Movement, Environment and Community

Assignment Task 1: Mind Map & Justification
*For a larger, clearer copy of my mind map, please see the attached document on Moodle.*
The following report is based on a prospective teaching and learning sequence for sustainability to be established in the school grounds where a student-run fruit and vegetable garden will be created. The content will be a Movement, Environment and Community unit developed around the eight guidelines for meaningful and effective outdoor learning (Beames, 2012).

**Learning across the curriculum**

The outdoors, if utilised correctly and effectively can be a space for extensive and meaningful interdisciplinary learning to occur (Beames, 2012). For my proposal of a student-run fruit and vegetable garden to be created in the school grounds and utilised in classroom kitchens poses a wide variety of interdisciplinary learning. The main theme and purpose of the garden will be to promote sustainability. Within the process, there are unlimited opportunities for learning. Through the production of ‘home’ grown fruits and vegetables, health and fitness is promoted, as students will be outdoors participating in the creation and maintenance process of establishing the garden, as well as learning about the benefits of fruits and vegetables.

According to the Australian Dietary Guidelines (Department of Health and Ageing, 2013), primary school aged children should be having 4-5 serves of vegetables each day and 1-2 serves of fruits each day. Students will increase their daily intake of fruits and vegetables by using their crops in the classroom kitchen to create healthy snacks and meals. Literacy will be incorporated at each stage of this project, for example; procedural writing (how to create your own fruit/vegetable garden, recipes), transactional writing (letters to the community for fundraising, donations, local chef’s recipes) and personal reflection writing. Literacy tasks can then be combined with Art tasks, for example; students can create a piece of artwork showing their garden and incorporate diagrams and labels. Students can also produce progress paintings and media/visual art creations to demonstrate the lifecycle of a plant. This then leads to science tasks, where students can create a formal scientific report of the lifecycle of their crops. Maths can be incorporated into this project, as students can work on area, grouping, addition, and using money in relation to their garden. Above all, Civic Citizenship will be strengthened throughout this process, as students will be instilled with leadership, responsibility, pride, commitment, care and awareness of bigger issues around the world which affect their lives (sustainability). Students will establish credible characteristics throughout this project and will become active citizens who contribute meaningfully to their community by helping others and raising awareness of the benefits of growing your own fruits and vegetables.
Education for sustainable development

Beames (2012) describes ‘sustainable development’ as an understanding of the implications of our daily actions on a global scale. To partake in activities to promote sustainable development, an individual needs to have ethic and care for their planet. For this project, as discussed above, promotes active civic citizenship throughout. Development of civic citizenship characteristics which the students will acquire through the hands on experience of creating, using and maintaining their own fruit and vegetables, sustainable development is practiced. Students will learn about the purpose of this project through focussing on sustainability and why this is so important in today’s society. Students will learn about the concept of sustainability in conjunction with issues of pollution and global warming. After the students have a sound knowledge of the causes and effects of global warming, they will understand that their daily actions can impact the Earth. Students will understand the benefits of creating their own fruit and vegetable garden, including; saving money, supporting the Australian economy, conservation, reduced fossil fuel emissions (transport of agriculture), reduced water usage (watering techniques used on large scale agriculture farms), reduced air pollution (transport of agriculture) and health benefits of consuming fresh and uncontaminated products with no added pesticides and herbicides (used on the products we buy in supermarkets from farms). Students will also learn about food waste, landfill, pollution and the importance of recycling.

Learning through local landscapes

Waters (2013) discusses how children in primary schools are often isolated from the land and therefore deprived of the joys and responsibilities it teaches. Therefore, it is imperative that the outdoors is incorporated into school curriculum wherever and as much as possible. Thus, a student grown /managed fruit and vegetable patch in the school grounds is a perfect opportunity for student learning. This project where students create, use and maintain their own fruit and vegetable crops promotes learning through hands-on, meaningful and interactive experiences. Students will establish a sense of pride, responsibility and connection, as they care for and watch their crops grow and develop. McCombs (2013) has found that when students feel ownership over their own learning, they experience self-motivation which results in students wanting to engage in academic learning tasks. This proposed task will have the students feeling a strong sense of ownership and as a result, will be more involved in their learning.
Harnessing student curiosity & Enabling students to take responsibilities

Students learn more effectively through directing their own learning based on curiosity and wonder. Here, teachers take on the role of a facilitator, and assist the students in their own personal learning journey. This project is for students and run entirely by students, as they will conduct their own research on the process of creating a fruit/vegetable garden and then applying their knowledge in the creation process. Students will have entire ownership of the garden, as representatives of each year level will work together as a planning committee, and other representatives from each year level will take shared responsibility for the garden where students will be in rotational roles to be in charge of actions such as weeding, turning over the soil, planting, fertilising, watering, harvesting, washing, preparing and cooking.

Building community partnerships

At the beginning of this project, students will communicate with the local community, as they will take part in tasks such as; writing to local business’ to ask for tips on how to grow and look after their crops, parents and families of the local community to ask for donations either in money form or donations of seeds or gardening tools (the donation of seeds may act as an investment, where those who have donated will receive samples of foods cooked by the students at school, or recipes to showcase the fruit/vegetable they have donated), advertising and fundraising for tools through activities such as a student artwork sale, a trivia night, school disco or bake sale. Throughout the project, students will publish their own recipes for the community to access through the schools’ website (this may be a literacy and ICT task) as well as procedural texts such as ‘How to create your own fruit/vegetable garden’. Students can also send out invitations to the community for volunteers to come and help create their garden. Block et al. (2009) evaluated the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Programme and found that a school garden created strong links between students and the community.

Administration and risk management & Supervising people outdoors

In terms of risk management, the school yard as a learning space is the safest of the four zones discussed by Beames (2012). The student representative committee will discuss hazards with a teacher, prior to commencing this project. They will identify these and then discuss ways to overcome/accommodate for these hazards. Students will also establish some ‘rules’ for gardeners to follow according to risk of being outdoors, for example; students must wear appropriate footwear, must wear a hat, must wear sunscreen (according to season),
must wear gloves and have a water bottle with them to stay hydrated. There will also be a board in each classroom, and a notice in the schools’ weekly newsletter where the student representatives from each class will be published, so that all teachers and students are aware of who will be working in the garden during that week. A supervising staff member will always be with the students.
References


