Name: _____ Date: _____

Growing Lettuce on the Space Station

Circle group

Astronauts on the space station eat food sent up from Earth. Much of it is dried or sealed. So fresh, crunchy food is a treat. That is one reason astronauts grew lettuce in space.

Growing a plant in space is not like gardening at home. There is no rain and no wind. Roots have no ground to grow in. So the astronauts use a small growing box. Seeds sit in little bags of growing material. Special lights shine on the leaves, like a sun in the box.

The astronauts water the plants with care. Water in space does not pour down. It floats and clings in blobs. So they add a little at a time.

After a few weeks, the leaves are big enough to pick. The crew ate some of the lettuce. Some went back to Earth so scientists could study it.

Gardens cheer up the astronauts. They give them something alive to care for. They also show us how people might grow food on long trips.

Questions

1. Where do astronauts get most of their food?

_____

_____

2. What did the astronauts grow?

_____

_____

3. What shines on the plants instead of the Sun?

_____

_____

4. Why is water added a little at a time?

_____

_____

5. What happened to some of the lettuce?

_____

_____

6. Why might growing food in space matter on long trips?

_____

_____

Words to know

astronauts: people who travel and work in space
crunchy: making a snapping sound when you bite it
roots: the parts of a plant that grow down to find water
clings: holds tightly onto something
crew: a group of people who work together

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Growing Lettuce on the Space Station

Triangle group

Astronauts on the space station eat food that is packed and sent up from Earth. Much of it is dried or sealed. So fresh, crunchy food is a special treat. That is one reason astronauts have grown lettuce in space.

Growing a plant in space is not like growing one in a garden. There is no rain and no wind. Plants have no ground to push roots into. So the astronauts use a small growing box. Seeds sit in little bags of growing material. Special lights shine on the leaves, like a sun inside the box.

The astronauts have to water the plants carefully. Water in space does not pour down. It floats and clings in blobs, so it must be added a little at a time.

After a few weeks, the leaves grow big enough to pick. Some of the lettuce was eaten by the crew. Some was sent back to Earth so scientists could study it.

Gardens in space cheer up the astronauts and give them something living to care for. They also teach us how people might grow food on long trips far from home.

Questions

1. Where do astronauts get most of their food?

_____

_____

2. What did the astronauts grow on the space station?

_____

_____

3. What shines on the plants instead of the Sun?

_____

_____

4. Why must water be added a little at a time?

_____

_____

5. What happened to some of the lettuce that was grown?

_____

_____

6. Why might growing food in space matter for long trips?

_____

_____

Words to know

astronauts: people who travel and work in space
crunchy: making a snapping sound when you bite it
roots: the parts of a plant that grow down to find water
clings: holds tightly onto something
crew: a group of people who work together

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Growing Lettuce on the Space Station

Square group

The astronauts living on the space station eat food that is packaged and launched from Earth, and much of it is dried or sealed in pouches. Consequently, fresh, crunchy food is a special treat, which is one reason astronauts have experimented with growing lettuce in space.

Growing a plant in space is nothing like tending a backyard garden. There is no rain and no wind, and the roots have no soil to push into. The astronauts therefore use a small growing box in which seeds rest in little bags of growing material. Special lights shine down on the leaves, acting like a sun inside the box.

The plants must be watered very carefully, because water in space does not pour downward. Instead it floats and clings together in blobs, so it has to be added a little at a time.

After several weeks, the leaves grow large enough to harvest. The crew ate some of the lettuce, and some was sent back to Earth so scientists could study it.

Gardens in space cheer up the astronauts and give them something living to look after. They also teach us how people might grow food on long journeys far from home.

Questions

1. Where do the astronauts get most of their food?

_____

_____

2. What did the astronauts experiment with growing?

_____

_____

3. What shines on the plants in place of the Sun?

_____

_____

4. Why must water be added only a little at a time?

_____

_____

5. What was done with some of the lettuce after it was grown?

_____

_____

6. Why might space gardens be important for long journeys?

_____

_____

Words to know

astronauts: people who travel and work in space
crunchy: making a snapping sound when you bite it
roots: the parts of a plant that grow down to find water
clings: holds tightly onto something
crew: a group of people who work together

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Growing Lettuce on the Space Station

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Growing Lettuce on the Space Station

Easier · 168 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.3

1. It is sent up from Earth.
2. Lettuce.
3. Special lights.
4. Water in space floats and clings in blobs.
5. It went back to Earth for scientists to study.
6. Crews far from home could grow fresh food.

Triangle: Growing Lettuce on the Space Station

This passage · 188 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.4

1. It is packed and sent up from Earth.
2. Lettuce.
3. Special lights.
4. Water in space floats and clings in blobs instead of pouring down.
5. Some was sent back to Earth for scientists to study.
6. Crews far from home could grow fresh food instead of only carrying it.

Square: Growing Lettuce on the Space Station

Harder · 199 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7

1. It is packaged and launched from Earth.
2. Lettuce.
3. Special lights.
4. Water in space floats and clings in blobs instead of pouring down.
5. It was sent back to Earth for scientists to study.
6. Crews far from home could grow fresh food rather than only carrying it.