

# Zucchini Life Cycle 4-5 year olds



Co-Created by: Eleanor Walsh, Teacher, The Nest Nursery School  
Monica Griffin, Dietitian

## Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards

CLL1.3a Listens and responds to conversations and group discussions.

CD-SC1.3c Records observations through drawings or dictations with adult guidance.

CD-SC1.3d Participates in simple experiments and discusses scientific properties.

CD-SC4.3c Explores and identifies physical properties and states of matter of common classroom objects.

## Materials

- Zucchini seeds
- Whole zucchinis
- Magnifying glasses
- Flashlights and examination lights
- Child-safe cutters
- Paper and drawing/writing materials
- Trowels
- Clay/play dough
- Unit blocks, lengths of string, rulers
- Paper towels
- Water
- Plastic bags
- Tape
- Camera
- Outdoor garden space
- Dirt

## Duration

Two to three weeks, or long enough for seeds to sprout and fruits to visibly decay.

## Motivation

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2pb3ti>

Time-lapse video of growth and decay of a flower. Discuss what happened with the plant and how it changed. Discuss the concept of death in relation to plants, as a way of nourishing the earth again through decay.

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## Procedure

1. Have children observe the seeds. Encourage them to feel the seeds together, using magnifying glasses and lights. Provide cutters for opening the squash and examining it.
2. Provide materials for children to draw the seeds and squash. Encourage the children to use clay or play dough to replicate the shape of the squashes and the seeds. Provide unit materials such as unit blocks and rulers for comparing the size of the seeds and fruits. Have them trace the individual seeds and fruits for measurement.
3. Plant the seeds with wet towels and plastic bags, taping them to a sunny window.
4. At the same time tape a large bag with a whole zucchini to the window, sealed well. Do the same with one of the fruits the children cut up.
5. Assess the growth and decay daily, using drawings, clay, and magnifying glasses. Have the children take pictures daily for reference later. Open the decaying bag to smell it or touch the fruit with a chopstick.
6. Once the seeds have sprouted and the whole fruits have become desiccated, plant both in the outdoor garden. Discuss how the whole fruit will nourish the new seeds.

## Conclusion/Assessment

Gather all the children's pictures of the growth and decay process. Have the children look at the pictures and their drawings, remembering as a group the different stages and what the children noticed.

## Extensions and Differentiation

Extensions: Watercolor opportunities with the colors from the documented stages of the growth and decay. Discuss death in the context of other things, like picking plants from outside or through pets that have passed.

Differentiation: Allow children who have trouble sitting and drawing or listening opportunities to paint with colors on a large piece of paper to facilitate large motor movement.