

College Guild
PO Box 6448 Brunswick, ME 04011

Gardening

Unit 2 of 7

“In the hope of reaching the moon
men fail to see the flowers
that blossom at their feet.”

Quotation by Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965), doctor, missionary, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize

1. What do you think Schweitzer may have meant by this quotation?

In this unit we are going to look at container gardening. This is a very popular method of creating an instant garden in a limited space in a wide range of plants, colors and combinations. Containers can be used to match your mood, your home and your surroundings.



The three pictures above show some of many ways container gardens are created. Containers can be almost any item that can hold soil and plants – from typical pots to teacups. The plants can vary as well, from flowers to vegetables.

2. List as many advantages as you can to gardening in containers versus gardening directly in the ground.
3. Name as many types of containers in which you could grow plants as you can. Then list what kinds of plants you'd grow in each of the containers.
4. Brainteaser time – how many words could you make from the word “container”? There are at least 30. List as many as you can.

Regardless of the type of container you use – ceramic, terra cotta, metal, plastic or wood – there must be holes in the bottom.

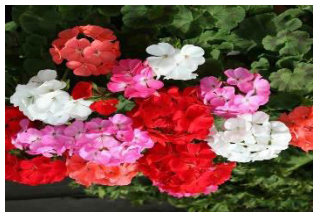











5. What do you think the holes are for? What would likely happen without the holes?

Container plants thrive best in potting mix rather than just soil or dirt. Potting mix is full of organic matter that feeds the plants. It also is less dense so that there's good drainage, which protects the plants from many soil-borne diseases.

6. What other factors do you think would be very important to consider when growing plants in containers? Why?

Fine Gardening Magazine suggests using the following technique when planting a container garden:

“A **thriller** is a centerpiece plant with star quality, something big, bold and beautiful. A **filler** is a billowy and usually more finely textured plant that surrounds and weaves through the thriller. And finally, a **spiller** is a graceful drooper that provides a finishing touch by sprawling over the sides of the container, softening its edges while tumbling toward the ground.”

<p>a.</p>  <p>Geranium</p>	<p>b.</p>  <p>Bacopa</p>	<p>c.</p>  <p>Cardinal Flower</p>	<p>d.</p>  <p>Petunia</p>
<p>f.</p>  <p>Lobelia</p>	<p>g.</p>  <p>Celosia</p>	<p>h.</p>  <p>Delphinium</p>	<p>i.</p>  <p>Dracaena</p>
<p>j.</p>  <p>Coneflower</p>	<p>k.</p>  <p>Salvia</p>	<p>l.</p>  <p>Blazing Star</p>	<p>m.</p>  <p>Daisy</p>

7. While the above 12 annual plants can be planted successfully in the ground, they are also appropriate for container gardening. List a to m on your paper and designate whether you believe each plant would be a thriller, a filler or a spiller. There are no wrong answers – just share your opinion.

Let's turn now to the kinds of decorative items people often place in their gardens to mix and meld with the plants. As you see below, these decorative items can be almost anything, and gardeners are only constrained by their imagination.



Bird Bath



Wagon Wheels



Fountain



Umbrella

Perhaps one of the most popular adornments in recent history is the plastic pink flamingo. It was designed in 1957 by an art-school graduate named Donald Featherstone. At 50 years old, this plastic symbol of pop culture is still either loved or hated. The flamingos are usually sold in pairs – one with its neck held gracefully upward and one with the neck curving downward. As of 2006, more than 250,000 pairs of flamingos a year were made at a factory in Massachusetts.



8. **Why do you think flamingos have been so popular among many gardeners? Conversely, why do you think they're intensely disliked by other gardeners?**
9. **If you created a garden, what adornments would you select and why?**

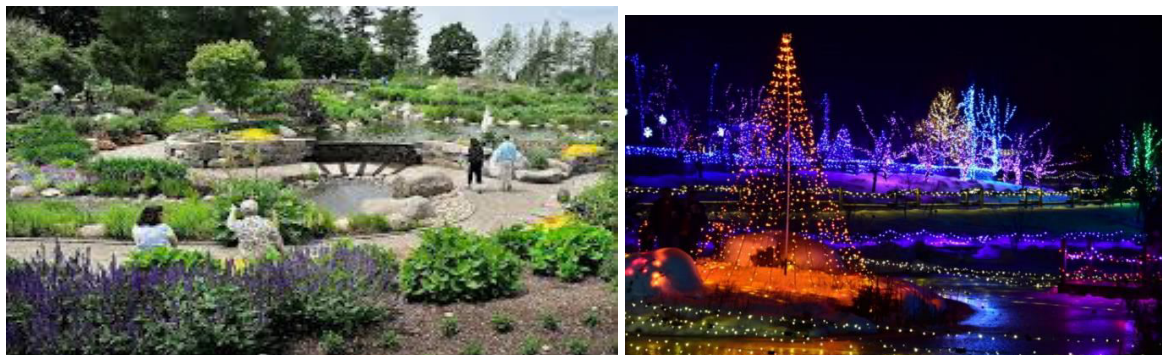
10. **Maintaining gardens can demand a great deal of time and effort. Why do you believe gardeners are willing to devote many hours per week during the peak season to their gardens?**

Famous American Gardens

There are many gardens in America that are so beautiful that they attract tens of thousands of visitors every year. Here are two:

Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens

Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, located on nearly 300 acres of coastal waterfront, is the largest botanical garden in New England and one of the nation's few waterfront public gardens. Featuring acres of cultured gardens and miles of woodland trails, Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens celebrates native plants and beautiful ornamentals in varied settings, and includes much stonework and many sculptures. The Gardens are home to a range of themed gardens and are rated the top public gardens in the US by TripAdvisor. Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens is one of Maine's top attractions, and is a place for the whole family to enjoy.



As you can see above, these gardens can be enjoyed day and night. The picture on the right is actually a winter scene when these gardens are illuminated by literally hundreds of thousands of colored lights.

11. **What time of day or year would you prefer to visit these gardens and why?**
12. **Do you believe that communities are using their resources wisely to develop gardens such as these? Why or why not?**

Busch Gardens - The **Busch Gardens** of today are amusement parks, but the original garden was owned by Adolphus Busch, who lived on a spacious estate in Pasadena, California in the early 1900's. He owned a magnificent home overlooking the Arroyo Seco Canyon, and he built some of the most beautiful gardens ever seen in California. In 1938 he offered them to the city for use as a public park, but was turned down by the town's Board of Directors.



13. Why do you suppose an amazing gift such as this would have been turned down?

14. What would you have done with the land, and why?

The **Busch Gardens** today are two amusement parks owned and operated by the Busch Entertainment Corporation, a division of Anheuser-Busch. One is in Tampa, Florida and the other is in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The park in Williamsburg opened in 1975 and has a European theme. Originally nicknamed “The Old Country”, it has attractions called “Escape from Pompeii” and “The Loch Ness Monster”. In 2007 a new rollercoaster called the “Griffon” opened. It’s the tallest coaster in the world and is floorless.

15. Why do you think rollercoasters are so popular?

The Busch Gardens in Tampa opened in 1959 on the grounds of the Anheuser-Busch brewery. Visitors watch animals in a tropical setting and taste the local brew in the adjacent beer garden. Even though this park has rides and roller coasters, too, it’s also very famous for the **topiaries** that adorn the park. A **topiary** is a living sculpture made from plant materials.



16. Describe what you see in the topiary above. What feelings or thoughts does it generate within you?

17. If you could design a topiary for an amusement park, what would it be? What plant materials would you use to make it?