



Read & STEAM

Potatoes for Pirate Pearl



Lesson Summary

Students will learn about the process of growing potatoes through the book *Potatoes for Pirate Pearl* and planting their own potatoes

Grade Level

K-5

Length of Lesson

45 minutes

Materials

- Seed potatoes- potatoes cut into fourths (each $\frac{1}{4}$ having at least one eye)
- At least 8oz plastic cups (1 cup per student)
- Permanent marker (5 to share among students)
- Potting soil (at least 1 cup per student)
- Thumb tacks
- Trays

Reading Guide

1. Introduce the story using these questions (2 min)

- a. What is a potato?
- b. Who likes to eat potatoes?
- c. Where do you think potatoes grow?
- d. "Today we will learn about how potatoes are grown and why we eat them!"

2. Read *Potatoes for Pirate Pearl*

by Jennifer Concepcion (10 min)

- a. While reading the book, use different voices for each character
- b. Ask students to participate in the story

3. Reflect on the story with these questions (3 min)

- a. Why were the potatoes better for Pearl than hardtack?
- b. Where did the potatoes grow?
- c. Did they use seeds to plant the potatoes?
- d. "Just like in the book, farmers usually use seed potatoes to plant potatoes instead of seeds. The eyes of the potato grow new potatoes!"

Vocabulary

Seed Potato: a potato that is used to grow new potato plants

Potato Eye: a bud on a potato that can sprout and grow into a new potato

Additional Lesson Links

- Matrix Lessons
 - [Potatoes: More Than Fries](#)
 - [Powerful Potato](#)
 - [Vegetables: Tops and Bottoms](#)
- Other resources
 - [Wisconsin Grown + Raised Potatoes Poster](#)

Standards

NALO:

T1.K-2.a
T2.K-2.a
T2.3-5.c
T3.3-5.a
T5.K-2.a
T5.K-2.d

Lesson adapted from activity in *Potatoes for Pirate Pearl*

Developed with funds provided by the 2025 CHS Next Generation Grant

Potato Planting Activity

1. Begin Potato Planting activity (25 min)

- a. Tell students: “Today we are going to plant our own potatoes- just like Pearl and Farmer Fay in the book!”
- b. Distribute a plastic cup to each student, and have them write their name on their cup with a permanent marker.
- c. Have an adult use the tacks to poke several holes in the bottom of each cup.
- d. Fill each cup with one cup of potting soil.
- e. Give each student $\frac{1}{4}$ of a potato.
- f. Instruct students to plant the potato halfway down in the soil and to make sure it is completely covered with soil.
- g. Put the cups on trays and place them somewhere warm (i.e. windowsill).
- h. Water them until water drips out of the bottom of the cup.
- i. Have all students wash their hands.
- j. Students should observe and water their potatoes until they sprout.
- k. Once the plant has sprouted, students can re-plant in a larger container or garden space.

2. Review the activity with these questions (5 min)

- a. How do potatoes keep you healthy?
- b. Who grows the potatoes that we eat?
- c. How will you care for your potato plant?
- d. Final message: “Potatoes give us lots of nutrients like vitamin C! Farmers grow the new plants from seed potatoes to make sure we can keep eating them!”