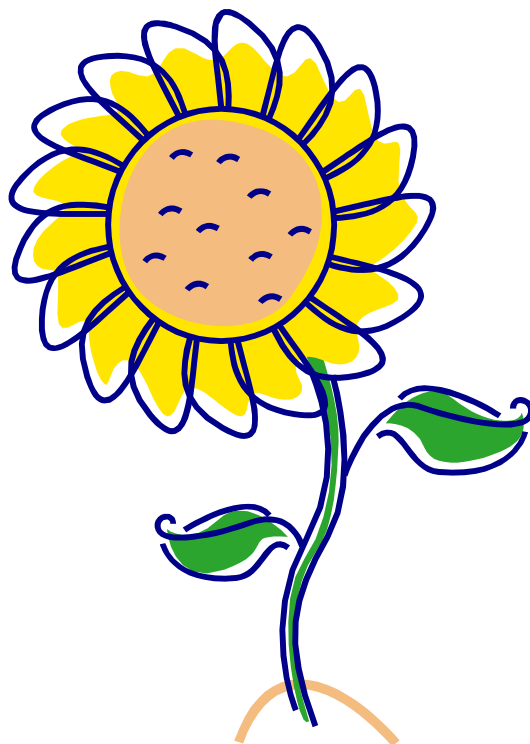


Name _____

Sunny, Summer, Sunflowers



Activity Book

Sunny, Summer, Sunflowers

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Articles with an asterisk (*) are adapted from
Kids Garden, The Anytime, Anyplace Guide to Sowing & Growing Fun
Avery Hart and Paul Mantell

Planting and Care Instructions

Planting

- Sunflowers grow best in locations with full sun; they prefer long, hot summers to flower well.
- Though they're not too fussy, sunflowers thrive in slightly acidic to somewhat alkaline (pH 6.0 to 7.5).

If possible, put seeds in a spot that is sheltered from strong winds, perhaps along a fence or near a building.

Planting Sunflower Seeds

- It's easiest to sow seeds directly into the soil after the danger of spring frost is past. Ideally, the soil temperature has reached 55 to 60 degrees F.
- Plant the large seeds no more than 1 inch deep and 4 to 6 inches apart in well-dug, loose soil after it has thoroughly warmed, from mid-April to late May.
- A light application of fertilizer mixed in at planting time will encourage strong root growth to protect them from blowing over in the wind.
- Experiment with plantings staggered over 5 to 6 weeks to keep enjoying continuous blooms.
- Give plants plenty of room, especially for low-growing varieties that will branch out. Make rows about 30 inches apart. (For very small varieties, plant closer together.)
- When the plants are six inches high, thin them to two feet.
- If you see birds scratching around for the seeds, spread netting over the planted area until seeds germinate.

Care

- Water plants deeply but infrequently to encourage deep rooting.
- Feed plants only sparingly; over fertilization can cause stems to break in the fall.

Tall species and cultivars require support. Bamboo stakes are a good choice for any plant that has a strong, single stem and needs support for a short period of time.

Thank you to the Farmer's Almanac for these instructions: <http://www.almanac.com/plant/sunflowers>

Planting Instructions

Sunflower

Helianthus annuus

Small Seeds

Planting instructions

Germination: 7—14 days at 70—75°F.

How to Grow: Sow seed outdoors after all danger of frost is past. Plant in groups of 3—4 seeds at a depth of ½ deep, 12 inches apart. Thin the groups to one plant per spot when the first true leaves appear.

Prefers: Full sun in well-drained soil.

Remarks: Sunflowers are very easy to grow. They make excellent cut flowers and are useful in back-grounds and borders.

Square Foot Gardening (SFG)

Planting Instructions

Planting instructions above are based on the row or hill method for plant spacing. For square foot gardening, use the following general guidelines for determining how many spaces to plant per square foot.

