CO-CREATE WIGWAMS: HOW TO

1

What is a Wigwam?

Wigwams are simple pyramidal structures that provide vertical space for farming and create ideal environments for producing compost.

*Examples of two wigwams for size and scale.

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Why do Wigwams matter for the climate and the environment?

a. They maximize vertical space for greenery in limited areas (they are tall).
b. They provide a sustainable solution for disposing of organic waste and produce a useful compost.
c. Compost from the Wigwam can then be used for the tree nursery, micro-forest, or other Earth related activities.
d. Wigwams enhance biodiversity and ecosystem health by introducing new or more plants and important insects.

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How are Wigwams connected to the broader climate action teacher champion toolkit?

- Wigwams provide an opportunity for students to see innovative and alternative methods of growing plants and crops, especially in small places. Wigwams are also multi-purpose innovations because they grow plants and crops, increase biodiversity, and produce compost which is a necessary resource for several of the other actions in the toolkit.

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Materials Needed:

a. Three 2m bamboo poles or sturdy branches for the structure
b. Composting materials (e.g., cooking scraps, yard waste, such as leaves).
c. Three or more climbing or trailing plants suitable for vertical growth, such as velvet bean or passion fruit
d. Two meters of twine or wire for pole securing and plant support

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How do I set up the Wigwam?

1. Construct a small wigwam structure (pyramid) using the three bamboo poles or branches, use your twine or wire to attach them to each other at the top and mid points.
2. Fill the base of each structure with composting materials such as cooking waste (eg. Banana leaves, eggshells) and compound green waste, such as leaves or branches.
3. Plant 1-3 climbing or trailing plants at the base of the bamboo or branch legs and secure them to the bamboo or branch legs using twine or wire.
4. Monitor and maintain Wigwam composting process by, 1) adding 4-8kg of compost and manure once a semester and 2) harvesting the compost when the soil is dark and crumbly and does not have a scent.

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What will I see if the Wigwam is working?

- Lush plant growth climbing up along the wigwam structure
- Visible decomposition of composting materials inside the wigwam, when dark, crumbly, and scentless soil is seen
- Increased biodiversity with visiting pollinators and beneficial insects, such as bees
- Aesthetic enhancement of the area with vertical greenery and composting functionality