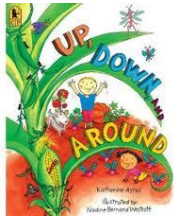


## Gardening Read-Aloud Outline

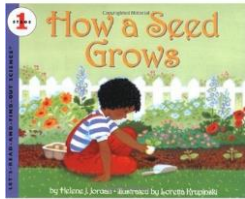
Explore the world of seeds and gardening at your Read-Aloud and prepare to get down and dirty with seeds and books!



### ***Up, Down, and Around*** by Katherine Ayers

Ages 2 to 6

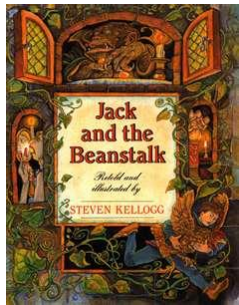
This rhyming book with delightful illustrations just begs to be acted out by young listeners. Kids will love "growing" up, down, or around with the vegetables in this garden. Pair it with *Tops and Bottoms* by Janet Stevens, for ages 4 to 9, or *The Giant Carrot* by Jan Peck, for ages 4 to 8, for a lively discussion about growing vegetables.



### ***How a Seed Grows*** by Helene J. Jordan

Ages 4 to 8

From the *Lets Read and Find Out Science* series, this picture book provides an introduction to how seeds become plants. Pair with *Ten Seeds* by Ruth Brown, for ages 4 to 9. (Don't be fooled by the simple text; a lot is going on in these illustrations.) Or try the lushly illustrated *A Seed is Sleepy* by Dianna Hutts Aston and Sylvia Long, for ages 4 to 12, to explore seeds and their development.



### ***Jack and the Beanstalk*** by Steven Kellogg

Ages 5 to 10

When regular seeds sprout, it seems like magic. When magic seeds sprout, things get crazy! Read this beloved folktale in a traditional version (Steven Kellogg has illustrated a great one.) and then introduce some revised versions. *Kate and the Beanstalk* by Mary Pope Osborne, for ages 5 and up, and *Jim and the Beanstalk* by Raymond Briggs, for ages 4 to 8, are good choices. For ages 9 and up, try the graphic novel called *Calamity Jack* by Shannon and Dean Hale.



### ***Anno's Magic Seeds*** by Mitsumasa Anno

Ages 8 and up

Explore math, economics, farming and the environment with older children at your Read-Aloud. A wizard gives Jack some magic seeds (sound familiar?), and a fun mathematical progression begins. You can count all the seeds in the pictures or figure out a way to calculate Jack's harvest.

## More books about gardening

***The Surprise Garden*** by Zoe Hall

Ages 2 to 6

***Jo MacDonald Had a Garden*** by Mary Quattlebaum

Ages 4 to 6

***The Gardener*** by Sarah Stewart

Ages 8 to 12

WETA's *Start with a Book* program has an excellent outline for reading with kids about gardening. It includes books about gardening and directions for planting seeds with kids.

[http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/literacybags/Gardening\\_2013.pdf](http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/literacybags/Gardening_2013.pdf)

## **Helpful Gardening Websites and Videos**

If you plan to be planting seeds or growing sprouts with the kids, start some a few days ahead so they can see what to expect.

- How to sprout lentils or alfalfa: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4n5p1rmTiw>
- Time-lapse video of radish seeds growing: <http://bit.ly/1nIQxkh>
- Ideas for gardening with kids from Mary Quattlebaum, author of ***Jo MacDonald Had a Garden***: <http://maryquattlebaum.com/documents/GardeningandKids.pdf>.

## Activities

1. These activities focus on seeds and the fruits and vegetables that carry them. Use *The Vegetables We Eat* by Gail Gibbons and/or *A Fruit Is a Suitcase for Seeds* by Jean Richards to explore how fruits transport seeds to new locations. If food is allowed at your Read-Aloud site, let the kids eat the fruits and vegetables. Ask the staff about food allergies before providing food at any Read-Aloud.
2. Bring seeds and the fruits or vegetables that come from them and challenge the kids to match them up.
3. Plant or sprout seeds with the kids (see video or *Start with a Book* suggestions.)
4. If your site has a vegetable garden, ask if you can pick vegetables with the kids to use in a Garden Pasta Salad.

## **Garden Pasta Salad**

### Ingredients:

- green onions
- fresh basil
- cherry tomatoes
- shredded zucchini or summer squash
- diced peppers
- fresh shredded parmesan cheese
- olive oil
- cooked pasta

Bring precooked pasta. The kids can tear the basil, cut the green onions with scissors or kitchen shears, and squish (or halve) the cherry tomatoes. A volunteer should cut peppers and anything else that requires a knife. Put the cooked pasta on top of the prepared vegetables in a big bowl. Stir and add a few glugs of olive oil and the cheese. Add salt and pepper to taste.

## **Conversation Starters**

1. Make a connection between the stories you read and the kids' daily lives. Explore their experience with fruits and vegetables by asking lots of questions. What fruits and vegetables do the kids like to eat? How do different fruits and vegetables taste (sweet, sour, savory)? How does cooking or seasoning fruits and vegetables change them, for better or worse? Which fruits and vegetables do the kids like raw, versus cooked?
2. Brainstorm the different kinds of seeds we eat: bananas, strawberries, pumpkin, sunflower, tomatoes, rice, raspberries, cucumbers, zucchini, corn, kiwi, peas, beans of all kinds, etc. How long can your list get? Then poll the kids on which seeds they like best and which they've never tasted. Chart the results for a visual representation.
3. Ask the kids what they would do with magic seeds or beans. Plant them? Share them? Sell them? Did Jack's beanstalk grow more magic seeds? What happened after he (or Kate or Jim) cut down the beanstalk? Encourage the kids make up or act out some magic bean stories!
4. For older Read-Aloud participants: Seeds can be seen as a kind of plant savings account. Who is responsible for caring for the seeds and plants? What happens when a storm destroys crops (see *Anno's Magic Seeds*) or plants become extinct (see *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss)? What are heirloom plants or seeds? (Heirloom roses are part of the story in *Jackson Jones and the Curse of the Outlaw Rose* by Mary Quattlebaum.)