SFG Conversion Guide

<u>Row Method</u>		<u>Square Foot Method</u>
Thin to 12" apart	=	1 per sq. ft.
Thin to 6" apart	=	4 per sq. ft.
Thin to 4" apart	=	9 per sq. ft.
Thin to 3" apart	=	16 per sq. ft.

Large Seeds

Planting Instructions

Sunflowers are easy to grow and are one plant your kids may enjoy growing with you. They grow very rapidly and will give you and them much enjoyment. They also make excellent bird food for next winter. Sow the seed 2 inches deep in the soil when it has warmed up in mid-spring. Allow 7—14 days for germination when the soil temperature is 65—80°F. Plant the seed 6 inches apart and thin to 18 inches apart. Their height makes them the perfect candidates for the back of the garden. If you want to use them for bird feed, the heads must be removed as soon as the seed is mature and dried. If you leave them in the garden, the birds will feed on them as soon as the seeds heads are mature.

Activity

Here Comes The Sun!

Do you tend to feel cheerful on a sunny day? Plants seem to perk up in the sun, too. In fact, plants absolutely need sunlight to grow and thrive. But finding the best light for your plants will take some detective work!

No matter where you stand, the sun always travels in a path from east (in the morning) to west (in the afternoon).

Wherever light comes from—east, south, or west—is called exposure. Southern exposures are best for most plants, because the sun takes hours to cross the southern sky in the northern hemisphere.

Make a sun map: Take a sheet of white paper and pretend it is your garden, or the room your plants will be in. Draw your garden, house, or furniture. Then get some yellow, orange, and red crayons ready.

In the morning, look around your growing space. Ask yourself, “where is the sun shining?” Go to the paper and fill in yellow stripes where you see the sun shining.

Do the same in the early afternoon (about 1:00 p.m.) with orange stripes, and late afternoon (about 4:00 or 5:00 p.m.) with red stripes. If the sun shines in the same place more than once in a day, put more stripes there, too.

Now you have a map of where the sun shines in our growing space—indoors or out! The place with the brightest yellow-red-orange plaid will be the sunniest place for the plants.



Activity

Water Just The Right Amount

Water! Without it, plants die; with too much of it, they drown. With just enough they grow and flourish! One of your most important jobs as a gardener is making sure your plants get the water they need—the way they need it!

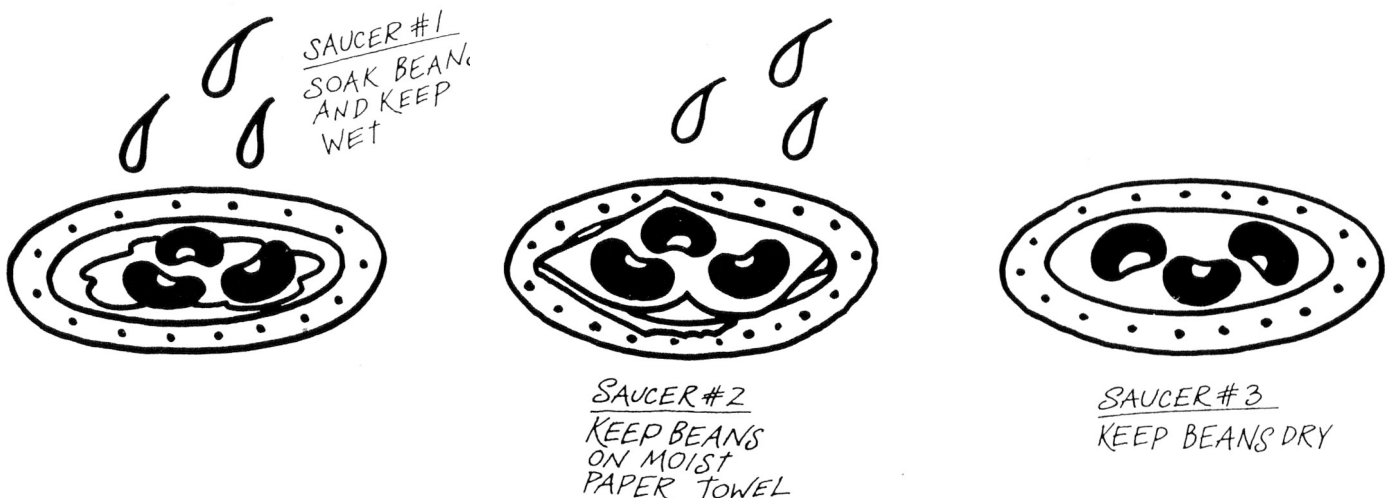
Seeing is Believing:

