

Let's Plant a Garden

Presenter Tip Sheet

About This Storytime

Sprouts and seedlings, caterpillars and butterflies, sunshine and water and mud! A garden is a natural haven, even for babies and young toddlers. This storytime introduces the concept of things growing and changing, and invites very young children to participate in sensory experiences such as planting seeds.

Books

For books to share in this storytime, pick three from the list below, or choose other board books or picture books in your collection that reflect the theme and are developmentally appropriate for babies and young toddlers. Always share your longest book first. For your second, choose a participatory book that engages the child or both the caregiver and child. For the third and last story, share a book told through the use of a flannel board or magnetic board, or use a prop or other visual. The examples provided in the storytime program fit these guidelines. If most children are restless and you feel the program is too long for that day, skip the last story and concentrate on the rhymes and songs.

Book Suggestions:

- *Bunny's Garden* (Pat the Bunny), by Golden Books (Golden Books, 2010)
- *Counting in the Garden*, by Patrick and Emily Hruby (Ammo, 2011)
- *Flower Garden*, by Eve Bunting (Sandpiper, 2000)
- *I Like Vegetables*, by Lorena Siminovich (Templar, 2011)
- *In My Flower*, by Sara Gillingham and Lorena Siminovich (Chronicle Books, 2009)
- *Lenny in the Garden*, by Ken Wilson-Max (Frances Lincoln, 2010)
- *On My Leaf*, by Sara Gillingham and Lorena Siminovich (Chronicle Books, 2012)
- *Planting a Rainbow*, by Lois Ehlert (Sandpiper, 1992)
- *Planting Seeds*, by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace (Marshall Cavendish, 2010)
- *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle (Philomel, 1986)

- *Who's Hiding? In the Garden*, by Christiane Gunzi (Barron's Educational, 2010)
- *Who's in the Garden?* by Phillis Gershator (Barefoot Books, 2010)

Songs

This storytime includes five songs. The same opening and closing songs should be used each week if you are holding a series of storytime programs. Always provide movements or motions to accompany each song, but keep these simple, such as the caregiver rocking the baby back and forth, bouncing the baby in time to the music, or clapping the baby's hands. Using recorded music during the storytime is fine, although it's best to sing the songs with a live voice, or sing along with simple recordings, so that very young children can hear the words and the sounds making up each word. Recorded music is often sung too fast for this purpose. For your reference or to play during storytime, *The Very Ready Reading Program* includes a CD of songs recorded at an appropriate tempo. Track numbers for each recording are provided in the songlist below and on the storytime program card.

Songs for This Storytime:

- Opening Song: "If You're Happy to Be Here" (sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It") 🎧 22 🎵 23
- "This Is the Way" (sung to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush") 🎧 47
- "Itsy Bitsy Spider" 🎧 25
- "Caterpillar to Butterfly" (sung to the tune of "Skip to My Lou") 🎧 9
- Closing Song: "The More We Get Together" 🎧 28 🎵 29

Rhymes

This storytime includes three rhymes and an optional fourth, with movements to accompany them. Caregivers perform the movements with the child, depending on the child's ability. For babies, the caregiver can move the child's hands, fingers, and body, or otherwise help the baby execute the movements. Young toddlers may be able to do the movements themselves or may need a little help. Keep in mind that children up to 24 months of age have not developed fine motor skills to the same

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degree as older toddlers and preschoolers; open and close motions are better than, say, putting one finger down at a time. The Very Ready Reading Program storytimes include different types of movement rhymes for variety, such as bounce/lift, finger/hand, and toe/foot rhymes.

Rhymes for This Storytime:

- “Rain on the Rooftops” (hand/bounce)
- “Five Little Peas” (finger/hand)
- “Caterpillar” (tickle/touch)
- “Little Arabella Miller” (hand/finger)

Activities

This storytime includes an optional theme-related activity, to be completed after the closing song. Below are three to choose from, including at least one that is suitable for the youngest babies. The activity you choose might depend on the size or predominant age of your audience, the amount of time you have to prepare, your space or environment, and the materials needed. The activities are designed with safety and the very limited attention spans of babies and young toddlers in mind. However, always keep in mind and remind caregivers: **Any time an activity involves materials such as paint, sand, string, or small pieces, close adult supervision is required.** Although each activity has a learning aspect, the emphasis should be on fun!

Activity Suggestions:

Tiny Garden. Together, if possible, have caregivers and children fill a paper cup with potting soil and sprinkle the top with several rye grass seeds. Encourage caregivers to allow their little ones to help water the seeds. If time permits, adults can draw a face on the cup. Take it home or leave it in the library to check its progress at the next storytime. When the grass sprouts, it will look like hair.

Seeds in a Bottle. Make a simple shaker by placing pumpkin seeds into an empty plastic jar, being careful that babies don't eat and choke on the seeds. Use clear tape to secure the lid. Have little ones shake the jar and listen to the wonderful sound! Alternatively, place dried flowers and seeds in clear bottles ahead of time, and secure lids with tape or glue. Give children magnifying glasses to get a closer look at the flowers and seeds.

Bright Flowers. Allow toddlers to crumple up pieces of brightly colored tissue paper. Caregivers can attach the “flowers” to a green straw “stem” with tape.

Early Literacy Tips

Promote the **7 Days • 7 Ways** principles with parents and caregivers by emphasizing the three early literacy tips found in the yellow boxes in the storytime program.