

Learning possibilities

Text: Henkes, K 2010, *My garden*, Greenwillow Books, New York.

Engage

Step 1. Gather your child/children for a story using the song, 'If you want to hear a story'.

Step 2. Encourage your child/children to predict what the story is about from the cover.

Step 3. Read the story or watch the video using the link in the Resources box and encourage your child/children to join in.

Step 4. Here are some questions to ask your child/children about the story.

1. What is this story about? (a girl who helps her mother in the garden and then thinks about what her own imaginary garden would look like)
2. What would the rabbits be like in the girl's garden? (chocolate for her to eat)
3. If you had an imaginary garden, what would you grow?
4. I wonder if you can grow a sea shell? Why/why not? (children explain their thinking)

Respond

Talk with your child/children about using their imaginations to create a garden with all the things in it that they would like, for example: jungle vines to swing on, bushes to hide in, and a scented garden that would smell beautiful, or even change smells. Encourage your child/children to share their ideas and to choose how to represent for example, with paint, by drawing, using playdough, small world play (plastic and wooden figures/objects) and collage.

Extend

- Experiment with using food dyes and water in clear vases or jars to change the colour of stalks of celery. Encourage your child/children to observe the change in the celery over several days and to record the changes by taking photos. Talk about why the changes might be happening.
- Invite your child/children to create a secret garden using sand in a plastic container and hide objects in the sand for them to find. This experience can be used to support descriptive language, for example: 'I feel something hard and round, maybe it's a ball?'
- If your child/children are interested, encourage them to plant some seeds or seedlings and talk about what the plants/seeds need to thrive and grow.
- Encourage your child/children to look closely at the plants in the garden and talk about what they see. They might help you to weed the garden, water the pot plants and take photos of any new discoveries.

Resources

Song

'If you want to hear a story'

(Tune: 'If you're happy and you know it')

If you want to hear a story, come sit down,

If you want to hear a story, come sit down.

Let's share a great big smile, as we read and talk a while,

It's time to hear a story, come sit down.

Video

My Garden (YouTube, YouTube Movies)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9u4ELtG4IQ>