

# Connections and Activity Suggestions



## Language Arts

### TOPICS AND IDEAS:

- ✓ Descriptions
- ✓ Celebrating Spring

# Language Arts



# Connections and Activity Suggestions



## Activity 1

# Descriptions

### SUGGESTED CONNECTIONS:

Key Activity 3, *Locating and Tagging the Plants* (page 13)

Key Activity 4, *Reporting to the Class* (page 17)

Science Activity 1, *Plants and Ecology: All My Relations* (page 31)

Science Activity 2, *Weather* (page 33)

Mathematics Activity 3, *Graphing and Mapping* (page 55)

Social Studies Activity 2, *People in History* (page 70)

### CONCEPTS AND SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH PLANTWATCH:

While engaged in the PlantWatch program, you could have students:

Read the native legend of the prairie crocus "How the Prairie Anemone got its Fur Coat" (located on the web page <<http://plantwatch.fanweb.ca/plant-information/prairie-crocus/prairie-crocus-information#a-blackfoot-legend>>). According to this legend the furry coat was given to the flower to protect it on chilly spring nights. The Blackfoot First Nations word "Napi," the "old man" central to the Blackfoot creation story, also refers to the grayish seed heads of prairie crocus, which appear in early summer.

The class could also read other legends, and students could then write their own legends to explain natural phenomena.

- Write poetry about the plant or flower they are observing, or about its environment.
- Research information about uses of native plants by First Nations peoples, and write a paragraph or essay on the topic.
- Write exact descriptions of the habitats of their plants in order to help research scientists understand local growing conditions.
- Create, read and interpret non-prose forms of communicating information (e.g. graphs, maps, charts) related to PlantWatch data. (For example, students could write paragraphs to explain the information contained on a graph.)
- Report orally to other classes the purpose and results of their PlantWatch project.
- Write an account of the weather just prior to and during flowering. Both exact and figurative language could be encouraged.
- Suggestion: Find sketches of your chosen plant in field guides or on the web, to provide ideas for covers for student observations/projects.
- Use the following field observation sheet to record information on each plant, for each visit to the plants. The form is only a model; you may wish to use only the column headings and expand the space provided for sketches, for example.

PLANT SPECIES	NUMBER OR NAME	GROWTH STAGE FLOWERS	LEAVES	FLOWER/ LEAF SKETCHES	OTHER COMMENTS
Saskatoon	#4	Buds now have some white showing	Just starting to unfurl		



# Plantwatch Observation Sheet

Date:	Observer's Name:
Location:	Description of Habitat:

PLANT SPECIES	NUMBER OR NAME	GROWTH STAGE FLOWERS	LEAVES	FLOWER/ LEAF SKETCHES	OTHER COMMENTS

# Connections and Activity Suggestions



## Activity 2

# Celebrating Spring

### **SUGGESTED CONNECTIONS:**

Key Activity 1, *Signs of Spring* (page 9)

Key Activity 2, *Predicting Seasonal Occurrences* (page 11)

Science Activity 2, *Weather* (page 33)

Science Activity 5, *Developing a Phenology Calendar* (page 43)

### **CONCEPTS AND SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH PLANTWATCH:**

Engage the students with a recording of “Spring on the Prairies” from Connie Kaldor’s *Wood River* album. Read aloud the poems “In Just- Spring” by e.e. Cummings and “April Rain Song” by Langston Hughes. Invite your students to help create a Celebration of Spring that recognizes and incorporates images and experiences from their local environment. Introduce them to seasonal celebrations of various cultures by encouraging them to research their own, or others’ cultural traditions.

Share other examples of music, poetry, photography, and painting that celebrate the arrival of spring.

Provide students with an opportunity to immerse themselves in a natural environment and observe the sights, sounds and smells around them. Ask them to describe the land, the air, the water and the sun. Encourage them to pay close attention to the colours and shapes of plants. Give them quiet time to reflect and record their observations, thoughts and feelings in a personal journal.

Encourage students to create their own poems, songs, photographs or artwork based on the signs of spring that they have observed in their natural environment.

Encourage them to create their own word combinations (like e.e. Cummings’ “mudluscious”) or express their feelings about signs of spring (like Langston Hughes’ “I love the rain.”) Invite a class of younger students to participate in a Celebration of Spring, by having your students accompany them on a “spring flower” nature walk and share with the younger students the poems, songs and artwork created by your students.

