Section 2: RESOURCES

Making the Most of MG SPROUTS

Forms and Templates

- Team Contacts
- Role Descriptions
- Session Planning Tool
- Supply List
- Book List
- Hort Helper
- Sample Room Set-up
- Letter to Community Partner
- Promotional Poster
- Press Release
- Participant Registration Form
- 4-H Code of Conduct
- Participant Sign in Sheet
- Name Tags
- 3 B's Poster
- Vocabulary Helper
- KWL Sheet Tally
- Sprouts Session Report
- Educational Activity Report

MAKING THE MOST OF MG SPROUTS

The tools at the end of this section are included to help the MG SPROUTS team carry out the project. Forms, diagrams and templates are included to help a team through the process, from planning through final reporting. The following paragraphs suggest some ideas and best practices for working with youth, conducting the activities, and making the most of the MG SPROUTS project.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

Each MG SPROUTS session is a complete package and includes lists of materials needed, session plan, worksheets, and helpful dialogue intended to help to connect the session BIG Idea to the activities. Teamwork and planning are key to the success of a MG SPROUTS project. The roles of Master Gardener Extension Volunteers as MG SPROUTS Team Members and Team Leader are covered in a fairly general way in the assigned role descriptions. Assigning specific sub roles during the planning for each session helps the session to flow smoothly and contributes to a great SPROUTS experience for all. (It is possible for members of the MG SPROUTS team to fill more than one role during the session.)

Pre-and Post Session Volunteers

Materials Coordinator: Gathers materials, makes copies for session and replenishes supply box.

In-Session Volunteers

Session Leader: Acts as the in-charge leader for the session. Teaches the hands-on horticulture activity and leads welcome back and wrap-up discussions.

Greeter: Greets parents and participants, passes out name tags and collects journal sheets.

Story reader: Leads the read-aloud story, vocabulary words and book discussion.

Table activity leader: Assigned to a small group of children, preferably the same group each week. Assists participants with completing the KWL and hands-on horticulture activities. Helps set out materials prior to the session, as well as getting completed projects ready for transport home with participants.

Timekeeper: Keeps all activities on schedule and gives audible or verbal cues to leaders and participants to wrap up activity and move on to the next activity.

BEST PRACTICES FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

The joy of introducing children to the fun and wonder of growing things and gardening is one of the reasons MGEVs often cite as motivating them to start or continue working on youth garden projects. To be successful, a youth program must put the needs of children first. Youth development programs, including 4-H, cite meeting these needs as central to helping young people become competent, contributing adults. Distilled down to four concepts, the needs youth programs should strive to meet are: Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity.

Belonging- All children need to feel a sense of connection and caring in relation to their peers and adults with whom they have interaction. Providing the opportunity for young people to feel both physically and emotionally safe while being active participants within a group or organization is vitally important to creating positive outcomes.

- Have all participants and volunteers wear name tags.
- Create a personalized mat for each participant's take-home sheets and projects.
- Seek to engage all participants in group discussions. If you have "conversation-dominators" consider a token system or talking stick that is passed between participants so everyone has an opportunity to share.

Generosity- Creating the opportunity where a young person feels their life has meaning and purpose directly correlates to their ability to understand the "big picture" of life and enhances their ability in understanding the concept of giving back to communities and society.

- Celebrate random acts of generosity and helpfulness. Watch for examples in the class and acknowledge them during your group meeting. When children hear others being celebrated, they will be more inclined to be generous themselves.
- Have plenty of materials on hand for children to use. Children will feel more naturally inclined to be generous if they do not feel their own supply is threatened.
- Point out examples of generosity, stewardship and caring in the read aloud activities.

Mastery- Self-confidence is a primary component needed by all youth to thrive. When a young person feels and believes that they are capable and find success in solving problems and achieving goals, they develop self-confidence. Additionally, youth need a safe environment in which to practice and build self-confidence, an environment where they are supported when mistakes are made and where positive and constructive feedback is given. Competitive events should not be the only outlet by which youth build confidence and/or seek mastery of various hobbies or interests.

- Children ages 6-8 are just beginning to get control over fine motor skills. Encourage them to use whatever writing or drawing instrument makes them most comfortable. Have them write or draw to their personal ability and help them get their own ideas on paper.
- If they are really having difficulty, you may ask them to dictate a word to you or ask questions that encourage them to think but allow them to work on it before you jump in to do it for them.

