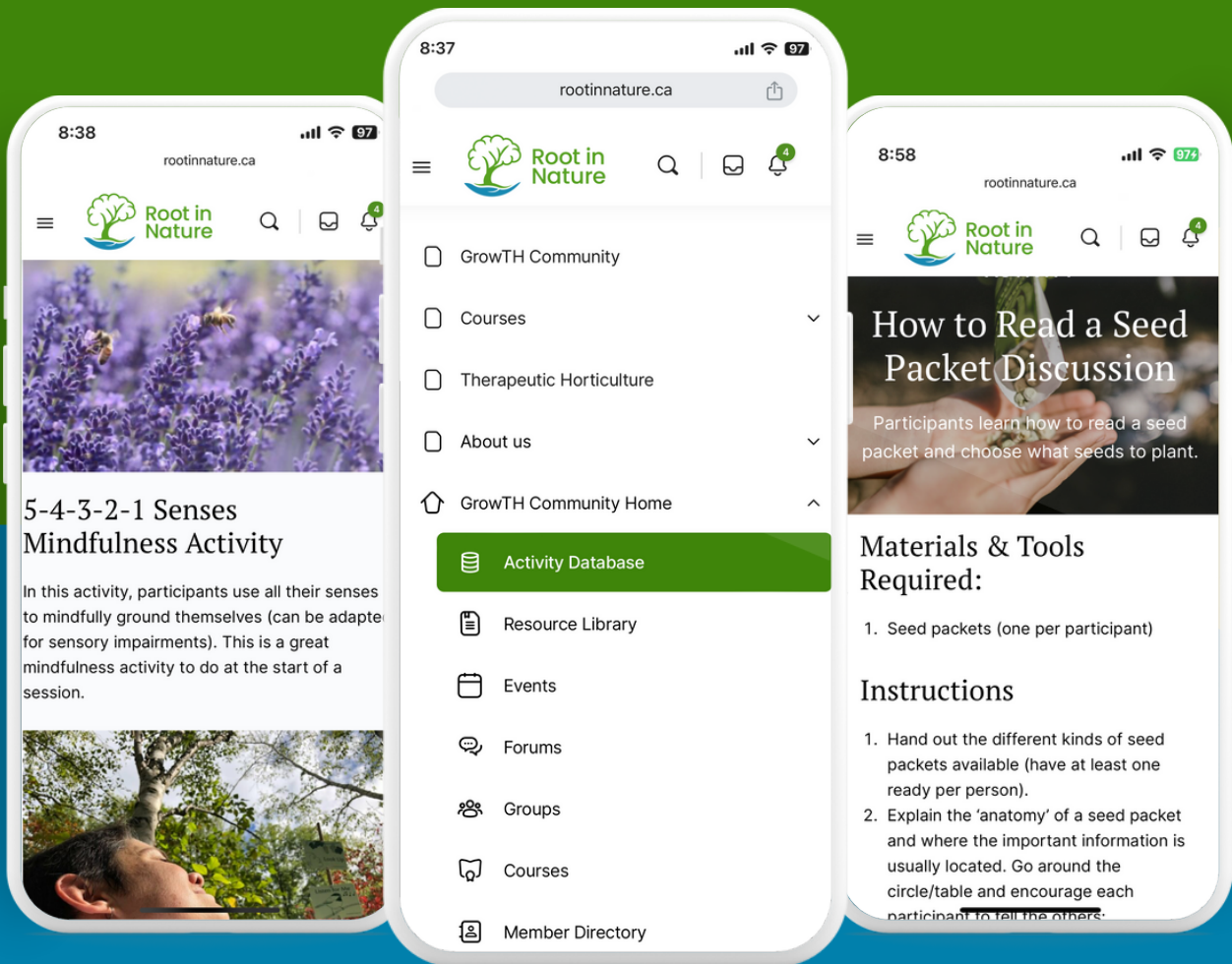




Root in
Nature

GrowTH Network



5 Seed Starting Activities

5 free activities to give you a taste of our
GrowTH Network Activity Database

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Seed Game

A hands-on activity to learn about what different seeds look like.



