

Key Steps for a Successful Session:

- **Come Prepared** - Review materials and gather necessary equipment, including printing worksheets.
- **Set the Tone** - Share about yourself to create a welcoming atmosphere for vulnerability.
- **Prioritise Safeguarding** - Follow your school's safeguarding policy and outline it for the group to set expectations.
- **Engage in Gardening** - Use gardening as a fun, practical resource to encourage open dialogue on deeper topics.
- **Manage Time** - Keep track of time to ensure you give space and time to explore the core theme of the session.
- **Utilise the Border** - Regularly engage with your school's border, allowing children and young people to enjoy and own the space.

Learning Objectives

- To learn about what mulch is and why we put it on our plants
- To get stuck in with mulching the border
- To think about love and how we give and receive love
- To identify people who love us
- To begin to understand that being loved helps us to grow and bloom

You will need:

Blankets
Speaker for music
Cosy items
Bag/Compost bin
Watering cans/Hose
Mulch
Gloves
Trowels
Printed picture cards
Pens
Paper

OPENER

Kick start the session with a game of musical blankets. This game works the same as musical chairs but swaps out chairs for blankets. Gather the children in a circle and lay out enough blankets for each child. When the music plays they need to march around the circle. When the music stops they must wrap themselves in a blanket as fast as they can. Each time you do it remove a blanket and anyone without a blanket is out. Keep this going until you get a winner.

OR

Gather lots of cosy items and explore them together. Think about how they feel on your skin. Do they make you feel warm and toasty? Are they soft/velvety/fluffy/thick? Talk about how being cosy is a lovely comforting feeling.

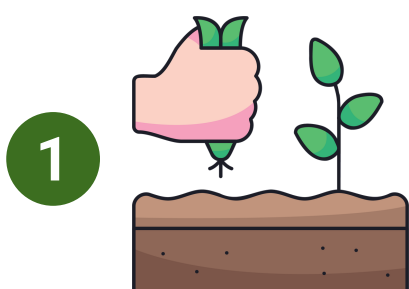


GARDENING GUIDE

Our border likes to be snuggled in a cosy blanket too. That blanket is called mulch. Mulch covers our border just like a blanket and it does so many amazing things to help your plants grow and bloom. We are putting a special mulch blanket on our border to:

- be a nice refreshing flannel in the spring that helps hold onto water
- be a nice cosy blanket to keep our plants protected and warm in the winter
- feed our plants and give them a boost of goodness, like a vitamin does
- keeps the weeds at bay and make it harder for weeds to grow back

Help the children to prepare the border for mulching and then cover it in a blanket of mulch.



Check the border for weeds and pull any out that are in the soil. Put the weeds to the side to add to a compost bin.



Make sure the soil is moist by giving it a good water.



Get mulching! We recommend some good quality compost* which is a great biodegradable mulch to cover your border with it. If you have made your own compost in other sessions this might be a great time to add that to your mulch too! (If the layers have broken down and started to degrade its ready to use). Cover the soil with a thick layer of mulch approximately 2-3 inches thick. Don't pat the mulch down just let it sit on the soil. Make sure you put it all round your plants but leave the stems and leaves uncovered by mulch, so the plants are surrounded by it, but not covered with mulch themselves.

*You can buy this through our website www.gardenonaroll.com/collections/gardening-products or at any local garden centre.

GET STUCK IN

Help the children to do the above activities and talk about the following.

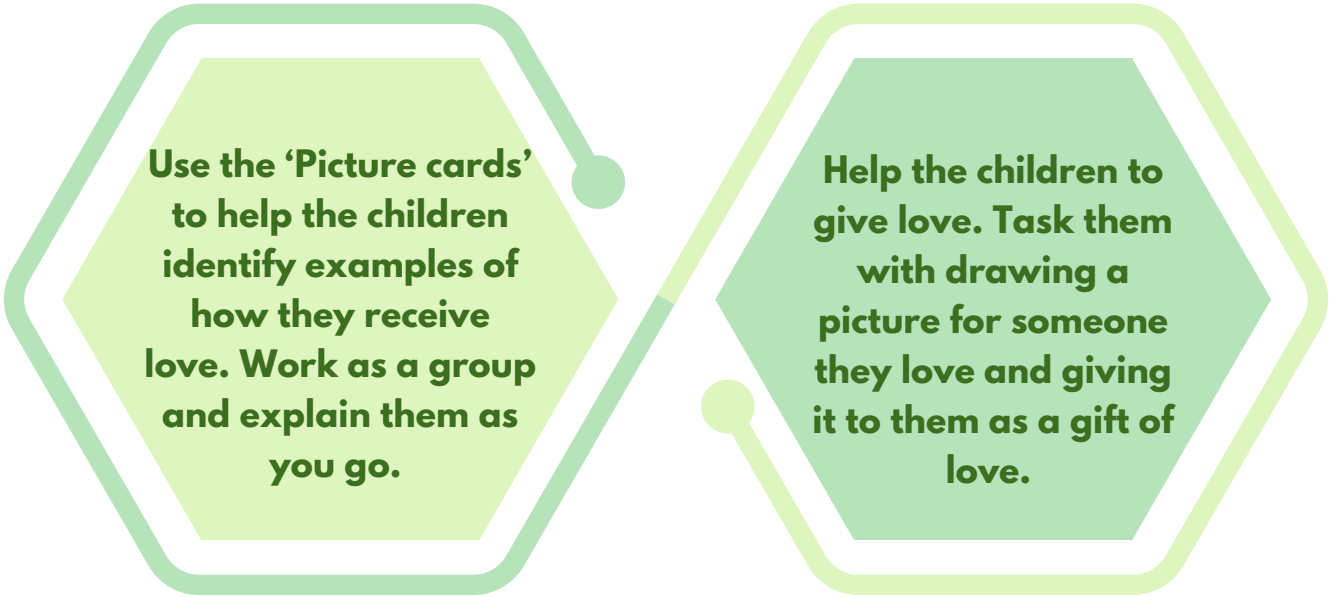
- How do you like to get cosy? - ie. snuggle under a blanket, wear cosy socks, be in a duvet cocoon, make a pillow fort etc.
- Is feeling cosy and snuggly a nice feeling? Does it make you feel comforted, safe, happy and loved?

Being cosy makes us feel lovely. It's a warm feeling and we feel safe and secure. That feeling we get when we are cosy in a blanket, is just like how it feels to be loved. When we feel loved we feel like we are being cuddled in a cosy blanket. Being loved helps us to grow and to bloom just like mulch helps our plants to grow and bloom. We are giving our border a cosy blanket to help it to grow big and strong. When we feel loved it helps us to grow big and strong too.

- Can you name some people who love you?

REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Think about love together and help the children to begin to recognise the ways we can receive love and give it too.



Use the 'Picture cards' to help the children identify examples of how they receive love. Work as a group and explain them as you go.

Help the children to give love. Task them with drawing a picture for someone they love and giving it to them as a gift of love.

CLOSE

Being loved feels like being covered in a cosy blanket and it makes us feel so comforted. When we feel loved we are able to grow big and strong because it makes us feel safe and feel confident. We covered our border in a mulch blanket to help it grow big and strong too. Who could you cuddle in a blanket of love today?

Top Tip: You could let each person take home a flower or leaf from the border to give to a loved one.