Grow a Garden

Lesson Plan for *Gnomes*
Grade 3

Objective
To help students describe and provide for the needs of plants.

Things Needed
- *Gnomes* book
- Empty cardboard milk cartons
- Potting soil
- Marigold seeds (or other flower seeds)
- Watering can
- Window, grow light, or other light source

Before the Activity
Read *Gnomes* out loud to students. Fill the watering can with water.

Activity
Gnomes are known for the way they care for gardens and help plants grow. To review this idea, ask students the following questions:
- What actions does the book say gnomes do for gardens? (Answers: They pull weeds [p. 6]. They prune plants [p. 6]. They move through the ground [p. 27].)
- How do these actions help plants? (Sample Answer: They give plants room to grow.)
- What other things do plants need to grow? (Answers: light and water)

Today, students will unearth their inner gnomes and plant a seed. Give each student one clean, empty milk carton. Students should take turns filling their cartons up with potting soil. There should be about a half-inch of space between the top of the milk carton and the soil.

Explain that you will walk around the classroom with the seeds and watering can. You will give each student a small pinch of seeds to sprinkle in the soil. Students should cover the seeds and tap the soil lightly. Then they should pour a small amount of water over the soil.

Place the planted seeds near a window or under a grow light. Check the cartons each morning to see if any plants have sprouted. If the soil looks dry, have students take turns using the watering can. When the plants are big enough, students can take them home to plant in the ground or in a larger pot.

Evaluation
Could students answer the questions based on the book? Could some of the students get their plants to grow?

Standards
This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 3 (RI 3.1, 3.2).