

**Project Contacts:**

Mackenzie Femreite  
Nutrition Advisor  
Extension Nutrition Program  
University of Idaho  
208.799.3096

Lydia Clayton  
Extension Educator  
Horticulture and Small Farms  
University of Idaho  
208.799.3096



Orchard's 4<sup>th</sup> graders learning 'How Things Grow'.

***Narrative Inquiry***

Narrative inquiry is the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through storytelling.

Field notes, interviews, journals, letters, autobiographies, and orally told stories are all methods of narrative inquiry.

-Writing at Colorado State University  
<http://writing.colostate.edu>

# Orchard's Elementary Pumpkin Project



Orchard's 4<sup>th</sup> graders with their new pumpkin project water bottles and their newly planted pumpkin patch.

## 'How Things Grow' Classroom Learning

To introduce the concepts involved in growing plants from seeds to harvest, we use the University of Idaho Extension Nutrition Program's 'How Things Grow' curriculum. This curriculum increases student's knowledge on plant related topics from identifying the requirements of plants for healthy growth to the six different edible parts of a plant. Prior to the lesson, the student's current knowledge of the information contained in the 'How Things Grow' curriculum was measured via pre-test. This information will be compared to the student's knowledge post project by the same test.

## Narrative Inquiry

Each student received a Science/Health notebook to write their focus questions, make predictions, chart the growth of their pumpkin plant, record their conclusions at the end of each lesson, and make daily observations. The use of these notebooks helped encourage participatory action learning by allowing the students to document the experience in their own words.



Pumpkin starts growing in student made newspaper pots.



Orchard's 4<sup>th</sup> graders planting pumpkins at Modie Park Community Garden, Lewiston, Idaho.



Students journaling about their pumpkin planting adventures.



Mackenzie and Lydia after pumpkin planting!

## Newspaper Pots Classroom Activity

The second classroom activity involved a fun hands-on activity of making pots out of recycled newspapers. These pots were planted with pumpkin seeds and left with the students in their classrooms to observe and record the growth process. Students used their science journals to take daily observations on the emergence and subsequent growth of the pumpkin plants. Their favorite part was coming up with creative names for their pumpkins.

## Modie Park Fieldtrip

We had a successful fieldtrip to Modie Park on May 28, 2010 and the pumpkin patch was planted despite the threat of rain showers. The students learned about drip irrigation, using mulch to conserve water, how to properly transplant vegetables, and enjoyed a healthy snack. The students are invited to attend three summer workdays, one each month that school is out, to check their pumpkins, weed the patch, and water. Assuming all goes well and there are pumpkins to harvest, the students will return to the patch as 5<sup>th</sup> graders to collect pumpkins for donation to the annual 'Save the Pumpkin' event.

## 'Save the Pumpkin' Service-Learning Activity

Community Action Partnership of Lewiston started the 'Save the Pumpkin' annual event in 2008. The event involves a whole day of community involvement in making pumpkin pies from scratch. Pies are donated to local food banks, meal-on-wheels programs, and senior meal sites. For 2010, Lewis-Clark State College Latina Sorority will take over management, they have partnered with Orchard's 4<sup>th</sup> graders to grow pumpkins for donation to the event.

## Multi-generational Interactions

In November 2010, the Orchard's new 5<sup>th</sup> graders will harvest and donate their pumpkins and they will have the opportunity to be involved in the making of pies from scratch for donation. The final step in this project will involve preparing a presentation on the entire project. This presentation and student-made pumpkin pies will be shared with local elders at the Orchard's Senior Meal Site.