Grow a Kitchen Scrap Garden

**Materials:** sprouting containers (cups, jars, small bowls, etc.), water, soil, produce scraps (seeds, pits, root parts, etc.)

**Background Information:** Gardening is the act of growing and tending to your own plants. Many people plant and tend to flower gardens and fruit and vegetable gardens. Gardens can be any size that works for you and filled with the things that you like. One easy way to set up a garden is to use kitchen scraps of produce and plants you might already have on hand. In order for seeds to sprout and plants to grow, they need just the right temperature, amount of water, and a medium (like soil) in which to grow.

**STEM Career Connection:** Gardeners maintain the beauty of plants, outdoor grounds, and trees in a garden. They perform a range of general maintenance tasks including designing, producing, caring for, and preserving outside spaces. Gardeners can work at local parks, hotels, farms, and nurseries.

**Literature Connections:** *Right This Very Minute: A table-to-farm book about food and farming* by Lisl H. Detlefsen, *Tops and Bottoms* by Janet Stevens, *We Are the Gardeners* by Joanna Gaines, *Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt* by Kate Messner

**Challenge:**

1. Gather planting materials and collect produce scraps. Good scraps include seeds (lemons, peppers, tomatoes), stems and leaves of herbs (basil, rosemary), the base of leafy plants (lettuce, celery, cabbage), the bottom or root base of onions/scallions, the top of a pineapple, the pit of plants (avocados, peaches, cherries), a clove of garlic, and pieces of produce (potatoes, sweet potatoes).
2. Small seeds and pits can be washed and dried and then planted directly into a cup or pot of soil, placed in a sunny window or outside (if warm enough), and watered regularly.
3. Stems and leaves or sprigs of fresh herbs can be placed in a cup of water and set in a bright, warm spot. Once the stems grow some roots, plants can be transplanted to a pot with soil.
4. Other plants should be started in other ways - refer to the chart below for instructions. [https://jerryjamesstone.com/2014/02/food-that-magically-regrows-itself-from-kitchen-scaps/](https://jerryjamesstone.com/2014/02/food-that-magically-regrows-itself-from-kitchen-scaps/)
5. Provide your seeds/plants warmth, sunlight, and water and observe the growth!
Food that **magically regrows itself...**

Growing anything from a seed is impressive but also difficult, unless you’re blessed with a green thumb.

Sure, it saves on money but there has to be an easier way... and there is! You can actually grow food from kitchen scraps. There is something very MacGyver about that, no? It’s true! You can upcycle everything from celery scraps to onion butts with a chance of success. **Use organic fruits and vegetables for the best results.**

---

**Green onions, lemongrass, leeks, fennel, & spring onions**

1. Place root ends in water but don’t fully submerge them. Change the water daily.
2. In 3-5 days, growth begins. Harvest the greens when full, then repeat the process.
3. Harvest lemongrass once it becomes a foot tall. Simply cut off what you need without uprooting the plant.

---

**Celery, cabbage, romaine lettuce, & bok choy**

1. Submerge the roots, leaving the tops above the water line.
2. Spray with water a couple times a week, replacing the water every few days. Leaves will sprout in about a week.
3. Plant the cutting with only the leaves above soil. Harvest when fully grown, about 5 months.

---

**Ginger**

1. Soak the chunk of ginger overnight.
3. Ready to harvest in a year. Simply remove entire plant, use what you need and repeat.