

MINDFUL PLANTING helps the garden grow and instills a spirit of respect and appreciation.

1. Begin by demonstrating how to use tools properly, then allow students to loosen the soil with their hands and/or tools to make room for air, water and roots to grow. Level the soil. Put all tools away.
2. Demonstrate how to plant seeds properly, before handing out seeds to students:
 - Plant seeds at a depth of about 2 to 3 times their height.
 - Small seeds, such as lettuce and carrots, may be sprinkled over the soil (or in a shallow trench) and covered with a light layer of soil.
 - For larger seeds such as beans, sunflowers, and corn, create a hole with one finger (about 1" deep) and plant one seed per hole, usually about 6" apart.
3. Walk around the garden bed and hand seeds to students.
4. Encourage students to observe the seeds closely, noticing a diversity of shapes, sizes, textures, patterns, and imagining the tiny life inside. Share observations with your neighbors.
5. Encourage students to hold the seeds gently in their hands. Name your seed, tell it a secret, make a wish! Give your seed the loving energy it needs to grow.
6. Be aware of the vocabulary you use: We want to "cover" the seeds instead of "bury" them, because they are alive! When planting say, "Good night seeds!" Pat the soil firmly but gently, do not pack it down.
7. Once the seeds are planted, invite students to imagine the seeds waking up (sprouting) and growing into healthy seedlings, then tall, strong plants! Act out the life cycle together.
8. Watering: It is immensely important that the seeds and soil receive adequate moisture in their first few weeks of life. Show students how to water:
 - Water the soil gently, like "raindrops, not waterfalls."
 - Allow the earth to "sip and swallow" before another drink is given.
 - Avoid making large puddles, keep the water spout moving so the water has time to soak into the soil.
 - To help younger students take turns you can count "one-butterfly, two-butterfly" then switch.

Students and teachers need to water and visit the gardens every day, checking often to be sure the soil is moist. Assign daily "Garden Monitors" in your class. Once the sprouts are growing, show students how to water the soil, instead of the leaves.
9. Cover cloths (e.g. burlap bags or sheets) may be used to cover the soil as soon as the seeds are planted. This protects the soil and seeds from the sun and birds. The cover cloth should be removed AS SOON AS the sprouts emerge. Hang to dry and store for future use.



ĀINA, LAND WHICH FEEDS US

*We plant in the soil, not in the dirt.
We "Take Care of the Garden,"
We do not work in the garden.
We cover the seeds when we plant them,
We do not bury them,
The seeds are alive not dead.
We say "Good Night Seeds" after we plant them.
When we hold the seeds in our hands,
We give them energy.
When the seeds have grown
They give us energy.
We do not plant with our hands,
We plant with our Heart;
Our Hands are the extension of our Heart.*

Provided By
HOA ĀINA O MAKAHA