Parts of a Plant Lesson
3rd grade
Prepared for Live Healthy Nevada County Farm to School Program

Description: This lesson is for 3rd graders and deals with identifying the parts of a plant, and what their functions are.

Standard: 3a
Adaptations in physical structure or behavior may improve an organism's chance for survival. As a basis for understanding this concept: Students know plants and animals have structures that serve different functions in growth, survival and reproduction.

Objectives: Children understand the parts of a plant and their functions. They can provide examples of different foods we eat that are made of different parts of plants.

Materials:
Parts of Plant Cards
Veggie Cards
Fresh picked veggies (optional)

Introductory Questions:
What are your favorite foods? Let's trace how they come from plants!

Example: Pizza. Pizza is made from dough, cheese and tomato sauce. The dough is made made from wheat. Wheat is a grain and the part used is the seed head. It is ground up finely to make flour. Cheese comes from milk. Milk is what cows (and other milking animals like goats or sheep) produce by eating grass. Grass is a plant. Tomato sauce is made from tomatoes and often also onions. Tomatoes are the fruit of a tomato plant. Onions and are the swollen stems of onion plants.

Action:
After going through a few favorite foods and tracing them back to plants with your group, hand out cards of different foods. If you have received actual veggies from your farmer, hand these out as well.

Bring out your plant part cards, and tell the kids you are going to play a guessing game. You can read out the definition of what the plant part is and see if the students can guess it. Or, you can have students read out the parts of the plants one by one.

Place your plant part cards on the ground and have each kid hold up their veggie and the class can decide which part of the plant we eat. Then, place it by the plant part card. Continue this until all the cards (and veggies) have been put with a plant part.
Discussion Questions:
How do you know which part of the plant we eat?
What are some plants that we eat more than one part of?
What are some similarities of veggies and fruits in each group?

What do plants need to grow?
Sun Soil Water and Air.
Yes, but HOW do these things help a plant to grow? Well, plants make their own food using all of these things! It's a big word we call photosynthesis. Can you repeat that? Photosynthesis!

Photosynthesis is the process by which plants make their own food, using carbon dioxide from the air, light from the sun, water, nutrients from the soil, and the green pigment in their leaves. This pigment is called chlorophyll. Have you ever wondered why plants are green? This green color is part of what helps them make their own food!
Can you imagine if we made our own food? If we did it like plants do, then we'd all be green! Another cool part about how plants make food, is that they produce oxygen in this process. What do we breathe? That's right, oxygen. So, the plants aren't only helping us by producing food that we eat, but by also producing oxygen that we breathe.

Key Concepts: Plants have different parts with different functions. The leaves help the plant to make food, the roots get nutrients from the soil to help this process and to anchor the plant to the ground. The stem helps support the plant and transports water and other nutrients throughout the plant. The flowers are the reproductive parts of the plant, which make fruit once they are pollinated. A fruit contains seeds, which are the embryonic plant (ie the unborn plant complete with its lunchbox). Plants make their own food using photosynthesis.

Wrap up: Show the picture of the plant with each part unlabeled. Ask the students to tell you which part is which and what each part does.