Activity

GROW YOUR OWN

Build important skills as a scientist: grow a plant from seed and make careful observations of the process, recording these clearly.

What should I do?

Let Nicola Davies explain…

Visit the Authorfy website and discover their 10 Minute Challenges page: https://authorfy.com/10minutechallenges/. Scroll down to find Nicola Davies. Those of you who have read some of Nicola's books will know she writes lots of books about living things. She has recently written *Grow: Secrets of Our DNA* (2020), which is about how and why living things grow the way they do.

In this video, Nicola sets a fun 10-day challenge – 'to grow something and record the results'. Watch the video! (If you have trouble playing it, try refreshing the page and/or check your browser – we find it tends to work best in something like Chrome.)

She tells us, 'Some of the first and most important skills of a scientist are to look, and record, and think, and ask questions.'

That's what you're going to do!

Choose your plant(s)

First, you'll need to plant some seeds. Cress and mustard grow very quickly, but any seeds could be used. Try planting two or three different things to see how they grow differently. Nicola suggests growing some easy things you may have lying around at home:

- packet of vegetable seeds;
- the pips from an orange;
- dried (not tinned!) beans.

You can plant your seeds:

- in a pot (even a yogurt pot or something like that)
- in half an eggshell: can you draw funny faces on eggshells so once your seeds have grown, the shells will look like people with green hair?!
- straight into the garden.

Make sure you find out the best things to try growing at this time in the year. Will you plant indoors or outside?

Watch and record

Your challenge is to watch this growing process very, very carefully and record the changes, no matter how tiny.

- Every day, make time to look and write. What is different from the day before?
- Make a drawing or take a photo and write down what you see.
- Record the date and the time on each day.
- Write down any questions you have.

You can make your own notebook or use the format at the end of this activity.

Share your work

How might you also share your work with your friends and your teacher(s)? Can you film yourself reading your writing, or take photographs, then email or upload to a shared area? Could you create a copy of your work to post?

You may even be able to bring your plant into school, eventually, and add it to other people's in a nature area, or collect them on a classroom windowsill for everyone to enjoy!

You can tweet what you've been up to using the Twitter handle @BabcockLDPEng and the hashtag #BabcockEnglishAtHome.

IMPORTANT: If you decide to share your finished work publicly, just remember everything you have been taught about staying safe online, and do check with the person who looks after you before posting anything.

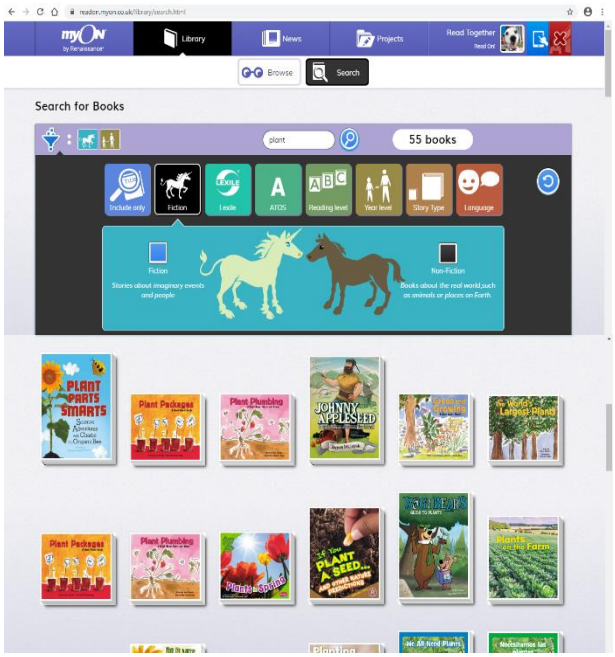
Things that could help me

BBC Bitesize has some nice pages to help you learn about plants at https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpxnyrd.

Change it up! ...Go further!

A) Explore Nicola's website to discover more about her and her books: https://www.nicola-davies.com/. She has also written a little about her new book here: http://fcbg.org.uk/grow-secrets-of-our-dna/

B) Browse for online books on growing things, and enjoy finding out more about plants. Visit https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/improving-schools-settings/english/home-learning for links, e.g. to MyON, where you can find 1,029 books on Life Science & Plants:



Notes for parents and teachers

The idea of growing something is a simple one that could lead to some lovely topic-based work with great Science and Art links, lots of associated reading, and plenty of opportunities for writing in many different forms. It is something children can be asked to do whether learning at home or in school; there may even be an area in school where plants can at some point be brought in from home and replanted to join everyone else's (unless you choose to grow something like mustard or cress!).

If you are working with older primary-age children as well, you might find the additional activities suggested in our KS2 version of this plan useful (also Week 10): https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/improving-schools-settings/english/home-learning/home-learning-english-key-stage-2.

My Scientist Notebook

Date:	**Date:**
Draw or write what you see:	**Draw or write what you see:**
Questions?	**Questions?**
Date:	**Date:**
Draw or write what you see:	**Draw or write what you see:**
Questions?	**Questions?**