

Family Literacy Guided Lesson

For The Carrot Seed / La semilla de zanahoria

NY State Learning Standards

Learning Standard 2 and 4 for English Language Arts:

Students will read and listen to texts, and relate texts to their own lives. Students will listen, speak, read, and write for social interactions to enrich their understanding of people and their views.

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About the Book

The Carrot Seed / La semilla de zanahoria

Ruth Krauss, Author and Crockett Johnson, Illustrator

In only 101 words Ruth Krauss has created a story that teaches the value of faith, patience, and determination. In this classic story, a little boy's carrot seed grows in spite of everyone's prediction that it won't come up. The two-and four-color illustrations are cartoon-like and match the simple text. The mild-mannered boy's hope and unfaltering faith shine through in Johnson's uncomplicated drawings. He plants the seed and tends it carefully. Finally, he harvests an enormous carrot. Young readers learn that confidence, hard work, and persistence can result in twice the reward expected.

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The Language/Literacy Connection

Learning About Language and the World

The work of Michael Halliday, former professor of linguistics at the University of Sydney, Australia, explores the functional aspects of language and *helps us understand how children create language through the process of social engagement with other language users*. The research shows that *the primary concern of parents is to make communication work, usually by allowing children to take the lead and then supporting and extending the child's efforts at communication*. Frequent participation in a variety of home interactions such as reading to the child, interactive conversations between parent and child, and participation in family centered activities, helps children develop language skills, enhance cognitive skills, and build an understanding of the surrounding world.

Early Childhood Education-Infant/Toddler Level

Seed Shape Cards

PLS-4 Skills

Auditory Comprehension

31. Understands simple descriptive concepts

Expressive Language

12. Plays simple games

Before the Visit

Gather Needed Materials

- ♦ 5 x 8" index cards or oaktag squares
- ♦ Bag of large assorted seeds (beans, peas, etc.)
- ♦ Glue
- ♦ A pie tin for the seeds

Prepare Lesson Props

- ♦ Make seed shape cards to use as models.

Seed Shape Cards

- ♦ Pour the seeds into the pie tin. Let the child and parent touch the seeds. For infants, have the parent place their hand into the seeds. Say: *What do they feel like?* Engage the parents as you articulate words like hard, soft, smooth, bumpy, etc.
- ♦ Give your model to the parent and child. Say: *We are going to make shape-pictures with the seeds. First, use glue to draw a large circle on one of the index cards. Then put the seeds on the glue line. You made the shape of a circle!*
- ♦ Set the card aside to dry and follow the above procedure to make a square, triangle, and rectangle.
- ♦ Say: *You can use these shape-pictures to help (child's name) identify different shapes. Guide his/her finger along the outline of the shape. Repeat the word for the shape. Print the name of the shape on the card. Some children may wish to make their own representation of the shape to share with others.*

During the Visit

- ♦ With the parent and child sitting together, look at the cover of the book and read the title running your finger under the words. Say: *See the boy? He's putting a seed in the ground so it will grow.* Point to the boy and the seed. Read through the story pointing to the characters. Depending upon the age of the child, ask him/her to point to the characters as they are mentioned in the story. Say things like: *Point to the boy, and where is the seed now?*

Other Tactile Experiences

Say to the parent: *This lesson provides tactile learning opportunities important for infants and toddlers. Try some of these touch and feel experiences with (child's name).*

- ♦ Pasta
- ♦ Buttons
- ♦ Sand
- ♦ Feathers
- ♦ Crumpled up paper
- ♦ Aluminum foil

Early Childhood Education-Preschool and School Age Levels

How Seeds Grow

PLS-4 Skills

Auditory

Comprehension

- 35. Understands negatives in sentences
- 61. Understands time concepts

Expressive

Communication

- 38. Tells how an object is used
- 48. Responds to why questions by giving a reason

Before the Visit

Gather Needed Materials

- ♦ Grass seed
- ♦ Potting soil
- ♦ Old sock
- ♦ Coffee mug/saucer
- ♦ Spoon
- ♦ Rubber band
- ♦ Assortment of felt cut into circles
- ♦ Needle and thread

Prepare Lesson Props

Make a "green-haired" creature model using the directions to the right. Ideally this should be done about 4-7 days prior to the lesson.

During the Visit

- ♦ With parent and child sitting together, show the cover of the book and read the title. Ask the child what the book might be about and what might happen in the story? Read the story comparing the child's predictions to actual story events. Also ask the child *where* the seed was planted to be sure he/she understands it is in the soil. Ask the child if he/she ever tried to do something that someone else said they couldn't do.