To see how important the right amount of water is, try this experiment.

What You Will Need:

- ◆ 9 dried beans
 - ◆ 3 saucers
 - ◆ Paper towel or cotton cloth
1. Take nine bean seeds, and put three of them on three different saucers.
 2. Keep the seeds on the first saucer soaked thoroughly.
 3. Place the seeds in the second saucer, on a moist paper towel. Sprinkle them with water every day, keeping them moist.
 4. In the third saucer, leave the seeds dry.
 5. Place all the saucers in a dark place and wait about a week. Make sure the first saucer stays soaked, the second moist, and the third dry.

The results will tell you a lot about how the right amount of water affects the seeds.



Activity

Observation Sheet

What sort of insects might you see? _____

Are these insects good or bad for your sunflowers? _____

Explain how the insects are good or bad: _____

What sort of animals might you see? _____

Will they harm your sunflowers? _____

What kind of animals do you think would eat a sunflower if they had the chance? _____

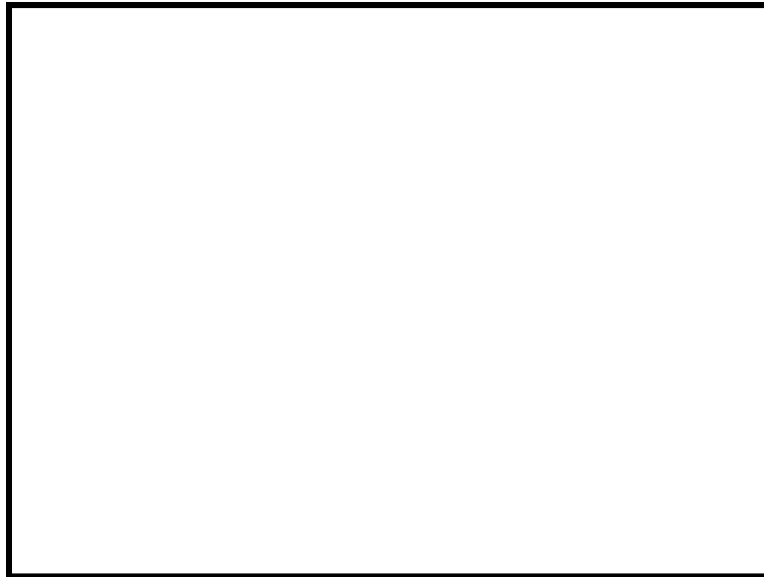
Sunny Summer Sunflowers Journal

Draw or take a picture for each question.

