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## Quick & Easy Habitat Education Activities

### Seeds for People

Developed by Heidi Bohan/ Starflower Foundation

3-11

Third Grade

30-45 minutes

Outdoors

<p><b>Description:</b> Students participate in creating a snack plate of edible seeds from native plants and share in eating these foods, while gaining an appreciation of their value to people. Students identify some of the plants that provide these foods. This serves as a culmination activity for students studying native seeds.</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary</b>  <b>Ethnobotany:</b> <i>the plant lore of a people; the study of how people use plants</i>  <b>Edible:</b> <i>fit to be eaten</i>  <b>Dehydrate:</b> <i>to remove water from food</i></p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students understand that seeds are an important food source for people.</li> <li>• Students understand that Native Americans used the seeds from plants that grow in the habitat area for food.</li> <li>• Students enjoy eating foods that come from native seeds.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Washington State EALRs</b>  <b>Geography 3.1.1a</b> Identify choices individuals have in how they interact with the environment. <b>Geography 3.2.1b</b> Describe how people adapt to their environment to meet basic human needs and concerns.  <b>Science 1.3.8</b> Know that most living things need food, water, and air. <b>1.3.10</b> Understand that an organism’s ability to survive is influenced by its behavior, the environment, other life forms, and the availability of air, light, water, nutrients and food. <b>3.3.4</b> Understand how humans and other living things depend on the natural environment. Describe what humans obtain from their environment.</p>
<p><b>Print Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘How-to-do Activity: Food for Snack Plates’</li> <li>• Images: ‘Seeds for People’</li> </ul> <p><b>Kit Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basket trays for serving foods</li> <li>• ‘Starflower Plant ID’ cards for beaked hazelnut, bigleaf maple, wild rose, salal, evergreen huckleberry, Oregon grape, wild strawberry</li> </ul> <p><b>Teacher supplied:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snack plate supplies selected from the following (see ‘How-to-do Activity’): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazelnuts (shelled) to be served raw</li> <li>• Dried sweetened cranberries</li> <li>• Blueberry or strawberry fruit rollups</li> <li>• Hazelnut crackers</li> <li>• Rose hip tea (serve hot or cold with honey)</li> <li>• Cranberry or cran-raspberry juice</li> <li>• Cups, napkins, plates (as needed)</li> <li>• Bigleaf maple leaves to line paper plates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<p><b>Before activity:</b> Check student records for nut allergies and get permission from parents to serve the selected foods. Prepare rose hip tea and chill if serving cold. Gather 2 or 3 large, fresh bigleaf maple leaves to line basket trays.</p> <p><b>Activity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to habitat area and find a good place to prepare and serve snack plates.</li> <li>• Tell students, “Today we are going to share in some foods that come from native plants, in particular, the seeds of native plants. Native people gathered their foods from the environment around them. Native plants provided many important foods. Seeds were an important part of these foods. What do you think some of these foods might be?” (Berries, nuts, fruits.)</li> <li>• State that, “There are many edible foods that come from native plants. There are also some poisonous plants, and some of them have berries and fruits that can make you sick, or even kill you, such as baneberry (<i>Actea rubra</i>), though this does not grow in Seattle parks. Some will make you nauseous (snowberry, red elderberry). And some are edible but taste terrible (red osier dogwood, bitter cherry). Native people knew which plants are edible and good, and passed on this knowledge, generation to generation. It is important for us to do the same. Never eat wild foods unless we’ve been taught by a respected, knowledgeable person. Today we are using native plant foods that we know are safe.”</li> <li>• Ask volunteers to assist with setting up snack food plates. Line the basket trays with bigleaf maple leaves while noting that, “Native Americans used bigleaf maple leaves as plates, to wrap foods, and make quick baskets to hold foods”.</li> <li>• While preparing snack food plates discuss each of the different foods and show related images: ‘Seeds for People’. Announce and describe the foods and their relationships to native plants as the plates are being assembled. Point out nearby native plants of the same species.</li> <li>• Ask volunteers to pass around the snack trays. Help to pour and distribute tea or juice. Allow a relaxed period of time to enjoy eating and sharing observations about flavors, comparisons to other foods, and similar experiences.</li> <li>• After eating, walk through habitat area and find plants featured in this activity (use Plant ID cards, personal knowledge).</li> <li>• Optional student journals: Suggested prompts: What foods did you eat? Describe the flavors of each one. Compare the foods you ate today with foods you normally eat. How are seeds important to people?</li> </ul> <p><b>Extension:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate this activity into a ‘celebration event’ for a stewardship project.</li> <li>• Create an ‘Ethnobotany’, ‘Berries’ or ‘Edible Wild Plants’ booklet, using plants from the habitat site.</li> </ul>
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