Independence- Youth need to know and understand that their decisions and actions often hold the power to influence others and/or events. Through the practice of independence, youth mature in self-discipline and responsibility, they learn to better understand themselves and often become independent thinkers.

- During discussion time, if you don't get the exact answer, acknowledge the speaker's idea in a positive way and continue to seek more answers.
- Encourage a child to try again if he doesn't succeed at an endeavor right away.
- Ask for cooperation and responsibility with cleaning up.

Guidelines for Creating Positive Behavior Expectations

Session 1 includes a group discussion to establish a few rules for the MG SPROUTS groups and communicates the expectation for how participants will behave during the session. Use a dry erase board or print the 3 B's poster. Keep the 3 B's visible during sessions. Throughout the subsequent sessions, take time to refer back to that discussion to remind participants of that discussion and give positive reinforcement.

- Acknowledge the positive behavior you want to continue

  Michael, I like the way you are listening and following directions.
- Use positive language

  I am so pleased to see that you are remembering our group's rule to be safe and keep our hands to ourselves.
- Communicate a faith in the child's ability to follow rules

  Leeanne, I know you can be patient until Louis has finished with the glue.
- Remind the participants of the behavior expectations set up in Session 1

  If we have trouble remembering the expectations for behavior at MG SPROUTS, we can just look at our 3 B's poster.
- Use direct language

  It's time for us to listen. Give me five.

USING KWL AND JOURNAL (Where I Live And Play Take-Home) SHEETS

One of the desired outcomes for MG SPROUTS is for participants to explore the plant world, connecting gardening and horticulture with the environment. To get an idea of how MG SPROUTS is expanding the participant's knowledge of and experience with plants, we use KWL worksheets and Where I Live and Play take-home journal worksheets to record their impressions and experiences over the six sessions. These worksheets not only help us know what level of knowledge our participants come in with, but they also use the participant's prior knowledge and learning to set a framework for new learning. These sheets are also known as graphic organizer worksheets and are often used in art classes, but they can also be used in science activities to spark inquiry.

KWL Worksheets

The KWL worksheet is used as a gathering activity as participants come together at the start of each session. Their responses form a starting point of knowledge and learning for participants. To use the worksheets, distribute the KWL sheet to each participant at the beginning of the session, after the parent has checked in the participant. The table will be set with a few items relating to the session to spur inquiry. Ask him or her to write their name on the sheet and write or draw in the "K" section, something they already know about the items on the table. In Session 1, the items might be sunflower plants, seeds, dried flower heads or all of these. Volunteers can help initiate the thought process by asking questions, such as:

- What do you see?
- Have you seen these before?
- What do you think they are?
- What do you know about the things you see?

In the second column, participants should write or draw something they want to know about the plants or items. You can help initiate the thought process by asking questions, such as:

- What do you want to learn about these plants?
- How tall will they grow?
- How long it might take to grow, etc.

These KWL sheets are collected up and held until the next session, when they are returned to participants to finish the final section (L-learned). In the last section of the sheet, participants write or draw something they learned about at SPROUTS or at home after the session. They may use the journal take-home sheets to remember any discoveries or learning that occurred after or as a result of the session activities. Ideally, in the "L" section they are able to answer questions they formulated in the "W" section.

The table below gives an idea of age-appropriate expectations for KWL responses:

<table>
<tr><th>GRADE LEVEL</th><th>RANGE OF AGE APPROPRIATE JOURNALLING EXPECTATIONS</th><th>HELP STUDENTS BY...</th></tr>
<tr><td>Preschool</td><td>drawing pictures, making "scribbles"</td><td rowspan="4">• having pre-writers dictate words for volunteers to record
• providing examples of what students may want to write or draw
• offering to spell words out on board before beginning
• assisting "slow-starters" by asking them questions and helping them think about what they want to write about
• beginning sentence/paragraphs with open ended statement such as "today I learned about…"</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pre-K - Kindergarten</td><td>drawing pictures, drawing and labeling pictures, several short sentences</td></tr>
<tr><td>1st and 2nd Grade</td><td>drawing and labeling pictures, a short to complete paragraph with or without drawings, possibly multiple paragraphs</td></tr>
<tr><td>3rd - 5th Grade</td><td>long paragraph to multiple paragraphs, students may still want to add drawings</td></tr>
</table>

Bringing It Together

As each session KWL sheet is fully completed, please take a moment to evaluate the sheet based on the evaluation rubric below. For each sheet, assign points for items in each row (Know, Want, Learned) per page. Transfer the total numbers to the results sheet. Return the results sheet to the local Agent sponsor for reporting and save the completed KWL sheet to place in the participant's My SPROUTS Journal. If time constraints prevent scoring all of the KWL sheets for every session, gather and report data from Sessions 2 and 4. Data from these two sessions should present a fair representation of the learner's articulation of new knowledge.

