

In the Garden

by Jane Buxton

illustrated by Phillip Small

Overview

This 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! There is an audio version of this book on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2000*.

Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of making connections and inferring. It builds on the sentence structure in the Ready to Read emergent text *The Picnic* and provides opportunities to practise one-to-one word matching, recognise high-frequency words, and cross-check the print with the illustrations.

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”; and the “bee”
and the “butterfly” in the illustrations
- the initial consonant blends “fl” and “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 support provided by the illustrations for the nouns on each page
- the visual sub-plot with the dog chasing the bee.

Introducing the text

Bring some fruit and vegetables into the classroom to show the children and generate discussion. If strawberries are available, bring enough for each child in the group, but save them as a surprise for the end of the story! Discuss the children's favourite fruits and vegetables. *Where do you get your fruit and vegetables from?* Question or prompt the children to build up their understanding about growing fruit and vegetables. Draw on any experience they have of home gardening. You could reread the Ready to Read poem card *My Flower* together.

Tell the students that you have a book for them to read that's about a family who like to grow things in their garden.

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 and accept suggestions, but don't confirm them. *Let's find out when we read the story.* Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

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

Page 2 – *Show me the first word.* Listen to the children read the text. If they say “vase” or “glass” for “jar”, encourage them to cross-check 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?* Draw out the idea that the word “I” indicates who is telling the story.

Remind the children of the strategies you want them to focus on during the reading. Then listen to the children read the text themselves, providing support and feedback as necessary. Observe how they manage the text changes on each page.

Page 5 – Encourage the children to confirm their predictions about the produce shown on the front cover. *I wonder what she'll do next ...*

Page 7 – *What do the three dots mean?* Encourage the children to predict the end of the sentence. *Where will she put the strawberries? Where would you put the strawberries?*

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

Encourage the children to infer. *Is she allowed to eat the strawberries? I wonder what her mum and dad will say ...*

Discuss what the family might do with all their fruit and vegetables.

Ideas for revisiting the text

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children 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 children to relate them to their own family experiences. Include the Māori or Pasifika names of other commonly grown vegetables, such as kūmara, pūhā, and taro. Include Chinese vegetables, too, such as bok choy, if that is relevant to the experiences of the children in your group.

Locate some of the high-frequency words in the text. *Find the word “the” on page 2. Can you find another one? Can you find “the” on the next page? Tell me the letters in the word.* Have the children practise writing “the” or making it with magnetic letters.

Find all the words in the text that start with “b”. List them and read the list together. Ask the children to find other things that start with the same (“b”) sound in the illustrations.

List the produce that was collected from the garden and read the list together. *What's the same about the end of all of these words?* Read the list again, prompting the children 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.

Suggestions for further tasks

Have the children listen to the audio version on the CD *Readalong 2000* and read along with the book.

Make a wall story, innovating on the text, for example, "Kāhu put the kūmara in the kete."

Make a fold-out story using the ellipsis, for example, "I put the ice cream ... in my mouth."

Look at different types of containers and write captions, for example, "We put the pencils in the jar" and "I put the crayons in the box."

Plant some bean seeds for the children 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 Picnic* and the poem card *My Flower* available for independent reading.