



Opération
tournesol



Student Guide

PRESENTED BY :



Welcome to the world of gardening!

Do you like plants? Do you like the smell of growing spring flowers and leaves? Do you like gardens filled to the brim with delicious vegetables?

So beautiful and so useful, have you ever noticed that vegetation surrounds us everywhere? Along the path to school, in your neighbourhood park, in the garden you might be growing at home, in the forest.... Plants are everywhere and it's important to take care of them! Which is awesome, because gardening is so much fun.

Do you like gardening? Would you like to learn how to garden as well? Today, you get to grow your very own sunflower with your classmates! But, first, let's learn a bit more about this amazing plant!



Magnificent Sunflower: who are you?

Its history

The common sunflower originates from the **southern and central United States and from the north-east of Mexico**. Around 1510, Spanish explorers sailed with the seeds all the way to Europe.

Its characteristics

The smallest sunflowers grow to about 60 cm tall and the largest... up to 5 metres or 500 cm!

The sunflower is a flower made of lots of small flowers that together form a spiral shape. Take a good look at the middle of your sunflower when it's fully grown: it's mesmerizing!

Today, we usually harvest sunflowers so we can:



1. Make vegetable oil;
2. Harvest its seeds;
3. Make edible flour;
4. Feed birds;
5. Decorate gardens.

Its superpower

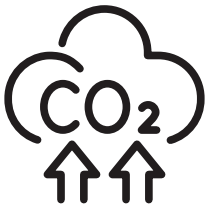
Sunflowers follow the sun! They turn when it moves across the sky to capture its light. The scientific word for this superpower is **heliotropism**.



The benefits of plants

On top of making the environment more beautiful, the plants around us benefit our health and environment in so many ways.

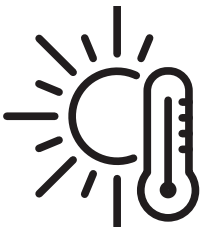
Plants are useful!



Plants absorb carbon dioxide (greenhouse gas) and produce oxygen.



Plants absorb air pollution, including dust



Plants lower ambient temperatures.

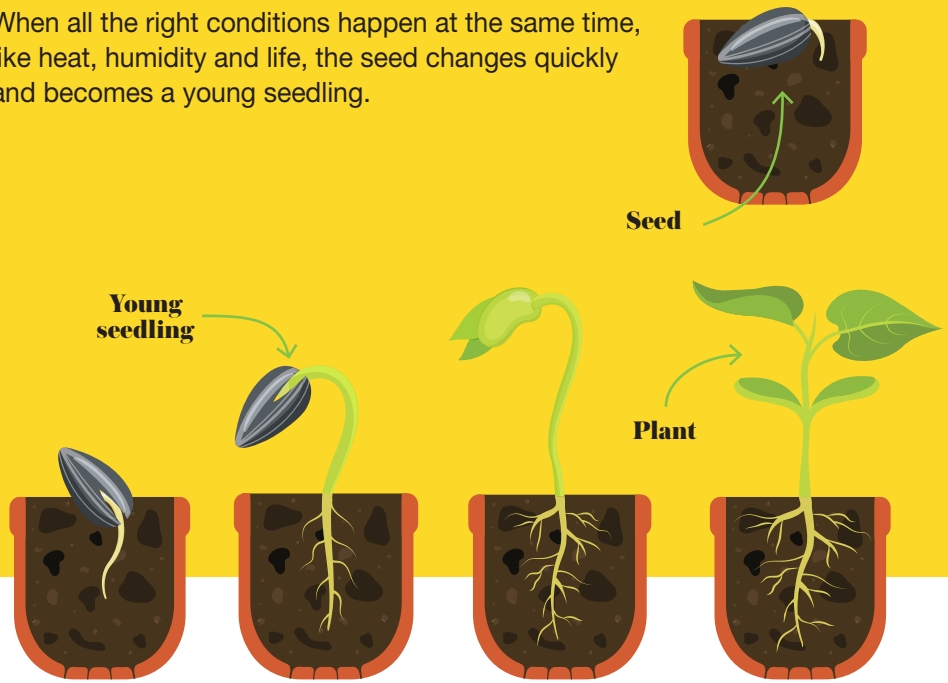


Plants and gardening are also good for the soul!

