



WINTER | Soil Gardening Away the Winter Blues: Terrariums

Summary:

Gardeners will have the opportunity to build their own terrariums as they learn about new life in the winter. We will explore the idea that our gardens can grow, even in cold weather, as long as they are in a controlled environment.

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: Pebbles and gravel, activated charcoal, potting soil, moss, plants, clear glass or plastic container

Explore: “Flowers Grow from Beneath the Winter Snow” by C.F.Tunnickliffe

Read: *Winter Walk* by Virginia Snow

In the Garden:

Even in winter, our plants along with our bodies continue to grow. Our plants just need a safe place to grow, such as a terrarium! A terrarium is a transparent enclosure that is used to grow different kinds of plants. Many of the things you learned about tending plants in the garden—checking water levels, making sure the soil has nutrients, ect.—apply to your terrarium as well.

Questions to Explore:

- What plants do you see growing in winter?
- Are there any plants in your house? How do they grow?
- Do you think plants need anything different to grow in winter?

Activity:

1. Wash and dry your clear container.
2. Add an inch of pebbles or gravel to the bottom of the container. Then pour a thin layer of activated charcoal over the pebbles or gravel.
3. Add potting soil on top of the charcoal. The amount you choose will depend on the depth of the roots of the plant you chose to put in your terrarium.
4. Plant your plants into the soil and surround them with moss for protection. Water as needed.

Plants help keep our air clean by breathing in carbon, what we exhale, and releasing clean oxygen, what our bodies need. Indoor plants make for happy windows and happy lungs!

Beyond the Garden | Visit a Giant Terrarium—a Conservatory or Botanical Garden!

A great place to visit when you're missing the sight and smell of living things is your local conservatory. Some are attached to zoos or arboretums while others are attached to large public gardens. In addition to providing you with some much-needed sensory experiences, botanical gardens have great gardeners on staff that can answer any of your questions about indoor and outdoor gardening. Sometimes, you just need a little inspiration, and a conservatory is a great place to find it.

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

Find an indoor garden: <http://nationalpublicgardensday.org/about-public-gardens/gardens#>