



Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child's class recently participated in the Living Classroom lesson **Life Cycle of a Tomato #1**. This is the first lesson of a three part lesson series. During this lesson, students studied life cycles as they used heirloom tomatoes to collect and prepare seeds to be planted in late winter/early spring.

This lesson began with a draw-along of the life cycle of a tomato plant from seed to tomato fruit. We then introduced the word heirloom, discussed how heirloom tomatoes differ from other varieties of tomatoes, and discussed why people may choose to save seeds.

The class was divided into two groups that rotated between two activities. During seed extraction, students were divided into small groups and by using their hands and tools, they squeezed a piece of tomato and placed the seeds into a cup taking care to omit the pulp. Students observed the seeds and noticed the seeds had a "jelly-like" substance around it that prevents them from sprouting. Water was added to the cup of seeds, and then cups were covered with plastic wrap. Students were asked to hypothesize what was going to happen. We will not find out until lesson #2!

During the tomato tasting activity, students were able to observe and taste four varieties of tomatoes. Students learned that tomatoes are in fact a fruit because they have seeds. Students were asked to brainstorm what foods they like to eat that are made from tomatoes and many students were surprised that many of their favorite foods had tomatoes, such as pizza! Students then sampled the four varieties of tomatoes and then took a blind poll to see which variety was the class favorite.

Be sure to ask your child which tomato variety was their favorite, and let's hope they will try it again!

Warm regards,

Susan Harder
Program Director
Living Classroom
susanh@living-classroom.org

The mission of the Living Classroom is to inspire children to learn about and value our natural world through garden-based education. Living Classroom staff collaborate with schools and communities to provide engaging, hands-on lessons that stimulate curiosity. Lessons are provided by trained staff, docents and classroom volunteers. We welcome you to become a part of the Living Classroom!

For more information, please visit: www.Living-Classroom.org. "Like" us on [Instagram!](#)