

Super Seedlings!



What's in a seed?

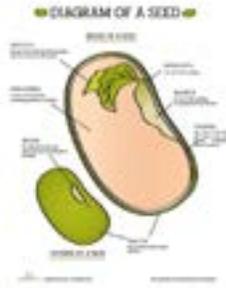
START WITH A SEED



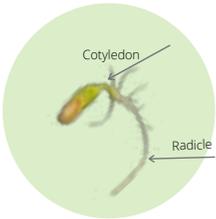
When flowers are pollinated and fertilized they make seeds. These seeds become plants with the same characteristics of the parent plant. Inside the seed is food storage and an embryonic plant. Once the seed starts absorbing water, it's ready to grow!

PARTS OF A SEED

Seeds have many parts. The seed coat protects the plant. Cotyledons contain sugars and protein needed for growth. The radicle, or root, emerges first and absorbs water and nutrients for the growing seedling. The epicotyl becomes the shoot which develops leaves for photosynthesis.



ROOTS FIRST



A strong central root anchors the growing seedling. Fine root hairs absorb dissolved minerals and water which is moved through the plant. After the radicle develops the shoot elongates, and the 'true' leaves develop. The cotyledon's stored energy is being used for growth.

TRUE LEAVES

Cotyledons, often called seed leaves, are found inside the seed. True leaves develop once the seedling emerges. These new leaves use energy from the sun during photosynthesis to convert water and carbon dioxide into matter for growth.



FLOWERS, FRUITS & SEEDS



As the young plant develops and matures, it grows more leaves, larger stems and it flowers. As we learned at the beginning of the page, pollinated flowers form fruits with seeds inside and the lifecycle begins all over again, from seed to seedling!

Grow seeds at home!

CHOOSE YOUR SITE AND SEEDS



Think about where you could grow a plant, maybe a sunny spot in the yard, or your front steps? Most herbs and veggies like a lot of sun. Go online, or check seed packets to learn more about plants you want to grow. The packet will tell you how deep to plant the seed, how long it takes to sprout and how much sun they need.

POT THEM UP!

Choose a small container with drainage holes, fill it with potting soil almost to the top. Use a marker and write the date and name of your seeds on the pot. Next, sprinkle a few seeds on the soil and cover with soil. Lightly press the soil down and wet it with a spray bottle. Seeds germinate best in moist, but not soggy soil. Put the pots in a warm place and wait. Most seeds germinate in for 7-12 days.



SEEDLINGS NEED SUNLIGHT



Once your seedlings emerge, move them to a sunny spot near a window. Or if you have grow lights, adjust the height of the lights above the seedlings so they don't burn, but grow straight. If you're growing them in a window, turn them once a week so they don't bend toward the light.

READY TO HEAD OUTSIDE

When your seedlings have grown a second set of true leaves, you can transplant them into a bigger pot, or in the ground. Your seedlings need to get used to the outdoors. Bring them outside in a shady place for a day or so, then move them to their permanent spot.



GOOD JOB!



Good job on growing new plants from seeds! Take good care of your new plants and enjoy watching them grow!