Crop Plan Lesson

Grade: 9th grade

Season: Late Winter/Spring

Larger IGS Unit: Seeds

Essential/Topical Questions:
- How do seeds grow?
- Why is it important to know where our seeds come from?
- What do seeds need?
- How can we make change through our food system

Materials:
- Seed packets. Approx. 30 different crops.
- Index cards
- Crop plan template (helpful to have on Google Docs, so students can work on it, and see it on the smartboard during class)

Introduction:
Review the work we've done together in the garden: saving seeds, seed experiments, classification in the garden.
Explain that we are now approaching spring, and it is time to start thinking about what we are going to plant, and when. This is a complicated task, but together we can create a crop plan that will guide our work together in the garden throughout the rest of the year (and into next year!)
Introduce the seeds – where they come from, why we chose them.
Ask students why it is important to know where their seeds come from? Review GMO lesson, and the effects of genetically modified seeds.
Ask students what the definition of "heirloom" is.

Lesson Plan:
Hand out seed packets, or ask students to come forward and choose 1-3 seed packets (depending on how many students).
Ask students what kind of information is on the seed packet. Make a list on the board.
- Type of crop/variety of crop
- Direct sow or start indoors
- Days to germination
- Days to maturity
- Spacing
- Depth
- Temperature requirements
- Sun requirements
- Water requirements
- Amount of seeds

Hand out index cards. Students fill out the information they can find on their index card.

Once all the seed packet information has been documented, ask students to begin to categorize the seeds.

- --- Challenge the students to *silently* divide their seeds into two groups: direct sown and start indoors
- --- Challenge students to *silently* organize their seeds according to family classification
- --- Challenge students to *silently* organize their seeds from the earliest planting date to the latest planting date

Come back together as a class and go over the organized seed packets. Make suggestions when needed, if seed packets should be moved to a different date.

Wrap--Up/Assessment:
Students fill out the Garden Crop Plan, according to how they categorized the seeds. This will be the guide for the garden.

Extensions:
Start seeds in greenhouse