



Outdoor Classroom Theme Garden Ideas

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A theme garden is designed around a specific idea. They are a great way to showcase a topic, a famous person, a book, an area of interest or just an idea that you want to bring to life through plants.

Sensory Garden

Plant a garden that stimulates childrens' different senses.

Smell Suggestions:

Scented geraniums, <i>pelargonium</i> s	Pineapple sage	Cinnamon basil
Lavender, <i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	Thyme	Orange mint
Curry plant, <i>Helichrysum italicum</i>	Lemon balm	Rosemary
Chocolate cosmos, <i>Cosmos atrosanguineus</i>	Lemon basil	

Touch Suggestions:

Lamb's ear, *Stachys byzantina*
Maidenhair Fern, *Adiantum pedantum*
Sensitive plant, *Mimosa pudica* - the leaves immediately close up when touched

Sound Suggestions:

Wind chimes	Leaves crackling	Bees buzzing
Wind rustling the plants	Water feature	Birds singing

Sight Suggestions:

Different colored plants and flowers or plants with different shaped leaves.

Taste Suggestions:

Spearmint, *Mentha spicata*
Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*
Wild strawberry, *Fragaria vesca*

Color Wheel for Birds

Include a variety of plants that provide seeds for birds and have different colored flowers. Note: Be sure to leave the "dead heads" on the flower tops so the birds can eat the seeds.

Colorful Flowers & Tasty Seed Suggestions:

Black eyed susans – flowers are brown and black
Purple coneflower – flowers are typically purple but some cultivars are different colors like pink
Dwarf sunflowers – flowers can be a variety of colors but are typically yellow or orange
Gerber daisies – flowers are a wide variety of colors

Storybook Gardens

Select plants that relate to children's literature.

Beatrix Potter's Peter Cottontail Suggestions:

Beets
Radishes
Herbs such as mint, lavender, sage, chamomile, and rosemary

Dr. Seuss' Daisy Head Mazie Suggestions:

Daisies



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Healthy Veggie Garden

Plant vegetables that help children stay healthy.

Healthy Veggie Suggestions:

Asparagus	Cauliflower	Spinach
Brussels Sprouts	Lima Beans	Sweet Potato
Carrots	Peas	Tomatoes

Pioneer Garden

Plant heirloom plants that were first introduced from European settlers.

Plant Suggestions:

Scarlet Runner Bean
Cosmos
Love-Lies-Bleeding
Giant Flowering Tobacco
Pumpkin

African Garden

Plants that were originally grown in Africa before being brought to North America.

Plant Suggestions:

Cucumber	Black-eye Peas	Collards
Okra	Watermelon	Sesame
Peanuts	Geraniums	Sorghum

North American Indian Garden

Plants that were grown in the Americas by the native Indians before Columbus's discovery of the "New World" in 1492.

Suggestions:

Beans	Gourds	Squash
Corn	Pumpkins	Sweet Grass (for baskets)

Patriotic Garden

Celebrate the United States and the Fourth of July in your garden.

Let red, white, and blue flowers abound. Include a sweet alyssum border, geraniums, lobelia, cosmos, begonias, and impatiens. For the finishing touch, add American flags to the mix.

Cottage Garden

Feature "old fashioned" plants, such as those mentioned in Mother Goose poems (Silver Bells and Cockle Shells).

Daisy 'Miss Muffet'
Speedwell 'Sunny Border Blue'
Coralbells 'Palace Purple'
Silver Lace Vine
Delphinium