

Rain Garden Maintenance and Community Presentations

ESTIMATED TIME: 45 minutes

OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

- Understand how to manage stormwater runoff in multiple ways, including the use of rain gardens
- Increase their environmental awareness
- Be motivated to teach others in their communities about the importance of rain gardens and how rain gardens can serve as one of the solutions to water resources issues in New Jersey

MATERIALS:

- Taking Care of our Rain Garden Checklist (1 per student)
- Design A Rain Garden! Worksheet (1 per student)
- Design Your Rain Garden Poster (print it out as 8.5" x 11", 1 per student)
- Crayons, markers, and/or colored pencils
- Rutgers Native Plant Information Sheets
- Video Questions (a Flip® video camera works well)
- Video camera
- Folding chair
- Tripod for video camera (optional)
- Rain garden gnome hat (optional)

PROCEDURE:

Part 1: Pre-Test

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Preparation:

1. Prepare the Stormwater Management in Your Schoolyard journal for each student to complete for this module (Before Lesson and After Lesson).

Directions:

1. Distribute a pencil and a Stormwater Management in Your Schoolyard journal to each student.
2. Read the questions on the "Before Lesson" page and have the students complete.
3. Have the students hold onto their pencil and Stormwater Management in Your Schoolyard journal until the end of the module.

Part 2: Rain Garden Maintenance Overview

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Preparation:

1. Prepare a Taking Care of our Rain Garden Checklist for each student.

Directions:

1. Go through the Taking Care of our Rain Garden Checklist with the class to discuss the following major points:
 - a. Inspecting
 - b. Watering
 - c. Weeding

Part 3A: Design Your Very Own Rain Garden (Indoors)

Estimated Time: 20 minutes (occurs simultaneously as Community Presentations)

Preparation:

1. Prepare the following materials for this activity:
 - a. Design Your Very Own Rain Garden Worksheet for each student
 - b. Design Your Rain Garden Drawing for each student
 - c. Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
 - d. Rutgers Native Plant Information Sheets

Directions:

1. Distribute the Design A Rain Garden! Worksheet and a Design Your Rain Garden poster (reduced to 8.5" x 11") to each student.
2. Discuss the directions on the Design A Rain Garden! Worksheet. Explain to the students that they will be drawing their own rain garden while the Community Presentations are occurring simultaneously.
3. Provide the class with crayons, markers, and/or colored pencils to draw the plants in their rain gardens.
4. Provide the class with Rutgers Native Plant Information Sheets so they can refer to the Hydrology Indicator status to see what zone of the rain garden the plant should be placed.
5. Collect each student's Design Your Rain Garden Poster (reduced to 8.5" x 11") at the end of the class period.

Part 3B: Community Presentations (Outdoors)

Estimated Time: 20 minutes (occurs simultaneously as Design Your Very Own Rain Garden)

Preparation:

1. Prepare the "set" of the video production next to the school's recently installed rain garden(s). Include a folding chair for the students to sit on while you are videotaping. Be sure to include the rain garden(s) in the background of the video. If you have a tripod for the video camera, set it up.

Directions:

1. Ask the students to come down to the rain garden(s) 2 people at a time.

2. One person will videotape the student while the other student stands quietly off to the side.
3. If desired, the students can wear a rain garden gnome hat while being videotaped.
4. Take 2 videos of the students:
 - a. The first video will be of the students saying their first and last name and the name of their teacher.
 - b. The second video will be of us asking the students the question that they have received as homework in the "Rain Garden Installation" module as well as the students' response in their own words.
5. Have the students go back to their class and have the next 2 students come to the rain garden(s) to the videotaped.
6. Compile the videos to be used as a "Community Presentation" about their school's rain garden(s).

Part 3: Putting it All Together and Post-Test

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Preparation:

1. Prepare the Stormwater Management in Your Schoolyard journal for each student to complete for this module (Before Lesson and After Lesson).

Directions:

1. Moderate a brief class discussion to help pull the module content together. Ask the students the following questions:
 - a. What do you think of rain gardens?
 - b. Do you think we are helping improve our local watershed by installing rain gardens?
 - c. What are other things that we could do, besides rain gardens, to help improve our local waterways?
 - d. Will you tell your friends and family what you learned as part of this program?
2. Ask the students to answer the prompt in their journal.