What you'll need

To create the seed game cards:

- Old/expired seeds are best for this
- Card stock, poster board or cardboard
- Clear tape
- Felt pen

For facilitating the activity:

- Seed game cards
- Pens and paper
(optional: for participants to write answers down on)

Instructions

To make the seed game cards:

- 1** Collect a variety of seeds (this is a great way to utilize old/expired seeds). Try to select some that are fairly recognizable and some that are more challenging. You may wish to make one seed game card with all flowers and one with all vegetables and/or herbs. The example in the photo above has 6 seeds per card.
- 2** Using clear tape, tape each seed down to the piece of card stock, poster board or cardboard. You may need to use a few pieces of tape for larger and more round seeds such as peas or nasturtiums.
- 3** Using the felt pen, number each seed, in order to make providing the answers more convenient. Be sure to print clearly in large sized writing.

- 4 As you create the game(s), be sure to write the names of the seeds down on an answer key as well. Try to include as much information about the seed as possible, such as the variety (e.g., a cherry tomato seed as opposed to a beefsteak tomato seed, or a small pie pumpkin seed versus a large Jack o' lantern variety).

Facilitating the seed game activity:

- 1 Pass out the cards to participants, as well as a sheet of paper to write their answers on and a pen, if appropriate. This can also be done more informally as a discussion style activity. Encourage participants to use their senses and remind them that it is just for fun! If in a group setting, encourage teamwork.
- 2 Be prepared to give clues. For example, if participants are having trouble guessing what an onion seed is, you could explain that it is a vegetable with a strong odour.
- 3 In order to reuse the seed game cards, make sure to ask participants to not write on them. If you are encouraging written answers, provide a blank piece of paper and pen for participants to write their answers on rather than directly on the seed game cards.



Seed Game Tips

For flower seeds, try to use some more commonly recognizable ones such as sunflowers and sweet peas, as well as more difficult ones like cosmos, calendula or pansies. For vegetables and herbs, seeds such as pumpkins, peas and beans are great options, as well as more challenging ones such as onions, carrots, beets, tomatoes and peppers.

This activity can also be adapted for a virtual setting by using photos of seeds rather than actual seeds. Be sure to provide a scale of the size of the seeds (for example use a coin in the photo with the seed to show the actual size).

Soilless Seed Starting Mix

In this activity, participants create a lightweight, well-draining medium for starting seeds.



What you'll need

- Coconut coir or peat moss
- Vermiculite or perlite
- Bucket, container or wheelbarrow for mixing (the size you need will depend on the quantity you are making)
- Trowel and/or gloves (for mixing)
- Water (to moisten the mix)
- [Soilless Seed Mix 'Ingredients' List](#)

Instructions

- 1** Combine 1 part peat moss or coconut coir, 1 part perlite or vermiculite.
- 2** Explain the role of the “ingredients” and the pros and cons of each, as outlined in the [Soilless Seed Mix “Ingredients” List](#).
- 3** Thoroughly mix all ingredients together in a large bucket/container or wheelbarrow until evenly distributed. You can use a trowel or your hands for this. Be sure to offer participants gloves to mix
- 4** Once mixed, moisten the soilless mix with water until it's evenly damp but not waterlogged. You want it to be moist enough to hold together when squeezed, but not dripping with water.

5 Sterilization (Optional): To prevent pests and diseases, you can sterilize the soilless mix by heating it in an oven at 180°F (82°C) for about 30 minutes. Allow it to cool completely before using.

6 Store in airtight container: If you have any leftover soilless mix, store it in an airtight container or bag to keep it from drying out.

7 Now it's time for seed starting!



Soilless Seed Starting Tips

Soilless seed mixes, while excellent for seed starting due to their lightweight texture and good drainage, do not contain sufficient nutrients for sustained plant growth. Therefore, it's crucial to supplement these mixes with fertilizers or compost to provide essential nutrients for healthy seedling development.

