



Mission :
Realize a school garden

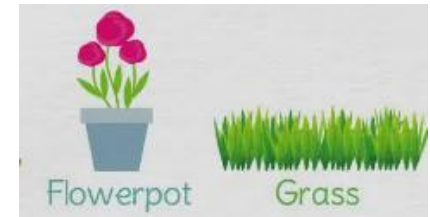


4^{ème} F students

June 2023



Introduction



At the end of May 2023, two 4ème classes started to make a garden in school. Every student brought something to prepare the soil. All students spent 2 hours in the garden in half groups.

Some students took photos for the report. Others put different layers of organic matter, used a broad fork to lighten the soil, used a watering can to water the soil, created a gardening raised-bed, cut grass for the compost, collected organic matter on the school grounds or planted seeds.

The objectives of the sequence were to learn how to create a garden, to prepare a rich soil, to build a raised-bed and to plant. Students also learnt about the benefits of school gardens. At the end of the sequence, students answered a survey about how they enjoyed the project.



how to make compost ?

Composting is a natural technique to transform and reuse organic matter. To make a compost, you need grass, woodchips, vegetable peelings, horse dung, nettles and other organic materials.

Organic matter decomposes naturally thanks to insects and worms who eat organic matter and transform it.



Between wooden pallets or directly on the ground, we added **different layers of organic matter** : the first layer was wood sticks or branches. Then, a group of students cut grass and started to make the second layer. We picked up leaves and foliage to make the third layer.

There are two more layers : one made of horse manure. The final layer is garden soil mixed with compost soil.f

what are eco-schools?

The first **eco-schools** were created in the United Kingdom in **1994**.

Today, there are more than 17,000 eco-schools there !



An eco-school is a school that takes care of the environment, where students participate in activities to reduce waste and their consumption of water and energy.

They study **different topics**: transport, waste, water, litter, school grounds, energy, the importance of biodiversity, a healthy living and solidarity.

the benefits of school gardens



School gardens have many benefits :

- they help reduce students' stress because we go outside, close to nature
- Students can eat healthier food if they know how to grow vegetable and fruits
- Students learn how to create a garden with compost

Eco gardens in schools also

- raise environmental awareness
- encourage physical exercise
- develop hands on skills
- enable scientific study of live organisms



how we prepared the soil

In the school garden we prepared the soil to plant seed. To start, we used a broad fork to lighten the soil. Then, we placed wood sticks to draw the limits of the garden bed and put different layers of organic matter on the ground.

To “feed” the soil we cut grass, collected tree leaves, wood sticks and fruit and vegetable peelings. Other students prepared the location to plant the seeds, gathered horse manure, wood sticks and straw.



To finish, we watered the soil and we added some hay on the top to protect it from the sun and the wind.

4ème F students really gave their energy and their strength to prepare the soil of this garden !

how we made a raised garden bed

We built a raised garden bed with 4 pallets, cardboard and strings.

The objective of the raised bed is to protect the plants from the wind, too much sun or rain.

Before we started to make the raised garden bed it was necessary to choose where to do it.

Then, we took big pieces of wood and made a square with them. While other students cut the grass with their hands or lightened the soil with a broad fork.



After we laid the grass, small pieces of wood, the straw and the horse dung. Then, we watered with a watering can. We put the pots in the raised garden bed and we laid grass on top.

how we planted the seeds and plants



Students brought material and seeds for the garden. We dug holes in the soil with a garden trowel to plant different types of seeds and plants :germinated potatoes, corn, mint, sunflowers, green manure.



In plant pots, we also planted different vegetables and placed them in the middle of a gardening bed. We covered plants pots with hay to protect them. We placed labels in each pot or plant to identify them.

In the end, we watered the layers and seeds in the plant pots.



How we liked the project, what we learnt What we will do next...

After going in the garden, we answered a survey in class to see how we enjoyed the experience. In the 4Fclass, **more than $\frac{3}{4}$ students liked creating a school garden!**

They particularly liked preparing the soil, planting seeds and learning how to do it.

They liked less bringing material and handling organic matter.

Most students have a garden at home.

60 % of pupils would like to continue the experience of school gardening next year.



For example, some students answered they will create a raised bed. Others plan to create a garden one day. And others will prepare the soil and have an eco-garden.

It's time to take some plants home!

During the summer holidays, there will be no one to take care of the garden. So students who can will take a pot with a plant to their house. Other plants (like corn, potatoes, green manure) will enrich the soil during the summer, so next year, other students can plant in a fertile soil.



- Thank you for reading our report -