

MY GARDEN

HI! FLY GUY

by Kevin Henkes

Ages: 5 - 8; Grades: PreK - 2

Themes: Growth and Change, Season and Nature, Fantasy and Imagination

Running Time: 10 minutes

SUMMARY

The girl in this movie works on the garden with her mother. As she works, she imagines her own garden, in which she would grow chocolate bunnies, seashells, and jellybean bushes, among other things. This movie combines a rich appreciation of the natural world with a child's sense of possibility. Students will enjoy sharing in the girl's magical garden, as well as imagining one of their own.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the life cycle of plants and flowers.
- Students will identify the things that plants need to grow.
- Students will design and write about a garden.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Bring a sample of various dry seeds for the students to observe. The children should draw each seed and, if possible, write down any observations that they have of the seed. Then, have students guess what the seed will grow to become. Give them some examples that are easy to identify such as corn, beans, and peas. Also bring some examples of flower seeds, which tend to be more difficult to identify. Be sure to save the seed packets so that you don't forget! These seeds can be used for the next **Before Viewing Activity**.

Brainstorm with students what things seeds need to plant and grow. Make a list of all of the students' ideas and then narrow it down to 4 essential components: warmth (sunlight), water, nutrients (soil), and air. Conduct a science experiment with one control group providing all of the components and then removing one component from each other group. Observe the seeds over time and record/discuss the results.

Discuss real and make-believe with students. If appropriate, introduce the terms *fact* and *fiction*. Use a T-chart to categorize their responses and create a working definition of each concept together. Guiding questions:

- What does "real" mean? What does "make-believe" mean?
- What are some examples of "real" things? What are some examples of "make-believe" things?
- How can you tell if a book (or movie) is real or make-believe?

Tell students that the movie they are about to see has both real and make-believe things. Encourage them to watch and listen for what is real and what is make-believe. Revisit this discussion after viewing the movie to classify students' observations.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Revisit the conversation of "real" and "make believe" from the **Before Viewing Activities**. After reviewing the definitions that the class generated for each term, ask:

- What did you see in the movie that could be real? (*real plants; people really plant gardens*)
- What did you see in the movie that was make believe? (*growing chocolate bunnies, seashells, jellybean bushes, etc.; flowers blooming all night; invisible tomatoes*)

Culminate the discussion by completing a picture sort with the students. Provide them with photographs of things that can grow in a garden and things that can't. Guide them through sorting each picture into a "real" or "make believe" pile. Alternatively, students can glue the pictures onto a t-chart.

Take a field trip to a local greenhouse or botanical garden. If possible, arrange for a tour guide or employee to talk to the children about the different plants that they see. Allow a quiet time for the students to pick a place to sit and illustrate a plant or flower of their choice. This is an especially enjoyable activity in a botanical garden or park.

Challenge students to imagine what would grow in their garden. Have them complete the sentence: "In my garden..." Then, provide them with constructions paper, scissors, and glue to create collage art of what they would grow in their garden. Display the students' work on a bulletin board entitled, "Our Garden".

Design a school garden with the class. This is a fun and on-going project that will require a small amount of space and some basic materials to get started. Talk with students about what kinds of plants they want to grow. Work together to design a layout, each student draw a model of the garden. Extend this activity by having students write several sentences about what they are planning on growing. Consult the School Garden Wizard website for help getting the garden started <http://www.schoolgardenwizard.org/>.

Students can keep a written or pictorial journal of the garden as it grows.

OTHER RELATED TITLES FROM WESTON WOODS

- **And Then It's Spring** by Julie Fogliano, ill. by Erin E. Stead
- **Bear Wants More** by Karma Wilson, ill. by Jane Chapman
- **The Curious Garden** by Peter Brown
- **Fletcher and the Springtime Blossoms** by Julia Rawlinson, ill. by Tiphonie Beeke
- **Planting a Rainbow** by Lois Ehlert

OTHER RELATED TITLES BY KEVIN HENKES:

- **Chrysanthemum**
- **Owen**
- **A Weekend with Wendell**

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