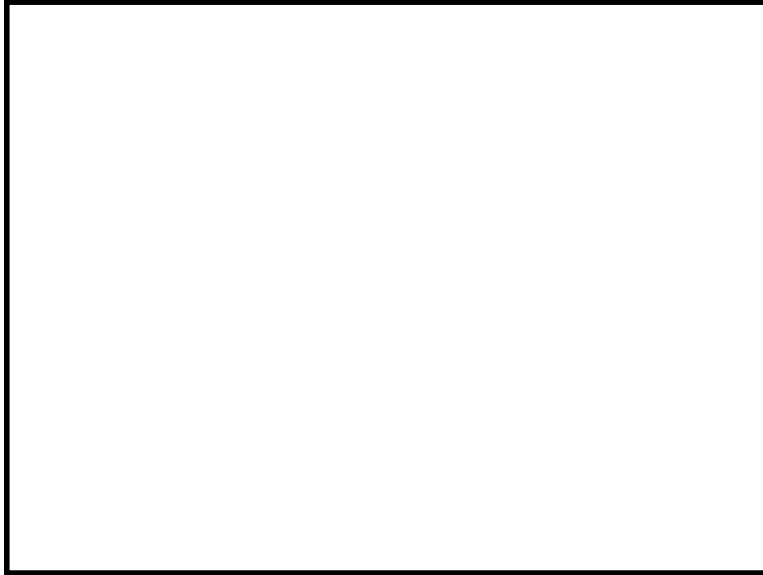
I planted my sunflowers on _____



My sunflowers plant came up on _____



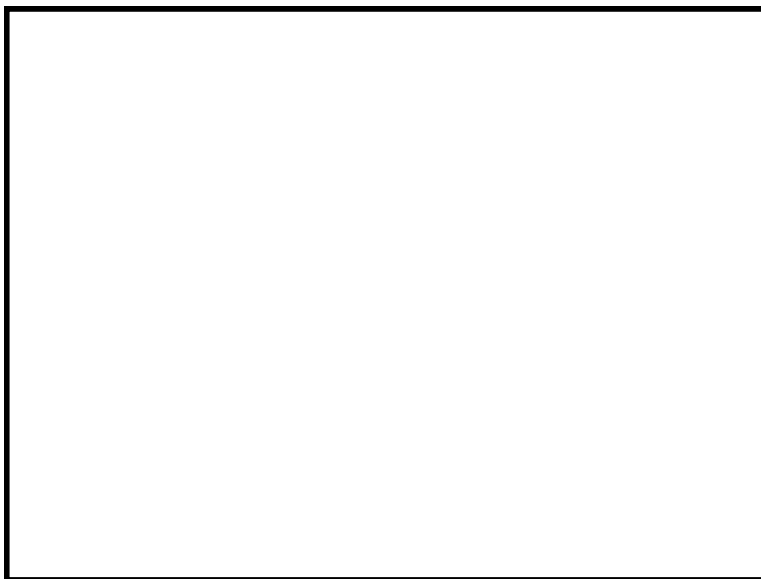
These is my sunflowers 4 weeks after I planted it.



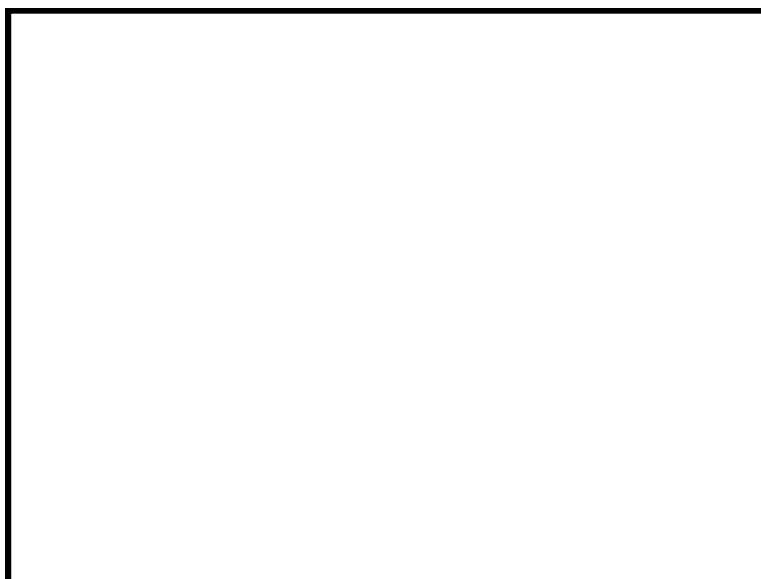
These are my sunflowers 6 weeks after I planted it.



