

Mini greenhouse

Learning opportunities

- * Performing experiments to prove that seeds and plants grow more rapidly in a warm, moist atmosphere

Links to the Early Learning Goals

- * Understanding the world – The world

Equipment and resources

Seeds such as sunflowers and plant cuttings ready to plant (eg busy Lizzie); potting compost; 10 cm plant pots; 2 litre plastic drinks bottles (cut in half); trowels or old tablespoons; water.



Activity

Invite the children to fill the plant pots with potting compost and plant the seeds or cuttings. Water them all and place the half plastic bottles over some of the pots to form a mini greenhouse for each one. Explain to the children why you are going to cover some of the pots and leave others uncovered. Otherwise treat all the pots the same: give them the same quantities of water and keep them in the same place, so that they get the same amount of light and heat. Every day observe what has happened to the plants and to the plastic bottles.

Extension

Select some of the plants that are covered and some that are not covered and do not water them. Observe closely and record on a chart what happens to these plants. Use a house thermometer to take the temperature inside the pots.

Discussion

Talk with the children about which plants have grown the fastest and why that might be. Talk about how plants need warmth to grow and that they grow more rapidly in a warm atmosphere. The plastic bottles have a film of condensation on the inside which helps to keep the plants moist.