KWL EVALUATION RUBRIC			
Points	K	W	L
3	Uses many appropriate vocabulary words and concepts of what plants need to grow Clear ideas	Thoughtful questions about plants At least 3 questions At least one questions begins with “how” or “why”	All vocabulary is defined correctly Some examples provided for vocabulary Includes accurate and detailed information from the lesson.
2	Uses some vocabulary and concepts Clear ideas	Mostly thoughtful questions At least 2 questions listed	Most vocabulary is defined correctly No examples provided Includes explanation of information contained in the lesson though they may not be complete or entirely accurate
1	No use of vocabulary words or concepts Unclear ideas or blank	One or no questions are listed or is blank Questions are silly or not on-topic	Definitions severely incomplete or incorrect No examples provided No explanations or blank

Where I Live and Play Journal Sheets

We will use these take-home journal sheets throughout the sessions to encourage independent thinking, exploration, and wonder about plants outside of the SPROUTS sessions. There are six different journal sheets to encourage thinking and wonder about insects, vegetables and fruit, soil, and more. These journal sheets can also be integrated into the group sessions in the following ways:

- As a show-and-share activity. Have several participants bring appropriate garden-related items each week. Set the item out and have participants make some notes about the item on their sheets. Break into smaller discussion groups with the participants going first, sharing their observations and questions, and then encouraging the participant who brought the item to share additional information with others in the group.
- As a follow-up activity. Send extra journal sheets home with participants so that they can find something they do not already know about. They can write or draw their observations and thoughts on the journal pages and add them to their My SPROUTS Journal. They can also share their findings during the next SPROUTS session.
- As a game. Have participants pick something at home or at the meeting site to complete a journal sheet. Have them be secretive about what they pick. Take turns, as a group, sharing the describing and wonder words until someone can identify what has been written about.

My SPROUTS Journal

The My SPROUTS Journal is a collection of the KWL worksheets, the Where I Live and Play take-home worksheets and additional blank journal sheets bound together at the last SPROUTS session. The purpose in using the journal is to give participants a place to write, think and describe what they are learning. The take-home sheets give participants the opportunity to engage parents and family in inquiry-based learning activities. There is an optional last sheet with a space for contact information to connect participants with their local UGA Extension office, connecting participants and families with the idea that UGA Extension is a learning place.

THE SPROUTS READ-ALOUD EXPERIENCE

The interactive read-aloud is an important and valuable component of every SPROUTS session. The purpose is to create a group story reading experience that is related to the art and science of horticulture and the BIG Idea for the session. Because developing a community of readers is as important as developing a community of gardeners, strengthening literacy is one of the benefits of SPROUTS. Literacy develops as children gain experience with oral language and print.

Studies show that:

- Literacy and language are as essential to science learning as the practice of inquiry.
- Children who are read to are more likely to become avid readers outside of school.

- Time spent reading outside of school is an important indicator of academic success.
- Reading about hobbies and subjects that interest them are crucial to motivating reluctant readers.

Here are a few tips to help make it easy and fun and help readers and listeners get the most from the experience:

- Prepare for the read-aloud: Familiarize yourself with the book before the session reading. Read the story aloud and then consider where you want to pause for discussion and interaction. Each SPROUTS Session guide includes suggestions for discussion.
- Introduce the book and set the stage for what's going to happen in the book. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration or title. Read the title and author's name. Encourage the children to comment and predict what will happen in the story.
- Use the vocabulary word list to introduce listeners to words from the story that may be unfamiliar to them. Before the reading begins, introduce the word (written on the dry erase board) and ask listeners help you define the word. Ask them to raise their hand and cover their mouth when they hear the word occur in the story. Then, ask them to repeat the word with you.
- Read the book aloud, using your voice to express the meaning and project a character's voice when appropriate. Stop briefly to comment, ask a question, or invite your students to share their thinking.
- After the reading, invite listeners to reflect on the book's purpose and themes, share what they absorbed from the text, and comment on their favorite pictures.
- Connect the book to other titles you've read and enjoyed together. Note similarities and differences. What big ideas do the two books explore? Encourage participants to do additional reading about topics the book explored and remind them that there are additional book recommendations in the Grow On! Newsletter.