These are my sunflowers 8 weeks after I planted it.



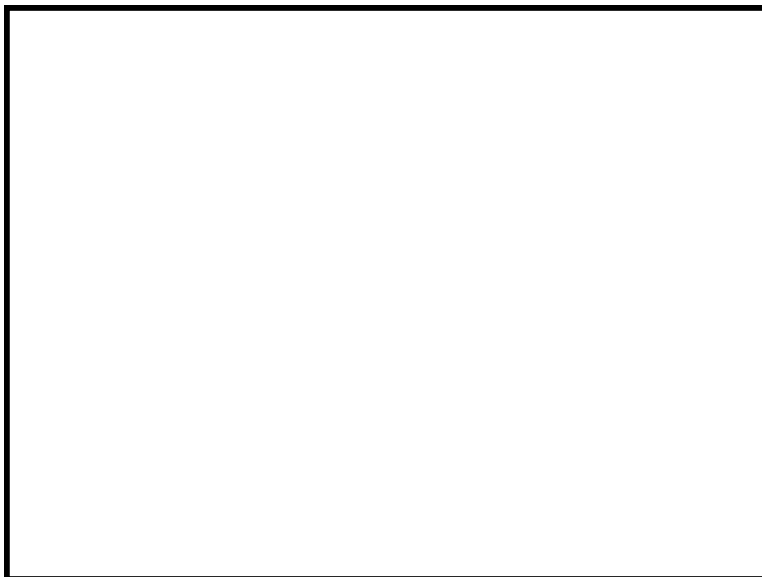
These are my sunflowers 10 weeks after I planted it.

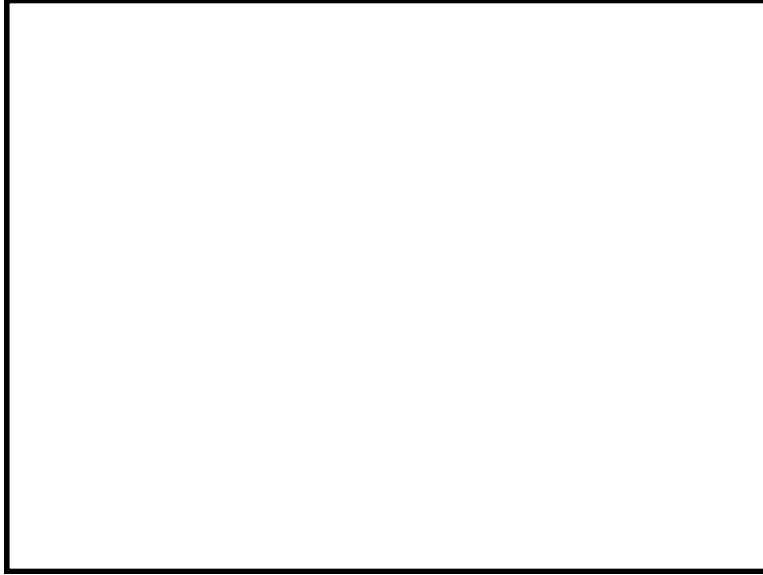


These are my sunflowers 12 weeks after I planted it.










The first flowers appeared on my sunflowers on _____





A Living Circle

and the plant grows. Then, a bud appears,  opening to become a blossom. Soon, a stem sprouts,  reaching for light. Leaves come,  and the plant grows. Some blossoms become fruit;  some become flowers.  Flowers and fruits fall on the ground and rest in the soil... and the cycle goes round and round again!  Seeds fall on the soil, and rest in the soil, and change into seeds.  and rest in the soil, and rest in the soil, and rest in the soil.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Cooke County
301 South Chestnut
Gainesville, TX 76240
(940)668-5412
<http://cooke.agrilife.org>

Adapted From:

Sara Gronski, 4-H Youth Development Agent
University of Wisconsin - Extension



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