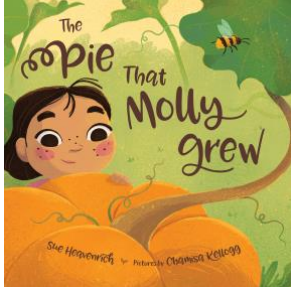


Planting Molly's Pumpkins



Time:
40 minutes

Learn More:

Explore the National Agriculture in the Classroom Curriculum Matrix to find more free and full lesson plans on pumpkins, planting, and all agriculture topics.

View the full lesson, explore related lesson plans, view vocabulary, videos, and additional book titles by using the QR code or visiting agclassroom.org/ny.



Agricultural Literacy Week 2025 celebrates 20 years of reading accurate agriculture books to over *one million students!* We are celebrating this milestone anniversary by reading *The Pie That Molly Grew* by New York author Sue Heavenrich. New York ranks in the top 3 states in the nation for growing pumpkins with over 6,800 acres in production. Join Molly on her seed to table journey as she carefully explores each stage in her pumpkin's lifecycle, all to end with her own celebration and sharing of the pie that grew from the seed she sowed.

- Introduce yourself and your connection to agriculture. Read the book *The Pie That Molly Grew*. (15 minutes)
- After reading the book, transition into the below activity.

Materials

- 1 portion cup per student
- 1 jiffy pellet per portion cup
- 1 pumpkin seed per student
- 1 water pitcher

Activity Procedures

Presentation Preparation

- When you arrive to the classroom and **before you begin your program it is recommended to hydrate your jiffy pellets**. They take some time to absorb the water.
- While hydrating, ask the teacher if they would write the student's names or initials on the cups, or be prepared to write on them after planting.
- Put 1 jiffy pellet into each portion cup. Use the pitcher to add 3 to 4 tablespoons of water into each cup, more as needed. The pellets will begin to saturate with water and grow.
- Consider including this process as conversation in your presentation, explaining that the jiffy pellets are made of a peat growing medium and the nets on the outside are decomposable. This means they will biodegrade in soil or compost, making them a great tool for starting seeds that will be transplanted.

Interest Approach (5 minutes)

1. Give each student a pumpkin seed. Instruct them to observe the seed and describe their seed. "Do you believe something as small as this seed can grow into something as big as a pumpkin?"
2. Ask, "What do you think this seed needs to grow?" (soil, water, warmth), and "How long do you think it will take for this seed to become a ripe pumpkin?" (90-120 days).

Planting Activity & Conclusion (15 minutes)

1. Share that we are going to plant our pumpkin seeds. Hand one cup to each student with the hydrated jiffy pellet.
2. Instruct the students to use their finger to make a room in the top of the jiffy pellet for their seed, and to place the seed in the hole. Cover the seed gently.
3. Ask the students to identify a location in their classroom, or in their homes, that would be a good place for the seed to grow. Remind them we've given the seed a home in the jiffy pellet, water in the cup, and we need to find warmth for the seed.
4. Have the students guess how many days it will take the seed to sprout.
5. At the conclusion ask, "Molly made a pie from her pumpkin, what would you make?"