



Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! Curriculum Correlation and Alignment to State Standards and Assessment Measures

The Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Program is a youth gardening program operated internationally through the Cooperative Extension network. JMG is “Growing Good Kids” by igniting a passion for learning, success, and service. This unique gardening education inspires youths to serve others through leadership development and service learning projects and rewards them with certification and recognition.

As a national and international youth gardening initiative, the Junior Master Gardener® (JMG) program provides strong support in the attainment of the necessary curricular skills to prepare students to succeed within the K-12 school environment, college, future careers and in the global market. The Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! curriculum was specifically created by teachers, horticulture and health care professionals for students and classrooms. The curriculum’s ten (10) concepts of instruction are designed with a focus on skills delivered with depth and clarity. The curriculum emphasizes Science, Math, Language Arts/Reading, Writing, Social Studies, Physical Education, Health, Horticulture, and Nutrition all with a solid correlation to the **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)** standards. With a focus on TEKS alignment and the learning objectives most critical to assess, students are best prepared for the **State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)** assessment that is administered each year in the state of Texas to students. As the TEKS and STAAR correlation process was implemented, specific attention was given to the eligible content from the TEKS Readiness and Supporting Standards Assessment Blueprint in Third Grade Reading, Third Grade Math and Fifth Grade Science that are eligible for measurement on the STAAR test.

JMG’s Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! curriculum, as a *supplemental curriculum* to a district’s existing curricula, offers the following to a school’s instructional program to best affect and improve learning outcomes:

- ❖ JMG’s **Learn, Grow, Eat & GO!** curriculum provides 10 teaching concepts that are:
 - aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards - Science, Math, Language Arts/Reading, Social Studies, Physical Education and Health
 - highly engaging
 - clear in purpose
 - in-depth, specific
 - linked to grade level readiness and preparedness at current and future grade levels and support college and career readiness

- ❖ JMG’s **Learn, Grow, Eat & GO!** concepts provide 10 teaching concepts comprised of hands on learning activities:
 - **Total number of TEKS: 99**
 - **Total number of TEKS eligible for STAAR testing: 36 = 36%**
 - **Total number of TEKS eligible for STAAR testing as Readiness Standards: 16 = 44%**
 - **Total number of TEKS eligible for STAAR testing as Supporting Standards: 20 = 56%**

Benefits of the JMG Program

- Over 85% of 442 teachers stated that JMG has increased youth interest and academic achievement in science.
- Over 83% of respondents said youth were more enthusiastic about learning.
- Over 85% of teacher/leaders plan to continue using the JMG program with youth.
- Over 69% of teachers and leaders said that JMG has encouraged students to perform community service projects outside the classroom.
- Over 63% said youth tried new fruits and vegetables.

**Research conducted by Boleman and Cummings, 2002.*

JMG Program Numbers

- 50 states, plus the District of Columbia have implemented JMG
- 38 Land Grant University Partners
- 1 Million youths participate each year in America.
- Programs in 10 foreign countries

“Students participating in JMG as part of their school science curriculum scored higher on science achievement tests compared to students using traditional classroom methods. Moreover, the JMG curriculum was more effective as a teaching method in raising science achievement scores for boys in third and fifth grades and for girls in the fifth grade compared to traditional classroom-based methods alone.

Klemmer, C.T. Waliczek and J.Zajicek. 2005. Growing Minds: The Effect of School Gardening Program on the Science Achievement of Elementary School Students. Horticulture Technology. Vol. 15, Number 3: 448-452.