



Pizza Garden Fun

Basil in a Cupcake Container



What is an Herb?

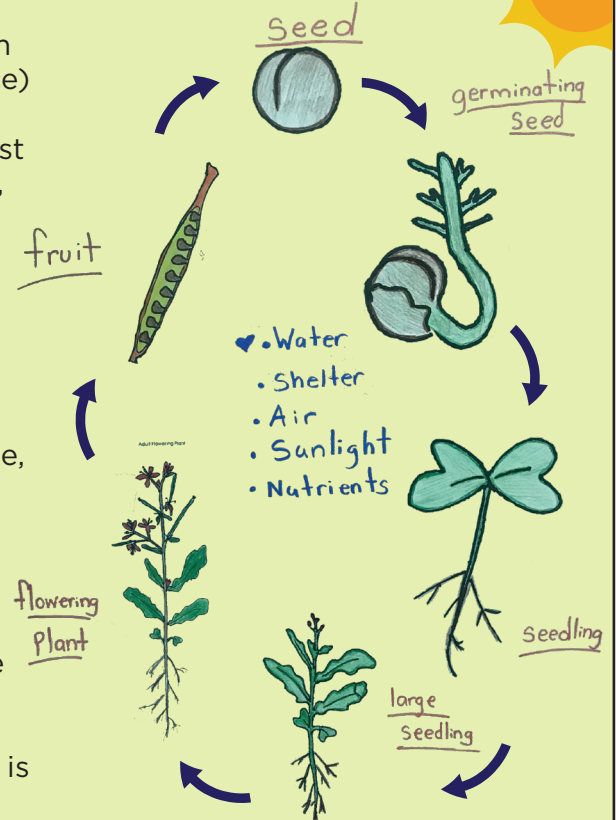
Imagine your favorite food... what made it so yummy? If you have ever watch your relatives cook? You may have seen them add spices to that special dish you love so much. A herb (spice) is a pleasant smelling plant that can be used dried or used in its natural state to add delicious flavor to a meal. The four most common herbs found in kitchens are parsley, basil, bay leaves, and oregano. **GET PERMISSION** from you caregiver to look inside their spice cabinet. Can you find these common herbs? What others did you find?

Ask your caregiver how they use them.

What does a plant need to survive?

A life cycle is the process that a living organism goes through from the beginning of its life until the end. A bean, for example, begins as a seed and eventually becomes an adult plant that produces a food source. In order for a plant to survive, there are 4 basic items that it needs: water, sunlight, air, shelter, and nutrient (food from soil). These items provide the plant with the resources it needs to continue through its life cycle. Even though most plants are grown outside in a field, plants can be grown inside. Basil is an easy plant to start in the house and transplanted outside. These are sometimes called container gardens. Basil is also found on pizza. Did you know that pizza is in the top 10 most favorite foods eaten by all Americans?

