Name: _____ Date: _____

Growing a Potato From a Potato

Circle group

Most plants grow from seeds. Potatoes are different. A gardener can start a potato plant with another potato. A potato is not a root. It is a swollen underground stem. It stores food for the plant.

Look at a potato. You will see small dents called eyes. Each eye can sprout into a new plant. A gardener can cut a potato into chunks. Each chunk needs one or two eyes. The chunks dry for a day so the cut sides heal over.

The chunks are planted a few inches deep in loose soil. Green shoots push up into the light. As the plant grows, the gardener piles soil around the stems. This keeps the new potatoes covered. Potatoes that see the sun turn green and are not good to eat.

When the leaves turn yellow and die back, the new potatoes are ready. The gardener digs gently and finds new treasure.

Questions

1. What do gardeners use to start a potato plant?

_____

_____

2. What is a potato?

_____

_____

3. What are the eyes on a potato?

_____

_____

4. Why do cut chunks dry for a day?

_____

_____

5. Why does the gardener pile soil around the stems?

_____

_____

6. How does a gardener know the new potatoes are ready?

_____

_____

Words to know

swollen: made bigger and rounder than usual
sprout: to start to grow a new shoot
chunks: thick pieces cut from something
shoots: young stems that are just beginning to grow

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 a Potato From a Potato

Triangle group

Most plants grow from seeds, but potatoes are different. A gardener usually starts a potato plant with another potato. This works because a potato is not a root. It is a swollen underground stem that stores food for the plant.

Look closely at a potato and you will see small dents. These are called eyes. Each eye can sprout, and a sprout can grow into a whole new plant. A gardener can cut a potato into chunks, as long as each chunk has at least one or two eyes. The chunks are left to dry for a day or so, so the cut sides heal over.

The chunks are planted a few inches deep in loose soil. Soon green shoots push up into the light. As the plant grows, the gardener piles soil around the base of the stems. This keeps the new potatoes covered, because potatoes that see the sun turn green and are not good to eat.

After the leaves turn yellow and die back, the new potatoes are ready. The gardener digs gently, and the soil gives up a handful of new treasure.

Questions

1. What do gardeners usually use to start a potato plant?

_____

_____

2. What is a potato, according to the passage?

_____

_____

3. What are the eyes on a potato?

_____

_____

4. Why do gardeners let cut chunks dry for a day?

_____

_____

5. Why does the gardener pile soil around the stems as the plant grows?

_____

_____

6. How can a gardener tell the new potatoes are ready?

_____

_____

Words to know

swollen: made bigger and rounder than usual
sprout: to start to grow a new shoot
chunks: thick pieces cut from something
shoots: young stems that are just beginning to grow

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 a Potato From a Potato

Square group

Most plants begin as seeds, but potatoes are different. A gardener usually starts a potato plant with another potato, and this works because a potato is not a root at all. It is a swollen underground stem that stores food for the plant.

If you look closely at a potato, you will notice small dents known as eyes. Each eye is able to sprout, and the sprout can grow into an entire new plant. A gardener may cut a potato into several chunks, provided that every chunk carries at least one or two eyes. The chunks are then left to dry for a day or so, which allows the cut surfaces to heal over.

Afterward, the chunks are planted a few inches deep in loose soil, and soon green shoots push upward into the light. While the plant grows, the gardener keeps piling soil around the base of the stems. This keeps the developing potatoes covered, because potatoes exposed to the sun turn green and are not good to eat.

Once the leaves have turned yellow and died back, the new potatoes are ready. The gardener digs gently, and the soil gives up a handful of buried treasure.

Questions

1. What does a gardener usually use to start a potato plant?

_____

_____

2. According to the passage, what is a potato?

_____

_____

3. What are the eyes on a potato?

_____

_____

4. Why are the cut chunks left to dry for a day or so?

_____

_____

5. Why does the gardener keep piling soil around the stems?

_____

_____

6. How can a gardener tell that the new potatoes are ready?

_____

_____

Words to know

swollen: made bigger and rounder than usual
sprout: to start to grow a new shoot
chunks: thick pieces cut from something
shoots: young stems that are just beginning to grow

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 a Potato From a Potato

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

Circle: Growing a Potato From a Potato

Easier · 151 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.9

1. Another potato.
2. A swollen underground stem that stores food for the plant.
3. Small dents that can sprout into new plants.
4. So the cut sides heal over.
5. To keep the new potatoes covered, because potatoes in the sun turn green and are not good to eat.
6. The leaves turn yellow and die back.

Triangle: Growing a Potato From a Potato

This passage · 186 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.6

1. Another potato.
2. A swollen underground stem that stores food for the plant.
3. Small dents that can each sprout into a new plant.
4. So the cut sides heal over.
5. To keep the new potatoes covered, because potatoes that see the sun turn green and are not good to eat.
6. The leaves turn yellow and die back.

Square: Growing a Potato From a Potato

Harder · 198 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.2

1. Another potato.
2. A swollen underground stem that stores food for the plant.
3. Small dents that can each sprout into an entire new plant.
4. So the cut surfaces can heal over.
5. To keep the developing potatoes covered, since potatoes exposed to the sun turn green and are not good to eat.
6. The leaves turn yellow and die back.