

BE A WASTE WARRIOR



Elementary Scrappy Plants Gardening Activity

Audience: K-5 Students

Length: 25-30 minutes

Activity Format: To be completed during the “Be a Waste Warrior” Kids Gardening classroom nutrition activity.

Materials for Activity:

- Fresh celery heart bottoms*
- Water
- Shallow clear glass or plastic bowl
- Growing Journal
- Extra pencils (if needed)
- Toothpicks

**Director of Dining Services to purchase fresh heads of celery instead of precut celery sticks one to two days before the gardening activity. Ask associates to cut the celery 2-3 inches from the base. Ask associates to hold the bottom of the celery head aside for classroom activity. Associates should cut the celery stalks into sticks using Webtrition recipe 37458.4 and serve on the fresh fruit and vegetable bar.*

Lesson Objective: For elementary students to have a better understanding of how to decrease food waste at home and school. Students will learn how to regrow celery.

Introduction: Read from Script:

Be a Food Waste Warrior! is the theme for this month. In the United States, it is estimated that between 30-40% of all food harvested and produced is wasted. This alarming statistic accounts for waste that occurs at the farm, grocery store, restaurants, schools, and even at home. Reducing food waste could help save money from buying less food, support the community by donating food that would have otherwise gone to waste to those who might not have a steady food supply, lower our carbon footprint and conserve energy and resources.

One of the ways we can be a food waste warrior is by using the ends or scraps of food to grow more plants instead of throwing the ends of food in the garbage.

In recognition of the Be a Food Waste Warrior! theme for the month, lead a fun activity with the students where they grow a fresh celery from the base of an already cut celery stalk base.

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Activity: Provide each student with a copy of the Growing Journal. Talk about food waste and ask what can students do at home and in the cafeteria to reduce food waste? Discuss scrappy gardening as one way to reduce food waste. Divide all students into a team of two or three. Each team will receive a saucer or bowl. Distribute 3 tooth pics and a celery base to each team. Students will gently poke the toothpicks into the celery, forming a circle around the base. Then, rest the toothpicks on the rim of the bowl so that the uncut bottom of the celery base is submerged in the water.

Fill each bowl with 1/2 inch of water or until the water covers the bottom 1/4 of the celery. Discuss with students where they might see the new growth. Students will write and draw predictions in the growing journal. Place the bowls containing the celery in a window sill within the classroom, in a place that will receive adequate sunlight. Provide instructions to the teacher that students should change the water every two days. Each team should observe the celery growth every 2-3 days and track in the Growing Journal.

Time	Materials	DO	SAY
1 min /1:00	Script	Introduction/smile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good morning/afternoon students! This month, as part of the Be a Food Waste Warrior! theme that we are celebrating in the cafeteria, we are discussing ways to decrease food that is thrown away. • Reducing food waste is important because it could help save money from buying less food, support your community by donating food that would have otherwise gone to waste to those who might not have a steady food supply, keeps wasted food out of landfills and prevents pollution involved in the growing, transporting, and selling of food.
3 min/ 4:00			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's talk about ways that you can help reduce waste. Do you ever think there is food wasted here in the cafeteria? • That's right. There is food wasted each day in the cafeteria. Can anyone think of what food is wasted in the cafeteria? • That's right. If you take too much food, don't eat it and then throw it away. • There are tasty, nutritious dishes you can eat at meal times from the cafeteria, and it is important that we eat everything that we take so it makes our bodies healthy and strong instead of ending up in the garbage. • If you bring food from home, it is also important to eat all the items in your lunch so these items don't end up in the trash either.

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<p>4 min/ 8:00</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How about at home. What foods have you seen gone to waste there? (allow students to answer) • There are simple ways to decrease food waste at home: eat perishable items like fresh fruits and vegetables before they go bad, save your leftovers and eat them for another meal, and eat the food that your family serves to you so it doesn't get thrown away. • Today, I'd like to show you another fun way to decrease food waste. Instead of throwing the ends of certain vegetables away, we can use those pieces to grow a new vegetable. This is called vegetative propagation but the fun name we have for it is scrappy gardening since we are using food scraps. • Today each of you will participate in scrappy gardening by growing celery stalks from an already cut celery base.
<p>15 min/ 23:00</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shallow clear glass or plastic bowl • Fresh Celery Base • Water • Growing Journal • Pencils (if needed) • toothpicks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide each student with a copy of the Growing Journal and pencil (if needed). • Divide all students into a team of two or three. • Each team will receive a saucer or bowl and fill the container with 2-3 cm of water. Depending on the ages of the students, students or staff can fill the water. • Celery bases will be distributed to each team and placed in the water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now let's talk about re-growing this celery plant. • We have divided you into teams. I will pass out three toothpicks and a small bowl and I'd like for each of you to be very careful with this because we are going to be filling the bowls with about 1/2 inch water. • Next, I am going to pass out a celery base to each team. Does this look familiar to you? This was a head of celery bought from the grocery store. In the kitchen, the associates washed the celery, cut the celery stalks from the base and then cut them into celery sticks that were served on our fresh fruit and vegetable bar in the cafeteria. The next step that we will take in re-growing this celery is to gently poke the toothpicks into the celery, forming a circle around the base. Then, rest the toothpicks on the rim of the bowl so that the uncut bottom of the celery base is submerged in the water. Refill water every 2-3 days, or as needed, so that the bottom half of the celery remains submerged in water. <p>Photo from Kids Gardening:</p> 

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great! With the celery base in front of you, please open the Growing Journal. • Go ahead and write in today's date. Draw and write your thoughts in the first page of the growing journal. Think about the answer to the following question. Where might you see this new growth first? That's right. Roots may come out the bottom and new celery stalks may grow out of the top.
2:00/ 25:00	Shallow clear glass or plastic bowl	Move all the containers to a window sill or an area with plenty of sunlight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are now moving your celery plants to a place with sunlight. Fruits and vegetables need sunlight and water to grow. The water should be changed every two days. • Please look at your celery plant every 2-3 days and continue to write in your Growing Journal what you see. • In about 3 weeks you can move your plants to a pot and plant with potting soil. Once your celery plants grows several inches tall, you can cut the celery stalks, eat and enjoy. • There are other food items you can grow at home using scrappy gardening such as lettuce, garlic sprouts, and basil.
5:00/ 30:00		Clean up and answer questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the lesson with questions, comments, what did you learn? • Thank you for participating in this "Be a Waste Warrior" activity.