



Children grow their bond
with plants by creating a
schoolground greenspot.

Nature and Me 3



Keywords dramatisation • exploration • planting

- 1 By March, your classroom should have a nature space with healthy potted plants that the children are looking after and bonding with through curriculum links. This activity strengthens that bond by extending your nature space into the schoolyard. Talk about the idea of outdoor lessons and let the children express feelings. Explore these feelings.
- 2 Prepare (a) a crate of soil (b) a small empty pot for every child (c) a bag of recent fennel seeds (d) bags of small objects, e.g. beads, etc. (e) child-friendly trowels. Place everything in the school yard.
- 3 Take the children out into the schoolyard with your cushions/chairs/beanbags. Talk about what you see and hear as you walk to the spot. Get a feel for being outdoors. Choose a spot together, settle and dramatise the story *Poppy's World Grows Bigger* (**Resource File**). The story should have tactile, motor coordination and creative elements.
- 4 Lead the children to the place where you prepared pots, soil and seeds and tell them to find something that will turn into a plant when you water it. Allow them time to explore, guide them to touch and smell and ask questions. Link with what they know. Don't give answer yet. After some time, call the children back to hear the rest of story.
- 5 Each child now has their pot, trowel and fennel seeds. If a child feels that one of the inanimate objects will grow, let them experiment. Grow seeds – see *Growing Seeds* in the **Resource File**. Take the pots back to class and each child personalises their own pot with materials you have prepared. Put the pots on the window sill and water them. Don't over-water – soil should be damp not wet (draw out difference between the two words).
- 6 Make links with the growing seeds, which should sprout within a couple of weeks if carried out in spring. Watch seedlings develop 'fingers' and green colour, see whose seedlings grow best, discuss what that child did and so on.
- 7 This activity chooses fennel seeds because they are easy to grow especially at this time of year; they are also aromatic and they attract butterflies and bees. When the seedlings grow big enough, take them outdoors and continue to care for them. You may start off your outdoors lesson spot with other potted plants – see suggested species in the **Resource File**. For long holidays, plants can be taken home by children to 'foster', providing you with more links to related topics of caring and growing.

Use the Dinja Waħda Notice Board and tell the school about what you're doing.

Send photos of

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|---|---|
| ☐ children dramatising story | ☐ personalised pots |
| ☐ children sowing fennel seeds | ☐ outdoor green spot |

