



# tip sheet: **Top 20 School Garden Planting Combinations**

## overview

When deciding what to plant in your school garden, consider grouping plants in combinations that together create a theme. Themes can be related to a particular subject area to support lessons or units of study.

## objectives

### *Participants will learn:*

- to establish curriculum-connected garden theme ideas, to make easier the garden planning process.

## suggestions

### **1. Social Studies**

#### **Native Plants Garden**

Planting wildflowers and trees native to your region is important and responsible gardening. If introducing trees, shrubs, or a meadow, find plants common to your area.

#### **Native American Garden**

Native Americans were smart gardeners: growing corn, shelling bean, and squash, in combination, foraging for raspberry, cranberry, and blueberry, pruning willow, and other shrubs for basket making supplies, and other tools.

#### **Global Garden**

Explore cultures of the world with gardens featuring plants important to or representative of various regions of the world. Create passport notebooks to encourage travel: familiarizing your students with the diverse traditions, agricultural practices, and harvest celebrations of cultures around the globe.

#### **George Washington Carver Garden**

Throughout his life, GWC worked with plants, dedicating his later years to sharing his discoveries with thousands of farmers at agricultural fairs held throughout the southeast US. Share lessons in plant diseases, crop rotation, and the power of sharing information.

#### **Put Your Plants On Garden**

Explore ethnobotany, how people use plants, by combining the plants people grow to make clothes. Rubber, silk, cotton, flax and more will inspire layered discussions on the business of the clothes people wear.

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## suggestions (*continued*)

### **2. Science**

#### **Wetlands Garden**

Wetlands – swamps, bogs, ponds, streams, rivers, and more – are important parts of our environment. Generate interest and understating of these ecosystems by planting plants characteristic to these wetlands.

#### **Pollinator Garden**

Grow a garden to attract pollinators, a great way to introduce relationships between plants and animals, food webs, and producer-consumer relationships.

#### **Plant Family Garden**

Explore taxonomy through planting combinations. Group plants of the same family or pick a representative from many and explore variations in plant morphology. Use the garden as a source of material for lessons in classification or understanding variations in plant form.

#### **Tops and Bottoms Garden**

This is a fun way to learn about the parts of a plant and where to find them. The excitement of pulling on a carrot leaf and finding a carrot root never gets old.

#### **Seed Savers Garden**

Refrain from harvesting some fruits and keep them on for seeds. This is a fun and powerful way to share life cycle lessons and save money.

### **3. Math**

#### **Plant Growth Garden**

Squash vines growing 12 inches in a day? Plant seeds, measure their growth, and create a graph to visually represent this amazing feat.

#### **Symmetry Garden**

Explore various forms of symmetry in the garden using plants exhibiting bilateral or radial symmetry in their flowers. Combine mint family and aster family plants.

#### **Geometry Garden**

Construct planting beds in various geometric shapes to help explore formulas: squares, rectangles, triangles, circles and more.



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## **suggestions (continued)**

### **3. Math (continued)**

#### **Shapes Garden**

Construct planting beds in various shapes to help explore squares, rectangles, triangles, circles and more or look for the shapes on the parts of the plants.

### **4. Food and Nutrition**

#### **Pizza Garden**

Connect to a very recognizable dish to the plants of which it's made. Grow wheat, tomato, onion, garlic, basil, oregano, peppers, eggplant, and your students other favorite plant-based toppings.

#### **Salad Bowl Garden**

Many meals start or end with a salad. Expose students to plants full of vitamins and nutrients and develop affinities for these easy to grow plants such as lettuce, kohlrabi, broccoli, scallion, radish, snap pea, chard, spinach, and kale.

#### **Cereal Bowl Garden**

A bowl of cereal is on most tables at breakfast. Plant a garden space with oat, barley, corn, wheat, flax, and rice, to investigate this important part of the diet OR use the plants to bring lessons in biomes (grasslands) to life.