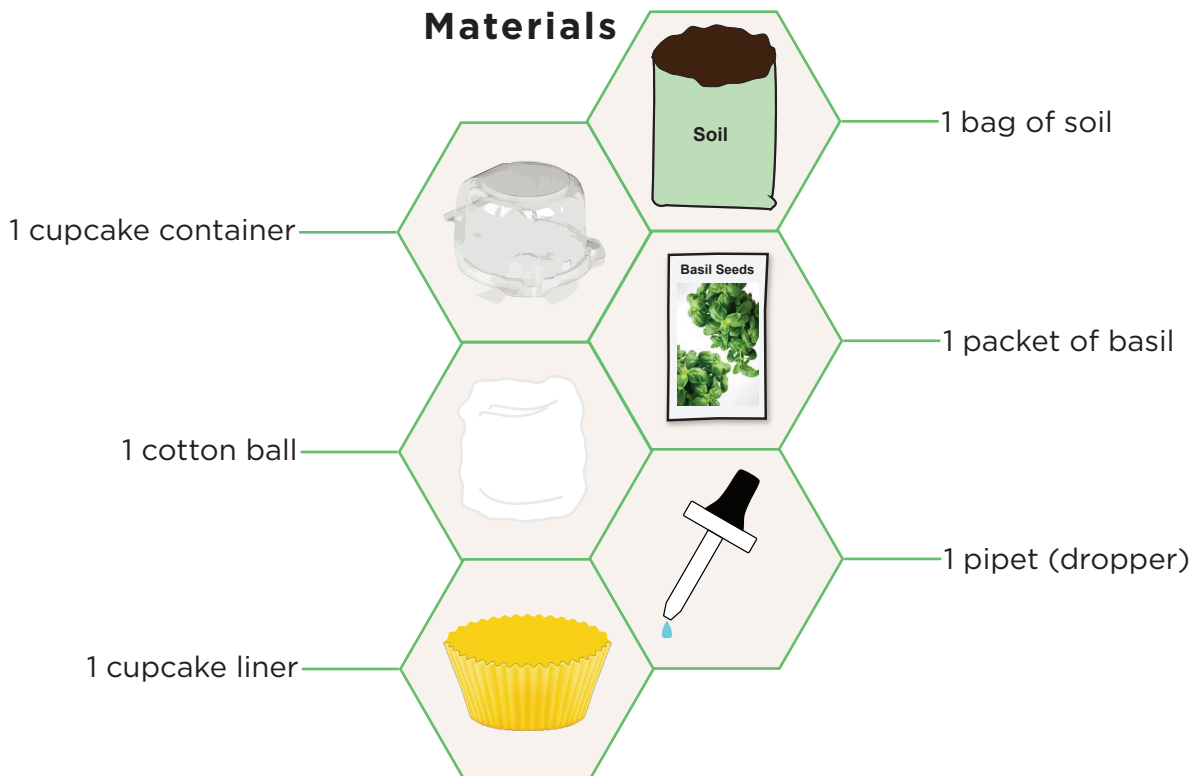
Plant Life Cycle



The Experiment

Pay attention to the changes that occur in the seed itself as well as the resources that it uses to survive. Basil seeds usually germinate and emerge from the soil within 8-14 days. Look for the first set leaves another 8-14 days later. Then, 8-15 days later the basil plants should be about 6 inches tall and ready to plant in a bigger pot. **ASK a caregiver** to help you to plant your basil. Using the steps on the back:

Materials



Directions

Step 1	Place the cupcake liner inside of the cupcake container.
Step 2	In the palm of your hand place 10 basil seeds.
Step 3	Fill the pipet (dropper) with water. Add a few drops of water to the basil seeds in the palm of your hand. What is happening to the seeds?
Step 4	Tear the cotton ball in half. Place the wet seeds on one half of the cotton ball. Use the rest of the water in the pipet to wet the cotton ball. The seeds should attach to the cotton ball.
Step 5	With the seeds facing up, place the cotton ball in the middle of the cupcake container. (cupcake liner should be in the container)
Step 6	Take the bag of soil and pour into the cup cake container making certain that the seeds and cotton ball are covered well.
Step 7	Gently press the soil. Shut the lid on cupcake container.
Step 8	Place the cupcake container in a sunny location either inside or outside, and watch your basil grow.
Step 9	After the seed sprouts, remove or prop open the lid to prevent fungus from growing on the new basil plant.

Dinner Talk

Talk with your family, siblings, friends, etc about this experiment.

- What did you learn about indoor gardening?
- How does the cupcake container assist in watering the plant?
- What would happen if your plant was not placed in a sunny area?
- How can you use the plant when it becomes an adult?

Quick Pizza Recipe



Ingredients

- 4 slices whole-wheat bread or 2 English muffins, halved
- ½ cup low-sodium spaghetti sauce
- ½ cup pineapple tidbits in own juice, drained
- ½ cup lean diced ham
- ¼ cup reduced-fat mozzarella cheese, shredded
- Basil leaves



Extra Enrichment

- Draw the basil once a week to track the progress that it is making.
- Move the basil to a different container. Mason jars, clay pots, or old ceramic cups work well.
- Watch a basil plant grow in 30 days through time-lapse. <http://bit.ly/basillapse>
- Let's Make Pizza With Basil. A recipe is provided for you to make an individual pizza. Use your fresh basil. How does it taste?

Directions - Ask a caregiver to help you!



1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Toast bread or muffin until very lightly browned.
3. Place toasted bread or muffin on a baking sheet.
4. Spread ½ of the spaghetti sauce onto each slice of bread or muffin half.
5. Place ½ of the pineapple tidbits and ½ of the diced ham on top of the spaghetti sauce on each slice of bread or muffin half.
6. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of cheese on top of pineapple and ham on each slice of bread or muffin half.
7. Bake at 350°F for 4-6 minutes or until cheese melts and bread or muffins are thoroughly heated.
8. Top with fresh basil leaves.



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