

Let's Plant a Garden

Tips for Parents and Caregivers

Here are ideas and activities to try this week with your child. Each activity is based on one of the **7 Days • 7 Ways** principles of early literacy development and is designed to engage your child, stimulate his or her literacy skills, and enhance the bonds between you.

- 1. SHARE BOOKS** Although board books are ideal for sharing with babies, try sharing some non-fiction (fact) books with more complex texts and beautiful pictures, too.
- 2. SHARE SOUNDS** Many sounds can be heard in the garden: bunnies nibbling, animals scooting, crickets chirping, birds tweeting, and raindrops pitter-patting. Talk to your child about gardens and the different sounds he might hear there.
- 3. SHARE WORDS** Look at flowers together, outdoors and in books, and say their actual names, colors, shapes, and any other details you can think of: red and pink roses that smell good, round white chrysanthemums with lots of petals, tall golden sunflowers. This will expose your baby to more unique vocabulary.
- 4. SHARE RHYMES** Share rhymes from today's storytime and any other rhymes you know with garden themes (such as "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary"). Repeating rhymes over and over helps your baby learn them. When she can speak, she will easily join in!
- 5. SHARE SONGS** Share the nature songs from today's storytime while taking a walk outside. Emphasize the syllables so that your baby can hear the smaller sounds in words.
- 6. SHARE STORIES** Go on a nature observation walk, and make up stories about the plants and flowers that you see.
- 7. SHARE PLAYTIME** Share the fun and excitement of planting grass or other seeds in a cup and watching them grow. Have your baby help plant the seeds and water them every day.

Songs and Rhymes for Let's Plant a Garden

Here are the songs and rhymes that you and your child enjoyed today. By continuing to sing, chant, and play with them every day, you will help your child make sense of the new information and concepts introduced at storytime.

Songs

If You're Happy to Be Here

(sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It")

If you're happy to be here, clap your hands, *(Clap hands)*
If you're happy to be here, clap your hands, *(Clap hands)*
If you're happy to be here, then place a smile there, *(Point to mouth)*
If you're happy to be here, clap your hands. *(Clap hands)*

If you're ready to have some fun, clap your hands, *(Clap hands)*
If you're ready to have some fun, clap your hands, *(Clap hands)*
If you're ready to have some fun, then join in everyone,
(Motion hands to join in)
If you're ready to have some fun, clap your hands. *(Clap hands)*

This Is the Way

(sung to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush")

This is the way we dig the dirt, *(Make digging motion)*
Dig the dirt, dig the dirt,
This is the way we dig the dirt,
So early in the morning.

Additional Verses

This is the way we plant the seed...
(Pinch fingers together and apart to plant seed)
This is the way we water the seed... *(Make pouring motion)*
This is the way we watch it grow... *(Slowly raise arms)*

Itsy Bitsy Spider

The itsy bitsy spider *(Climb hands from low to high)*
Went up the water spout.
Down came the rain *(With open hands, sweep from high to low)*
And washed the spider out.
Out came the sun *(Make sun overhead with arms)*
And dried up all the rain,
And the itsy bitsy spider *(Climb hands from low to high)*
Went up the spout again.

Caterpillar to Butterfly

(sung to the tune of "Skip to My Lou")

I'm a little caterpillar, wiggle with me, *(Wiggle child)*
I'm a little caterpillar, wiggle with me,
I'm a little caterpillar, wiggle with me,
What'll I be, my darling?

A big butterfly, come fly with me, *(Move arms and hands as if flying)*
A big butterfly, come fly with me,
A big butterfly, come fly with me,
That's what I'll be, my darling!

The More We Get Together

The more we get together, *(Sway from side to side in time to music)*
Together, together,
The more we get together,
The happier we'll be.
For your friends are my friends, *(Point to child, then to self)*
And my friends are your friends, *(Point to self, then to child)*
The more we get together,
The happier we'll be.

Additional Verse

The more we play together...

Rhymes

Rain on the Rooftops

Rain on the green grass, *(Arms down, feeling grass)*
Rain on the trees, *(Arms straight up)*
Rain on the rooftops, *(Make roof with arms over head)*
But no rain on me! *(Point to self)*
Because I have my UMBRELLA! *(Lift baby on UMBRELLA!)*

Five Little Peas

Five little peas in a peapod pressed, *(Make fist in front of body)*
One grew, two grew, and so did the rest.
(Extend one finger, then another finger, then the rest)
They grew and grew, and did not stop, *(Raise both arms up slowly)*
Until one day that peapod POPPED! *(Clap hands on POPPED!)*

Caterpillar

"Who's that tickling my back?" said the wall. *(Tickle baby's back)*
"Me," said the caterpillar, "I'm learning to crawl!"

Little Arabella Miller

Little Arabella Miller
Had a fuzzy caterpillar. *(Tickle child's palm with two fingers)*
First it crawled upon her mother, *(Walk fingers up left arm)*
Then upon her baby brother. *(Walk fingers up right arm)*
They said, "Arabella Miller!
Take away that caterpillar!" *(Shake finger!)*