

READY, SET, GROW!

Orientation Information

A program of 4H and Fairfax Master Gardeners

For

4th grade classrooms and other groups
of 4th grade students in Fairfax County

Ready Set Grow!



Brought to you by Master Gardeners
and Fairfax County 4-H

***Ready, Set, Grow!* Leadership Team 2023**

FCMGA co-chairs

Andrea Bowles

703-505-5417

ambowles@me.com

Beth Janik

703-690-7156

bidin@yahoo.com

Maryellen Leister

703-307-0193

MEleister@aol.com

DESCRIPTION OF THE *READY, SET, GROW!* PROGRAM

The *Ready, Set, Grow!* Project (RSG) is an interactive approach to reinforce what 4th grade students have learned about plants and horticulture basics. Power point slides, display boards and seed and flower dissections are employed as well as planting and craft projects. Through this 4-H school enrichment program, students learn about the importance of plants to people and the environment.

Participation in RSG is open to all 4th grade classrooms and other groups of 4th grade students in after school programs in Fairfax County. Our audience is a diverse group of students located throughout the county. In some cases, Master Gardeners will be introducing plant anatomy topics for the first time. In other classes, the activities will serve as a hands- on reinforcement of material already learned.

PRESENTATIONS

A two-hour presentation is conducted in a classroom environment by a team of two Master Gardeners and interns during the months of March through May. Volunteers who have previously participated in the RSG program are teamed up with new volunteers to provide “hands on” mentoring and training. You and your partner set your own schedule for the presentations that you will conduct based on your individual availability coupled with the classes that have been requested by various teachers.

Supplies are provided by VCE and FCMGA for use in the classroom for the following:

- Build a plant activity
- Planting exercises
- Living seed necklace (an activity left with the teachers for later)

PRESENTATION HINTS:

Be sure to wear your FCMGA Master Gardener Badge

Bring a government issued ID (such as your driver's license)

Assume presentation-ready technology in the classrooms (smart boards, laptops, etc.)

Have fun!

VOLUNTEERS

FCMGA members annually teach *Ready, Set, Grow!* classes reaching thousands of students.

This project offers unique opportunities to work with all types of students. Class participation is dependent on the number of volunteers available to fill the requests received. We may have to turn away classes if we cannot meet the demand.

The *Ready, Set, Grow!* Audience

Our audience is a diverse group of 4th grade students throughout Fairfax County. The students will range in age from 8 to 11 years old. Some classes will be identified as being AAP (advanced academic programs) and several classes have students with various special needs. Classes with children with learning disabilities or language barriers may have classroom aides present as well as a teacher.

One thing all of the students have in common with one another is that they are excited to have the presentation in their classroom and are eager to learn.

The following chart shows the characteristics of children of this age.

Characteristics of 9 – 11 Year Olds

	Characteristics	Implications for Programming	More Implications For Programming
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steady increases in large muscle development, strength, balance and coordination Small muscle coordination improving Gender differences in maturation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan opportunities to move bodies Vary activities to accommodate differences Avoid boy/girl competition 	
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Want to plan their own free time without adult help Loyalty to group or club May prefer same sex groups Use reasoning skills to solve problems and negotiate with peers Concerned with fairness and rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give them freedom within structured limits Plan time to spend with friends Assist groups to form for activities Encourage them to negotiate rules prior to an activity Reinforce positive communication and negotiation skills 	
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admire and imitate older kids Want to act grown up Beginning to question parental authority Look to adults for guidance and approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give correction quietly and one-to-one Help them identify successes Never play favorites Give specific positive feedback 	
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased attention span but have many interests that change rapidly Starting to think logically and symbolically/still prefer concrete See ideas in absolutes Like collecting and hobbies Want to learn adult skills and make useful products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage belief and value exploration Encourage goal setting Provide opportunities to learn “real-life” skills Help youth form groups to explore similar hobbies and collections 	



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. I am interested in the RSG program, but I worry about the public speaking skills required.

First, you are not alone. Everyone is paired up into a team of two. Partners are encouraged to focus on their individual strengths and comfort levels. Remember that you are speaking to 9 and 10 year olds. The RSG presentation is interactive. The students will be bored if the speaker just talks for two hours. The emphasis is on learning by doing.

2. What resources are available to the RSG volunteers?

There are many resources available to educate and support the teams.

- The orientation and training packets are a CONSTANT reference.
- An instruction guide on how to sign up for classes will be available.
- PowerPoint slides and handout materials are posted on the RSG website page.
- The RSG leadership team is available to assist you.

3. How many RSG orientation and training meetings do I have to attend?

Multiple sessions are provided for each of the Orientation and Training meetings to be held at the Extension office in the Pennino building. A Sign-up Genius notice will be sent to each volunteer. New volunteers should attend both Orientation and Training meetings.

4. How is my volunteer time reported?

Volunteers receive 4 hours of service activity for each presentation. Meetings and presentation time are tracked and reported by the RSG chair. ALL ADDITIONAL TIME INCLUDING PLANNING MEETINGS, MATERIAL PREP AND TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE RSG PRESENTATION IS SELF REPORTED BY YOU.

- Orientation is 1.5 hours
- Training is 1.5-3.0 hours
- Online signup for classes is 0.5-1.0 hours

FCMGA Interns are asked to complete at least two classroom presentations. Certified Master Gardeners will complete 2-4 classroom presentations. Please feel free to sign up for more than this minimum standard!

CORE INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN PRESENTATIONS

Your classroom presentation will either introduce or reinforce materials that the class has already studied. The topics below represent the CORE information that every presentation should contain:

- Information about 4H
- Photosynthesis
- Plant structure
- Reproduction processes and structures. (POLLINATION/TYPES OF POLLINATORS)
- Germination and dormancy
- Life cycle of a plant
- Build a plant
- Planting exercise

The Fairfax County school science team leaders have asked us to cover native and invasive plant information as well.

Information about each topic is provided in the RSG online training guide. The Master Gardener handbook will also be an additional source of information. We suggest using materials with an .edu suffix for reference purposes.

CREATE AN OUTLINE/AGENDA TO ORGANIZE AND FORMALIZE A LESSON PLAN

It is recommended that your team write an outline that lists the topics that your presentation will cover, and the estimated time allocated to each topic. Note the start and end time for each section of your lesson. Note which team member will present each section. This lesson plan is your reference. This will help you keep focused and will ensure that you cover all key concepts.

WELCOME TO THE *READY, SET, GROW!* TEAM!!!