Sprouting

You'll make a sunflower from just a seed!
The process of growing plants from a seed is called sprouting.

Each seed carries a spark of life that lets the plant renew itself later. The outside of the seed is hard and the inside is alive! When all the right conditions happen at the same time, like heat, humidity and life, the seed changes quickly and becomes a young seedling.



The embryonic plant inside the seed already includes the beginning of a stem, roots and shoots. When heat, water and light produce sprouting, the plant's growth is spectacular because the sprout wants to find the light!

It's thanks to the sun that the stem becomes green and grows, that new leaves develop, and that the plant is born.

Good to know!

Thanks, Mrs. Bee!

Pollination is when pollen transfers from the plant's stamen (the male reproductive organ) to its pistil (the female reproductive organ). It's responsible for the fertilization and production of seeds and fruits. For sunflowers, this work is mainly done by bees.



The flower of the sun

A sunflower symbolizes the sun, and it looks very much like one too! It's also associated with love, luck, and happiness.



Good for your health

Do plants speed up healing after surgery? Sick people who are around plants need less pain medication and recover quicker

Planting Steps



Open the packet and gently pour the soil into the pot.



Wet the soil a little without soaking it.



Level the soil and make 2 fairly large, deep holes; that's where you'll place your seeds.



Place your seeds flat on the bottom of each hole and cover them with soil.



Gently pack the soil with your fingers and water thoroughly with warm water.



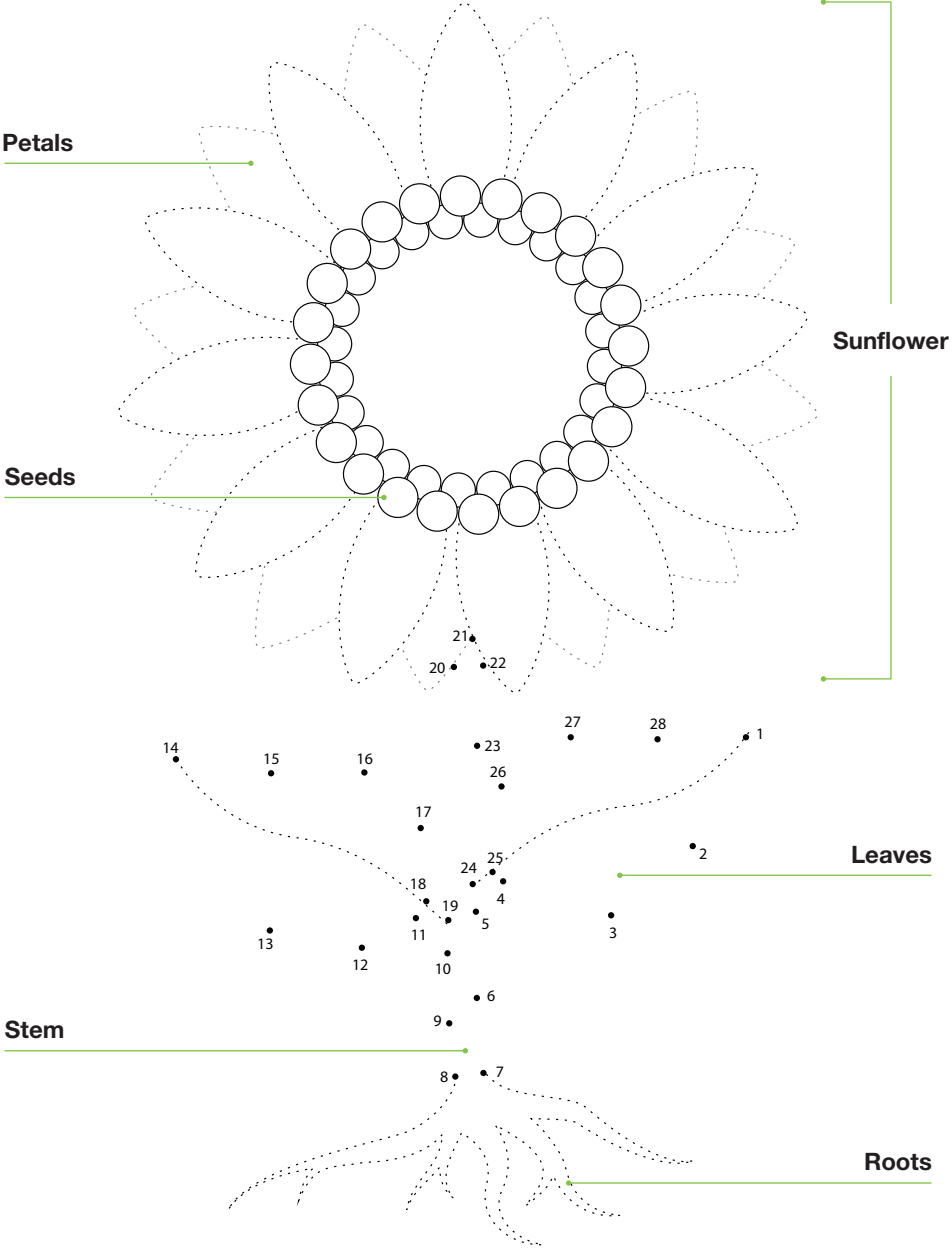
Expose your pot to light and warmth.

