blues...and Reds, Yellows, Purples: Color Your Imagination

Summary:

Bringing color to a winter white landscape, our tiny gardeners will use construction paper and other colorful materials to create window gardens.

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: 12"x18" white cardstock or watercolor paper and a variety of colorful materials: markers, crayons, colored pencils, construction paper, pom-poms, foam shapes and stickers, magazine or newspaper clippings, etc. (be creative!), glue, and scissors

Explore: A bouquet of flowers from the grocery store and/or images of Dale Chihuly's "Fiori Di Como"

Read: *Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert

In the Garden:

Winter in many areas is often the least colorful time of the year. We can still make our own fun, though, with color. This a great season for art projects and planning for spring planting.

Observations:

- Have your gardener explore the flowers you bought.
- Can you sort them by color?
- How many of each color are there?
- Do these remind you of any other flowers? Did we grow any flowers like these in our garden?

Questions to Explore:

- If colors were temperatures, which color makes you feel warm? Which color feels cool?
- What kind of flowers would you like to have in your own garden? Why?
- Walk around the garden imagining where you would plant flowers in the spring.
- Can you plant some of the flower stems into the snow to create a colorful winter garden?

Activity:

1. Brainstorm the colors and shapes of plants you want to include in your paper-window garden.
2. Work with your gardener to pick out different colors and patterns from your materials. Let them practice their "pincer grip" grabbing pom-poms. Help tiny fingers learn to cut and enjoy the sensory experience of glue as you begin putting the pieces onto the white cardstock together.
3. Talk to your gardener about the color, texture, and feel of the materials to help them develop their descriptive vocabulary. Link the project to gardening by explaining that master gardeners often sketch out their garden dreams in the winter as they plan for spring!
4. Once complete, hang it in a window to add some extra color to your home.

Beyond the Garden | Garden Store Exploring

Continue to give your tiny gardener opportunities to explore materials outside of the house and add to their paper-window garden (or create a new one). Visit your local hardware or garden store. They may have seeds and garden planning materials to explore. You could create a collage with seed packets or build a seed band by inviting more gardeners to get together and shake, shake, shake some seeds!

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

Visit an indoor garden: <http://nationalpublicgardensday.org/about-public-gardens/gardens#>

More ideas: <http://jmgkids.us/>