Planning a Cooperative Learning Experience

Read the following scenario and then plan an appropriate cooperative learning experience. Include how you will pair the children, what the goal of the learning experience is, and what social-emotional skills will be practiced.

Scenario:
You have observed that the children in your program are very interested in gardening. You have various seeds, gardening tools, and a patch of available soil in your yard. The children range in age from 3 to 9 years old. Some of the children have never planted seeds before. One of the children has difficulty waiting for his turn.

Suggested response: Allow the children to come up with all of the ideas about how and what to plant. Read books and look at magazine articles or videos to learn how to plant a garden. Small groups of children can work together toward a common goal on a planting project. Children who have mixed backgrounds, temperaments, abilities, interests, ages, can work together towards this common goal. Encourage the children to work together to brainstorm, try new ideas and take risks. Brainstorm solutions to challenging situations, ask the children to help each other when faced with a difficult situation, help them bring their garden idea to life. Practice patience and be nurturing and responsive to the children's ideas. Allow the older children to help the younger children plant.