Take good care of your sunflower!

1. Check each day if it needs more water. If the soil is dry, water it. If it's moist, wait and check again the next day.
2. Always keep your pot exposed to sunlight, close to a window and warmth. Not too hot though, or your plant will wither quickly.
3. Give the pot a quarter turn every 4 to 5 days so the sunflowers grow nice and straight.
4. When your 2 stems begin to grow, remove the smallest of the two by cutting it at the base to help the other one grow into a strong sunflower!



Draw me a sunflower...



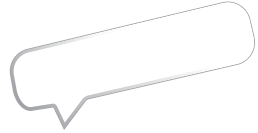
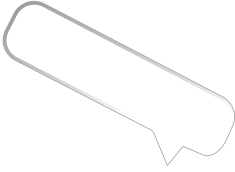
My sunflower

1

Draw a sketch of your plant

2

Write down the parts you see



3

Measure the stem each week

Week 6 : _____ mm

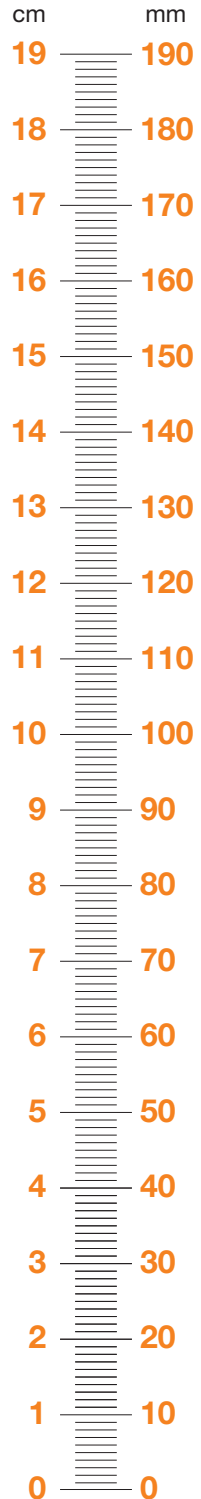
Week 5 : _____ mm

Week 4 : _____ mm

Week 3 : _____ mm

Week 2 : _____ mm

Week 1 : _____ mm



**Good luck and
have fun getting
your hands dirty!**



THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS!