Seed Starting

In this activity, participants plant seeds and learn about best practices for seed starting.



What you'll need

- Variety of seed packets
- Seed starting mix (make your own or purchase in advance)
- Small seed starting pots or containers
- Trowels or spoons (for scooping soil)
- Watering can (if watering during session)
- Gardening gloves (optional)

Instructions

- 1 Choosing seeds:** Show the participants what seeds are available and let them choose which ones they want. Have a discussion with the participants about the different information that you can find on the seed pack. If you join the [GrowTH Network](#) you can also use our *How to Read a Seed Packet* activity.
- 2** After participants choose their seeds, they can divide the seeds into ones to be planted inside and the ones that can be directly sown outside in the garden (such as carrots, beets and other root vegetables).
- 3 Planting seeds:** Demonstrate how to fill the pots with the seed starting mix, plant the seeds, and water after. Remind participants to follow the instructions on the seed packet, as instructions for different plants vary. While participants

are working with the seeds and seed starting mix, ask them to take note of the texture of the soil, the size, colour and texture of the seeds, pots, etc. Ask participants questions about sensations they're experience during this activity such as does the texture of the soil remind you of anything else? What does the smell of soil make you think of?

4

Seedling Care: Depending on where you are delivering this activity, staff may be responsible for the seedling care rather than the participants. Giving participants this information is valuable regardless. Share then information from our Seed Starting Best Practices document with participants to explain lighting requirements, watering and other important care instructions.



Seed Starting Tips

Larger seeds such as nasturtiums, sunflowers, beans or peas are easier to handle and plant than small seeds such as lettuces or pansies. Seed dials or tweezers can be also useful tools for planting small seeds.

We also recommend using recycled containers such as Keurig coffee pods or takeout dip containers as your seed starting pots.

Phases of a Seedling Check-in

In this activity, participants look at various phases of seedling growth to help connect with their own experiences and emotions.



What you'll need

- [Seedling Check-in Activity Sheet](#)

Instructions

- 1** Display the [Seedling Check-in Activity Sheet](#) for participants, either printed out or on a screen.
- 2** Explain that this is a check-in activity and an opportunity to pause and reflect. A simple form of this activity can be done by asking participants to identify which phase of a seedling they feel like at this current time. Depending on the context of this activity, you may want participants to share their answer (and why) with you and/or the group, or you might just give participants some time and space to reflect independently without sharing. More complex questions may include: What phase of a seedling do you feel you are in in life in general, within the context of your garden, recovery or career journey? Be aware of any possible triggers and tailor your questions according to your participants.

Seed Themed Reflections

A list of reflective questions and prompts that use seeds as a metaphor for life and growth. Conducive for closing a session on seed starting.



What you'll need

- No materials required

Questions to Ask

- 1 Consider a goal or aspiration as a seed. How can you cultivate the conditions necessary for it to flourish and grow?
- 2 Reflect on a recent change or transition in your life as if it were a transplanting process. How have you adapted to your new environment, and what support do you need to continue thriving?
- 3 Imagine yourself as a seedling, just beginning to sprout. What strengths and qualities do you possess that will help you grow into your full potential?
- 4 What recent experiences have felt like new beginnings or fresh starts, similar to the growth of a seedling emerging from the soil?

5

Reflect on the resilience and determination demonstrated by seedlings as they push through the soil towards the sunlight, and how you embody those qualities in your own journey of growth.

6

Consider the significance of timing and patience in the process of growth, and how you can trust in your own timing and pace.



Seed Theme Reflection Tips

How you frame these questions will depend on your population, setting and context. For example, you may wish to share some questions for participants to reflect on independently in their journal after a session. Alternatively, you may ask these questions throughout a seed starting session as you engage in the different steps of planting a seed. In a group setting, you may want to offer the choice of one or two questions for participants to answer in a closing round to wrap up a session.