

# Discovering Terrariums

Grade Level(s)

K - 2

Estimated Time

30 minutes

Objective

Students will learn what plants need to live and grow in a terrarium. A terrarium is a vivarium for smaller land animals, especially reptiles, amphibians, or terrestrial invertebrates, typically in the form of a glass-fronted case.

Materials

**Book:** Living and Non-Living book or read-aloud video available on website.

**Building a terrarium** (classroom terrarium or video experiment link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AikTBOTj7WA> )

Clear container

Soil and rocks

Water

Alfalfa, rye, and wheat, soybeans or corn

**Documents** included in the kit or available on our website

[https://www.linncoag.com/september:](https://www.linncoag.com/september)

Mason jar sheet

Living and non-living worksheet

Interest Approach or Motivator

1. Ask the students to brainstorm what living things need to survive.

Background

Iowa is known for growing corn, but did you know that 98% of the corn grown in Iowa is field or dent corn? Only 2% of the corn we grow here in Iowa is sweet corn. Field corn is grown to feed livestock, produce ethanol and processed in over 4,000 different products. Soybeans are grown as a grain here in Iowa. Fresh soybeans are called edamame. Grain soybeans are grown to feed livestock, produce biodiesel, processed to make soymilk, tofu, crayons, candles, etc. There are over 30,000 soybeans in a car- from the cushions to the plastic. Grass or hay is grown to feed ruminant animals like cows and sheep all winter long!

Procedures

1. Read or show video for the Living and Non-living book.
  - Living things eat, breath, move and grow.

2. Explain to the students what a terrarium is: a terrarium is a habitat consisting of both living and nonliving objects- typically in the form of a glass or plastic case.
3. Build terrarium (video link above or with kit supplies)
  1. Place rocks in the bottom
  2. Add soil
  3. Plant seeds (corn, soybeans and grass)
- Talk about the importance of each seed. Why do we grow corn, soybeans and grass in Iowa?
4. Water seeds and place in window

Which items added to the terrarium were living and which were non-living?

4. Color a picture of our class terrarium.
5. Distribute living and non-living worksheet. Ask the students to work on the sheet individually. Follow with a short review.

#### Author

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#### Agriculture Literacy Outcomes

T2.K-2.e Identify the importance of natural resources in farming

T1.K-2.c Identify natural resources

T1.K-2.b Describe the importance of soil and water raising crops and livestock

#### Iowa Core Standards

K-LS1-1. Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals need to survive

1-LS3-1. Make observations to construct an evidence-based account that young plants and animals are like, but not exactly like, their parents.

2-LS2-1. Plan and conduct an investigation to determine if plants need sunlight and water to grow.