

## **Strategy: READ-AND-DO**

### **Overview:**

Read-alouds are great, and students of all ages enjoy being read to. Additionally, students comprehend orally presented material at a higher level than material that they read visually on their own. Turn your read-aloud into a “Read-and-Do” by pairing it with a simple hands-on activity!

### **Instructional Strategies:**

The ideas for effectively creating and using “Read-and-Do’s” are limited only by your imagination and creativity! This strategy can be used effectively for virtually any content area. Some examples include the following: read a book about bats and have your students construct bat-houses (science); conduct some character education read-alouds and have students write skits to showcase how to display good and bad character (social studies); read aloud some recipes to your students and then have them measure ingredients and cook (math, home economics, life skills).

***You are ready to TeachItNow! Here’s how you can use “Read-and-Do” to teach the students about the plant biology. A learning target, instructional activity, and assessment technique are provided.***

### **Learning Target:**

Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of what plants need to survive (water, sunlight [includes temperature needs and photosynthesis], nutrients [from the soil], air [CO<sub>2</sub>]).

### **Instructional Activity:**

#### **Teach Plant Biology with the “READ-AND-DO” Strategy**

Activate prior knowledge by leading your class in a discussion of about plants’ needs. Begin by asking students what we, as humans, need in order to survive. Write their answers on the board. Next, ask students what plants need in order to survive and write these answers on the board. Are there any overlaps between humans’ and plants’ survival needs? Have your students draw some Venn diagrams using the characteristics that they listed.

**Read-aloud:** *Plantzilla* by Jerdine Nolen (illustrated by David Catrow). Tell the students that you will be reading a fun book to them that will help with their comprehension of plants’ needs.

### **Assessment:**

Provide each student with a Styrofoam cup (or germination pots), construction paper, glue, scissors, and crayons. (Water will be going in the cups, so don’t use markers – the ink will run.) Instruct your students to draw separate pictures to represent each of the plant’s survival needs. Students will cut their drawings out and affix them to the outside of their Styrofoam cup with glue. You will be able to assess students’ knowledge of a plant’s survival needs by observing what they have chosen to represent with their drawings. Plan to coincide this assessment portion to end right before another activity (such as lunch, specials, P.E. or even the end of the day).

While the students are away, allow glue to dry. Place one compressed soil disc (Jiffy Peat and other brands are available in convenient bundles almost anywhere that plants are sold.) in each of the Styrofoam cups/germination pots. Add enough water to fill the bottom 1 ½ - 2 inches of the cup. The compressed soil disc will soften and expand as it absorbs the water.

After at least an hour (Glue has dried, and soil has expanded.) when your students have returned, give them each the decorated cups with the dirt inside. Ask students to poke the tip of a pencil into the top of their cylinder of dirt (about ¼ of an inch deep) in order to make a hole for seeds. Provide students with 3-4 seeds to plant. (For extra fun, give each of your students a different type of seed and ask students to predict the type of plant that will grow.) Students will place the seeds in the hole and pinch the dirt closed over the seeds.

You may have students take their cups and planted seeds home or, to expand the array of “teachable moments” in this project, keep the cups at school near a window and allow the plants to grow. Each week you can have students track the growth of their plants. Let students theorize why some grow more or less quickly than others. Students can record their weekly results on one side of an index card and create a chart on the opposite side.