Tips for Reading Aloud in Sprouts Sessions

- Explain new vocabulary before you begin reading. Before beginning the story, talk about new words that might be in the story. Use the white board to write them where they can see them and when you reach them in the story have someone point to the word on the board. Make sure all students can hear you and see pictures in the story.
- Be dramatic! The more you make the story come alive, the more engaged children will be.
- Remind children how to be good listeners! It can be exciting that children want to contribute stories, questions, and comments during story time, but this behavior can quickly get out of hand and detract from the overall learning experience. Tell students that you value their contributions, and explain how and when you want them to contribute, and do this before you begin reading.
- If you are having a hard time keeping discussions on track, or you have students who dominate the group discussion time, you may find using a talking-stick or other similar object helpful. Explain to students that in many Native American tribes, people used a "talking stick" to make sure that each person had a turn to share his or her ideas and opinions with the rest of the group. The person holding the stick had the right to speak. Everyone else was expected to listen with respect. When a person finished talking, he or she passed the stick to someone else. This technique may also empower shy participants to participate, but don't force a child to speak if he or she doesn't want to.

Vocabulary Words

Before each session, use the dry erase board to write 1-5 vocabulary words that appear in the read-aloud. Suggested words appear on the front right page of each session guide or choose others from the text. Briefly discuss the words before the reading starts. You may also want to highlight some of the technical or horticultural words that you use in the hands-on activities and discuss them. Encourage participants to help think of what a particular word means, and when they give an answer that's not quite correct, acknowledge the answer in a positive way and continue to ask, guide and prompt until you get the desired definition. When the word comes up in the story, remind them of the definition. There is a ***Vocabulary Quick Hints*** sheet included in the Resources section.

Read-Aloud Resources

- ***Hints on How to Read Aloud to a Group***
  http://www.readingrockets.org/article/hints-how-read-aloud-group
- ***Reading Aloud to a Group of Children: Tips & Tricks***
  http://blogs.brighthorizons.com/familyroom/reading-aloud-group-children-tips-tricks/
- ***The Read-Aloud Handbook*** by Jim Trelease
  http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/

HANDS ON HORTICULTURE ACTIVITIES

The Hands-on Horticulture activities are an important part of the MG SPROUTS session. More than just starting seeds or craft projects, these activities give youth participants the opportunity to practice mastery. Many of the sessions offer suggestions on adapting the activity for varying skill levels. (NOTE: The dialogue included in italics is intended to help the lead volunteer tie all of the activities together with the BIG Idea, not to direct the volunteer to read a scripted message.)

Group Management Techniques for Hands-on Horticulture Activities

- Rely on the volunteer timekeeper to keep the sessions on track.
- Make eye contact with the children and try to use their names. Kids love personal attention.
- Smile and don't be afraid to use humor. Kids love a good laugh.
- Request student volunteers to help you distribute materials, samples, and hand-outs. Children love to feel important.
- Stop and wait for attention from everyone. This will ensure that students will settle down and pay attention to you every time you ask.
- Give short oral directions, and show students what you want them to do.
- After giving directions, provide time for students to work. Stop them if you want to provide an explanation, give the next direction, or say something to the whole class.
- Periodically, check to see that everyone is following along by having students hold something up or give you a thumbs-up when they are ready for the next step.
- Give the group thinking time after you ask a question. Each child needs time to think about the question before someone answers it. Do not jump to your own rescue if a question is unanswered. Be patient and, if necessary, re-phrase the question.
- Try to catch children being good and praise attentive and helpful behavior, which you want to encourage for all students.
- Use everyday examples and simple language to make science fun and accessible for children.
- Enjoy the children, their enthusiasm, and their sense of wonder. They have a fascinating perspective on the world.

(Portions excerpted from American Chemical Society's online resources for volunteers working with kids in the classroom)