

Sprout House



Spring has arrived, and the world is starting to sprout! Making a Sprout House is a fun way for children to learn about germination while exercising their artistic and engineering skills! Children can practice being little scientists by documenting their Sprout House growth observations throughout the month. Fun for the whole family, this activity is sure to dazzle children and adults alike!



MATERIALS

- Sponges
- Scissors
- Toothpicks
- Sturdy Plate
- Seeds
- Spray Bottle
- Spoon



STEPS

- 1) Assemble your sponges! Get creative with your colors. Your sponges will be the color of your house. A basic Sprout House will need 4 sponges, however use more to create a mansion or fortress!
- 2) Choose one sponge for your base and lie it whole and flat on a table.
- 3) Choose one sponge for your roof and cut it in half down the middle along the long edge.
- 4) Choose one sponge for your front and back doors and cut it into 3 equal pieces along the long edge. (Put one aside.)
- 5) Choose one sponge for your left and right walls and cut it in half along the long edge.
- 6) Grab your toothpicks and begin building! Start by staking two of the "front door" sponge pieces to the long edge of the base, then stake the "back door sponge piece to the opposite edge of the base.
- 7) Place the left and right "walls" against the "doors" and stake them to the base. This should give you the basic structure of your house.
- 8) Finally, take your two "roof" pieces and stake them horizontally to the side "walls," making sure to angle them so that they meet at the top in the shape of an A-roof.
- 9) Now that your house is constructed, its time to "landscape" it! Chia seeds, alfalfa seeds, and wheat berries work best: Place a tbsp of each seed type in a little cup and add just enough water to make a thick mixture. Next, use your spoon to scoop up some seeds and spread them onto the surfaces of the house and base. Finally, pour ¼ cups of water slowly into the plate and watch as the sponge absorbs it. Throughout the week, lightly spray your house with a mist of water to keep it moist.
- 10) Wait, watch, journal! Over the course of the next several days your house of seeds will begin to sprout! Use the journal sheet below to document your scientific observations and note the changes you see each day. What do you notice happening? What do you wonder about the process? What does it remind you of?
 - *Tip! Seeds need warmth and sunlight to germinate. For best results, place your Sprout House in a warm, sunny place like a windowsill, but don't place it outside or else it will become a tasty meal for critters!*

Seed Observation Journal



Name _____

Type of Seeds Planted _____

Date Seeds Planted _____

Draw and record your observations each day.

DAY 1	DAY ____	DAY ____
DAY ____	DAY ____	DAY ____

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDED LEARNING

We love Sprout Houses because they sound and look fun. But you can create whatever you want out of your sponges! So long as you keep the sponges and seeds moist, sprouts will grow. Make a grassy shamrock for St. Patrick's Day, or a sprouted heart for Valentine's Day! Cut each letter of your name out of a sponge and watch your name germinate! Draw a furry animal like a bunny or a sheep on a sponge, cut it out, and watch it grow a pelt! Place a cookie cutter on a sponge, trace its outline with a marker, cut out the shape and germinate it! Or – Just get creative and build to your heart's delight! Use toothpicks or a hot glue gun. Let your imagination go wild!

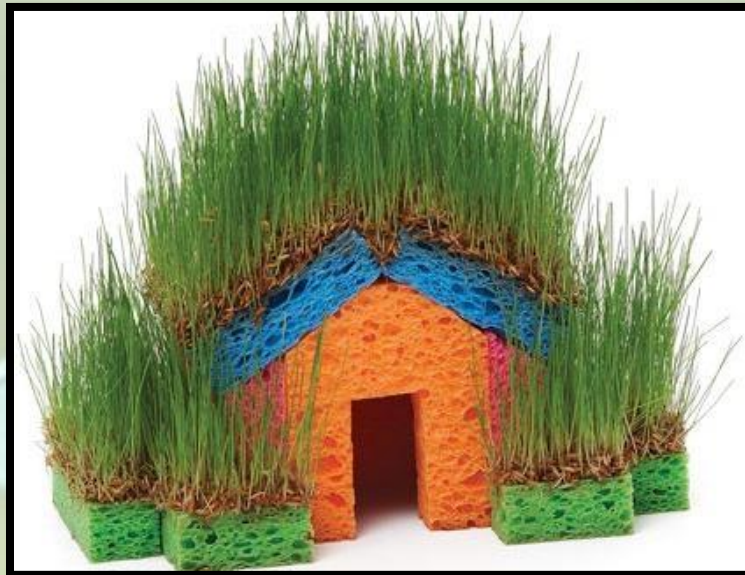
Test out different types of seeds! Which ones grew fastest? Which needed more moisture than the others?

Experiment with different locations! Place one Sprout House in a sunny place, and another in a dark area. What did you observe over the course of the week? Did one grow faster than the other?

Have a friendly competition! Have each family member design a creation and use different types of seeds and locations. Whose creation germinated the fastest and got the bushiest?

Think beyond the seed! What else do we see in nature that goes through a growth cycle? Make a list of all the things you can think of (a butterfly, the seasons, a mushroom, a human, etc.).

[Explore this fun seed sprouts read-aloud video with National Geographic Kids!](#)



**Thanks to the following partners
for use of their photos:**

MyPreKBox.com
Explorer.compassion.com
TheStemLaboratory.com
KidMinds.org
GoodsHomeDesign.com

Arboretum At Home
Nature Adventures
sponsored in part by
**EDISON
INTERNATIONAL.**

THE SPROUT HOUSE ACTIVITY SUPPORTS NGSS!

During this project, children will: Ask Questions and Define Problems; Develop and Use Models; Plan and Carry Out Investigations; Analyze and Interpret Data; and Obtain, and Evaluate, and Communicate Information, all while learning about: Cause and Effect, Energy and Matter, and Stability and Change in Life Science.