**Seeds are Surprising! Betty Darleen Horton**

K – 1 **dhortonky@gmail.com**

NGSS: Structure, Function, and Information Processing

Crosscutting Concepts: The shape and stability of structures of natural and designed objects are related to their functions. 1-LS1-1

Background: Younger students frequently do not identify the parts of plants they eat. As a foundation for understanding that seeds sprout and produce new plants, they need opportunities to discover how seeds are an important part of both human and animal diets.

Pre assessment: Can Students recognize seeds as plant parts? What are some common edible seeds in the garden?

Materials: seed corn, pop corn, beans (groceries carry bags with a variety of beans in one bag)

* Begin the activity by having students sit in a circle in the garden area.
* Give each student a few of the “seeds” and ask them to tell what kind of plants they

came from.

* Continue the discussion by asking if they have eaten corn on the cob or baked beans or green beans? Ask if they have ever eaten popcorn. Most students will say they have eaten these foods.
* Next, ask if they know where those seeds come from in the garden. Most will have no idea.
* At this point, break the group into at least two groups (each group should have an adult leader).
* Take students around the garden to explore the plants and to discover seeds. If corn is growing and ears are on the stalk, pull the shucks down and let students see the kernels. If corn is not ready to pick, just bring an ear from the store or even a dried ear from a place that sells animal food.
* Take young students to see beans growing on the plant as well. Let a student pick a bean and then pass it around. Show the students how to open the bean pod to see the seeds. In early spring, peas work well also.
* Explain to students that plants grow from seeds. Ask how many have ever eaten nuts like almonds or walnuts? Explain that these are seeds as well – they are tree seeds.
* Ask if they know of any animals who eat seeds? (squirrels, mice, birds) Seeds are an important part of our diet.
* If possible, let students clean their hands with sanitizer or wash them, then let them enjoy a favorite seed – popcorn!

Post assessment: In what way are seeds important to plants and to you? (they grow into plants and we eat them for food)

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