

## Academic Tutorial: Cress Characters



### Wellbeing Tutorial

**Session Length: 30mins-45mins**

#### Aims:

- This activity will be used as an introduction to plants or as a fun way to involve students in gardening and you possibly lead to them using the college garden.
- As a health and wellbeing activity this is a great activity to begin growing food that can be used in the café/canteen. Plants like cress grow quickly from seed and the process from planting to harvesting can take less than a week.

#### Set Up:

- A week or a few days before the session ask staff and students around your campus to keep and donate their empty yogurt pots for the session. Put the group into pairs and ensure that each pair has at least one yogurt pot each – the total number of pots needed will depend on the class size. Make sure the yogurt pots are washed out before use.
- Ensure that you have an area free to place the cress heads while they grow – classroom windowsills are good places for this and will allow the students to check in on their plant as it grows.

#### Equipment:

- Yogurt Pots
- Pens or other craft items to decorate pots.
- Glue gun or PVA
- Seeds - cress seeds or grass seeds work well as they are fast growing.
- [Cress Characters Instructions Resource](#)
- Cotton wool
- Optional—[Intro](#) and [Exit](#) Forms

## Structure:

### Session Introduction (5mins):

Introduce the session to the group by explaining that they are going to be making Cress Characters. They will be tasked to turn their yogurt pot into a character or famous person which will eventually grow to have cress hair. These cress characters will be kept in the classroom to watch their growth and when they're ready, the cress will be cut off and can be used to eat. In pairs they will each have one yogurt pot to turn into a character or famous person.

Optional - ask students to complete a digital intro form.

### Task 1 (5-10mins):

Set the pairs off with the task of creating their cress character. Using the coloured markers and craft materials they can create a character, famous person or anyone they like for their cress head. However, remind the students that their character will have a lot of hair. Once the students are happy with their design move on to planting the seeds.

### Task 2 (10mins):

Give each pair a Cress Character Instruction Sheet which will give them the following directions:

- Wet a handful of cotton wool balls and squeeze out any excess water, then use them to fill the pot to three-quarters full.
- Sprinkle over your seeds all over the cotton wool, getting in the crevices and on the top.
- Sprinkle some more water over the seed but don't drown them.
- Leave to grow over the next week. If you think the cotton wool is dry, sprinkle more water over it - make sure your cotton wool stays damp.

### Task 3 (10mins):

Place the finished cress character onto the windowsill and water well. Check each day to see if it needs watering. The cotton wool should be kept damp throughout the week.

The cress should take a week to fully grow. Once the cress has grown, the students can cut their cress character's hair and use it in salads or sandwiches. These can be kept in the classroom and re-used to grow more cress after the session! This will hopefully encourage some students to want to grow more vegetables, herbs or flowers. Therefore, this exercise could lead to the potential for a college/community garden on campus.

Optional - students will now be asked to complete a digital exit form for feedback on the session.