Sock Garden

- ♦ Say: *Most plants begin with a seed just like in the story. Can you remember something the boy did to help the carrot seed grow?*
- ♦ Say: *Seeds need dirt, water, and light to grow. Plants are the only things on earth that turn sunlight into food. We're going to have some fun growing plants in a sock! Show your model and say: After the seeds grow your sock will look like this.*
- ♦ Wet a sock and put it into a mug. Turn the top of the sock over the rim of the cup. Ask: *What will we need to grow a plant in a sock?*
- ♦ Have the child use a spoon to spread grass seeds over the bottom of the sock.
- ♦ Tell the child to fill the mug with soil. Use terms like: full, more, on top of, etc. Have a conversation with the child about the process. Be sure to insert appropriate terms.
- ♦ Have the parent tightly close the top of the sock with a rubber band and lift it out of the cup.
- ♦ Turn the sock upside down and put it on the saucer. Let the child pour water around the sock. Then have the child touch it and tell you how it feels.
- ♦ Ask the child to pick out 3 felt circles. Say: *Pick a circle to use as a nose and two to use for eyes.* Have the child show where each should be placed. Then sew the circles onto the sock with a stitch or two.
- ♦ Ask: *What kind of plants do you think will grow? How long will it take to grow?*
- ♦ Put the "green-haired" creature in a warm, light spot. Say: *Remember to give enough water to the plant to keep the top of the sock moist - just like the boy in The Carrot Seed.*

Parenting Education Activity

Learning About Language and the World

Children learn to listen and talk by listening and talking. Inviting children to become conversational partners and giving them feedback on what they say is a great early language and literacy experience for children. This works best when it occurs during a child-centered activity. How reassuring it is for a child to know we care about what they think and feel. This interest encourages the child's ongoing participation and involvement in learning. Effective opportunities for children to learn about language and the world in general are significant reasons to nurture social interactions between parent and child.

Talk About a Weed!

- ♦ Take four or five weeds — dandelions, grass, milkweed, whatever grows near your home—on your visit to the parent. Be sure to get the whole plant, stem, leaves, flower if there is one, seeds, roots. At the beginning of the visit spread the plants on the workspace.
- ♦ Say: *Examine these plants closely. Tell me what you notice about them. Ask leading questions to help the parent's thinking process.*
 - ♦ *Can you name the parts of the plant?*
 - ♦ *What colors do you notice?*
 - ♦ *Do you know the names of the plants?*
 - ♦ *Do you have plants like these around your home?*
 - ♦ *Have you ever eaten any of these plants?*
 - ♦ *Do any of the plants bring back a memory for you?*
- ♦ Say: *We've engaged in quite a bit of conversation around these weeds. You can follow this same format to engage your children in lively conversations. It costs nothing and gathering them can be fun.*
- ♦ Say: *Classification is another skill your children can learn with these same weeds. For example, arrange the plants from largest to smallest.*

- ♦ Say: *Ask your children to sort (classify) the plants and to explain how he/she grouped them. Take turns grouping the plants in a different way each time. Be sure to explain the different groupings (example: color, size, shape, flowering plants, etc.) You may even make this a game by guessing how the other person chose to sort.*

Plant a Tiny Yard

This is a fun project for you and your child.

- ♦ Put holes in an old dishpan. Cover the bottom of the pan with small pebbles. Fill the pan almost to the top with soil.
- ♦ For a pond, make a hole in the soil and put in an empty plastic margarine container. Put some pebbles in the bottom and fill the container with water. Cut a small piece of lawn from sod and put it beside the pond and water it well.
- ♦ Dig small holes and plant a mixture of small plants (not seeds) around your "lawn" and pond. (Small plants like pansies, ivy, and alyssum work well.) Your child may want to put small doll furniture or figurines onto their yard.
- ♦ Find a place where the whole family can enjoy the tiny yard. Remind your child they will need water it and be sure it gets sunshine.

Classification Skills

- ♦ Children who learn how to sort and organize objects; develop sound number ideas.
- ♦ The ability to classify and group objects builds a child's ability to organize his/her own environment.
- ♦ Early development of classification skills result in a better understanding of patterns and other math skills leading to higher achievement in school.

Interactive Literacy Between Parents and Their Children

Real World Connections

Do you remember how special you felt whenever your parents took time to talk with you? These special times were an important way of helping you better understand the world. Now it is your turn! Talking to your children is an important way of helping them make connections between books and real life. These magic moments help children process information and apply what they have learned to new situations.

