A13 Making a light reflector

Since light only comes from one direction on a windowsill, plants tend to stretch towards the light, especially seedlings. To prevent this, make a simple cardboard reflector covered in shiny aluminium foil to evenly reflect light so seedlings grow straight.

Resources

- Cardboard box that will fit on to the window ledge and wide enough for pots and seed trays
- Plastic sheet
- Aluminium foil
- Sticky tape or glue

Activity

1. Follow instructions on the next page for building a light reflector, adapting the design to suit your available resources and size of windowsill.
2. Experiment with a range of seedlings and vegetable crops.

Health & Safety

Younger children will require adult help if using scissors.  
See also Health and Safety Guidelines (Section B3.3)

Further information

A18 Sowing seed
B4.7 Growing on a windowsill
Instructions for making a windowsill light reflector

1. Materials for one reflector
   - Cardboard box
   - Plastic bag
   - Aluminium foil
   - Sticky tape or glue

2. Take a cardboard box and cut off the top so it is around 15-20cm tall (this height suits trays of seedlings). Alternatively, fold a cardboard sheet in half to create an ‘L’ shape and tape separate diagonal supports to hold cardboard in place.

3. On the front side of the box, measure 3-4cm up from the base and draw a straight line across.

4. Draw a diagonal line from the top of the new front edge to the top corner at the back of the box.
5  Carefully cut along these lines.

6  Line the base and sides of the box with plastic and use sticky tape or glue to secure.

7  Line the base and sides of the box with aluminium foil, shiny side showing, again using sticky tape or glue to secure.

8  Place your finished light reflector on a windowsill and start growing!