

In the Garden

by Jane Buxton

illustrated by Phillip Small



Overview

This narrative text, written in the first person, captures a young girl's delight as she picks produce from the garden and puts it into a variety of containers. The climax to the story is predictable – and delicious!

Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of using prior knowledge, making connections using real-life experiences, making and confirming predictions, and inferring. It builds on the sentence structure in the Dragonflies emergent title *The Picnic* and provides opportunities for practising one-to-one word matching, recognising high-frequency words, and cross-checking the print with the illustration.

Text features (Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the high-frequency words – *I, in, my, the*
- the plural nouns – *apples, beans, flowers, potatoes, strawberries, tomatoes*
- the repeated initial consonant “b” – *bag, basket, beans, box, bucket*
- the initial consonant blends – *-fl, -str*
- the first-person narration
- the use of the ellipsis for anticipation
- the repetitive sentence structure, with a change on pages 7 and 8
- the two word changes per page
- the visual sub-plot – the *bee, butterfly, and dog* appear on most pages

Introducing the text

Bring some fruit and vegetables into the classroom to generate discussion. *Which is your favourite fruit or vegetable? Where does it grow? How do you pick them? What else grows in your garden or the school garden?*

If strawberries are in season, bring enough for each student in the group, but save them as a surprise for the end of the story!

Encourage the students to share their experiences of shopping for fruit and vegetables.

The first reading

Discuss the cover illustration. Establish that the girl is in the garden and read the title with the group. *What is she picking?* Discuss suggestions, but don't confirm them. *Let's find out when we read the story.* Read the names of the author and illustrator.

Back cover – Read aloud the preview question. Lead a discussion to build or expand the students' background knowledge.

Title page – Listen to the students read the title again.

Remind the students of the strategies you want them to focus on during the reading. Listen to them read the text themselves, supporting them as necessary. Observe how they manage the text changes on each page.

Page 2 – Show me the first word. Listen to the students read the text. *Who is telling the story? Where is she putting the flowers?* They may say “vase” or “glass” for “jar”. Use the opportunity to encourage cross-checking using the initial consonant. *Could that word be “vase”? How do you know? How does the word start? Look at the picture. What else could it be?*

Page 5 – Encourage the students to confirm their predictions about the produce shown on the front cover.

Page 7 – *What is different on this page? What do the three dots mean?* Encourage the students to predict the end of the sentence. *Where will she put the strawberries? Where would you put the strawberries?*

Page 8 – Observe how the students manage the text change from “the” to “my”. Give each student a strawberry!

Encourage the students to infer. *Is she allowed to eat the strawberries? What will her mum and dad say? What will the family do with the fruit and vegetables that she has collected?*

Ideas for revisiting the text (Choose only one or two per session.)

- Listen to the students reread the text, observing their one-to-one word matching, their cross-checking of the print with the illustration, and whether they attend to the ellipsis on page 7.
- Explore the illustrations and encourage the students to relate them to their own experiences. Include the names of other commonly grown fruit or vegetables.
- Explore the visual sub-plot. Talk about what the bee, the butterfly, and the dog are doing on each page.
- Locate some of the high-frequency words. *Find “the” on page 2. Can you find “the” on the next page? Tell me the letters in the word.*
- Find all the words in the text that start with “b”. Ask the students to suggest more words that start this way.
- List the produce that was collected from the garden and read the list together. *What’s the same about the end of these words?* Read the list again, prompting the students to listen carefully to the end sound of each word. Explain that the “s” shows that there is more than one item. Practise saying the words with and without the plural ending.
- Using the words and punctuation cards for this book, reassemble the sentences with the students.

Suggestions for further activities

- Make a wall story, innovating on the text, for example, “Brianna put the lemons in the basin.”
- Make a fold-out story using the ellipsis, for example, “I put the ice cream ... in my mouth.”
- Look at different kinds of containers and write captions, for example, “We put the pencils in the jar.” “I put the crayons in the box.”
- Plant some bean seeds for the students to take home when the seeds have germinated, or grow some cress and use it to make sandwiches. Record the process in a shared book or slide show.

- Have the Dragonflies emergent title *The Picnic* available for independent reading.
- BLM word activity: practise writing high-frequency words

The students can write the appropriate words in the spaces provided. They can then draw a picture of their favourite fruit and vegetable.

- BLM comprehension activity: match words with pictures

The students can recall where the fruit and vegetables were placed in the story. They can then draw a line to match the item to its container.