Children build the prior knowledge base necessary for both success in school and later in life through their personal experiences. That is why it is important to take advantage of every opportunity to give your children a variety of learning experiences. Go to as many appropriate free events in the community as you can. As learning partners you and your child will share many delightful discoveries.

My Garden

Here's a simple five minute action poem to do with your child. First read the poem showing your child the corresponding actions.

Then try reading aloud while you act the poem out together. Children love to do this activity over and over until they know it by heart!

My Garden

This is my garden. I'll rake it with care.

Here are the flower seeds I'll plant in there.

The sun will come out and the rain will fall.

And my garden will blossom and grow straight and tall.

Carrot Salad

- ◆ 1 grated carrot
- ◆ About 20 raisins
- ◆ 1 tablespoon sunflower seeds
- ◆ Small pieces of pineapple
- ◆ 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- ◆ Gently mix all ingredients
- ◆ Enjoy with your child

Motions

- Extend one hand forward. Make a raking motion on palm with other hand.
- Make planting motion with thumb and index finger.
- Make a circle overhead with hands and let fingers flutter down.
- Cup hands together and extend slowly upward.

Adult Literacy - ABE Level

Recipe for Success

Many people enjoy making things. It might involve cutting, stitching, pasting, pounding, painting, planting, writing, or cooking. Being creative is a part of a person's makeup. All of us were born with thoughts and ideas just waiting to be let loose. Like the seed, the boy watered and cared for, we all contain the promise of more.

May the desire to learn, take root and grow.

Family Recipes

Write down at least 3 of your family's favorite recipes to use in you own cookbook.

Make Your Own Cookbook!

Cooking is a creative part of everyday life. Often times family recipes are passed from one generation to another. Use the carrot salad recipe (from page 6) as a beginning for making your own personal recipe booklet.

You will need: colored paper, writing tools, crayons, markers, scissors, glue, metal fasteners, hole punch and some magazines for cutting (optional).

- ◆ On a piece of colored paper, title your cookbook and decorate the cover. (You can cut out magazine pictures or draw your own.)
- ◆ On another piece of paper, copy the carrot salad recipe.
- ◆ Write your three family recipes. (Be sure to include the ingredients, procedure, oven temperature, and any other pertinent information.)
- ◆ Colorfully decorate your pages.
- ◆ Use metal fasteners to bind your book.

Now, it is time to share your book with family and friends. Perhaps they would like to add some of their treasured recipes to your book. Have fun making one of the recipes with your child.

Enjoy a family gathering and ask your guests to prepare a family favorite and share the recipe.

Adult Literacy - GED Level

Activity Page

Write a Step-By-Step Explanation

Notes:

Effective writing is a critical life skill. In our day-to-day life we often need to explain how to do various things so that others will understand. Order words (see Word Bank) are an important part of any explanation. To practice writing a clear explanation, describe the steps involved in making a salad. Imagine you were trying to explain how to make a tossed salad. First write a list of everything you would need – vegetables, utensils, etc. Then, think about what you need to do to prepare the salad. Now, in the space provided, write a paragraph that gives step-by-step directions for making a tossed salad. Remember that your paragraph needs a title! Be sure to use “order words” from the word bank!

Word Bank

First

Next

Before

After

Then

Second

Third

Last

Finally

Adult Literacy - ELL Lesson

Vegetable Words

Procedure

Beginning Level:

Reinforcing
vocabulary

Vegetable Names:

2 Carrots
2 Lettuce (Heads)
2 Tomatoes
2 Peppers

Required

Materials:

2 examples of each
vegetable, pictures
of the vegetables
glued to large index
cards with the
English word written
on the back.

Pick up the carrot.
Say: *This is a carrot.*
Pick up the second
carrot. Say: *This is a
carrot.* Hand the carrot
to the learner. While
saying again, *This is a
carrot.* Beckon to the
learner to repeat your
words. Give the carrot
to the learner and ask,
What is this? (Help the
learner give the correct
response if necessary.)
Repeat the process
with the second carrot.
When the learner is
ready, repeat the entire
process with the other
vegetables. Each time
you successfully
introduce a new word,
review all the previous
words by asking, *What
is this?* The visual
representations may
be used as flash cards.

More Advanced

Use describing words and sentence completion

With teacher support, more skillful learners should complete each sentence with a word from the "Word Bank." The completed sentence should be read aloud by the teacher and then repeated by the learner. The learner may wish to select different words to substitute in the sentence.

Word Bank

Hard

Fresh

Sad

Happy

Red

Green

Is the lettuce _____?

The tomato is _____.

The pepper is _____.

The carrot feels _____.