

The
Early Years Count
Literacy
Connection



Joy Takes Root

Written by Gwendolyn Wallace
Illustrated by Ashleigh Corrin

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

On a summer visit, Joy finally gets to join her Grandmother in planting the vegetable and flower gardens. What will Joy learn and how can she take what she learns back home?

Genre: Picture book/realistic fiction

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Joy Takes Root* to introduce in your classroom:

balm	ancestors
intention	hum
memories	rhythms

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

Connecting with the HighScope Curriculum

COR Advantage 1.5

Approaches To Learning
Item A (Initiative and planning)

Creative Arts
Item X (Art)

Science And Technology
Item BB (*Observing and classifying*), Item CC (*Experimenting, predicting and drawing conclusions*), Item DD (*Natural and physical world*), Item EE (*Tools and technology*)

Reading Tips

Ask the children if they have ever helped in the yard or garden? Let them know that in this story, a little girl helps her grandma in the garden and then makes a garden on her own. After pages where Grandma shares or teaches Joy something, try it with the group (feel their heartbeat, pass around fresh soil to smell, pass around a tea bag to smell). After Joy watches her seedlings grow, ask, "What did Joy learn from her grandma?" Try to identify the fruits and vegetables Grandma grows.

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

For **Small Group Time**, give each child some pages from garden or seed catalogues, scissors, glue and green or brown paper. Suggest they create their own kind of garden.

Look for seeds during **Outside Time**. What flowers are visible? What trees are making or dropping seeds or pods? Bring bags or buckets for collecting samples to examine and try to identify at future Small Group activities.

Around the Room

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Have a variety of seeds, tweezers, and magnifying glasses at the **Toy Area** for examination and comparison.

Enhance the **Book Area** with other stories about seeds, water and gardens. Include "Gwendolyn's Pet Garden" by Anne Renaud, "Miss Maple's Seeds" by Eliza Wheeler, "Drop" by Emily Kate Moon, and "Peter Rabbit" by Beatrix Potter.

Add soil, watering cans and garden tools to the **Sand and Water Area**.

Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Joy Takes Root*:

What part of the gardening would you most like to do?

If you could grow any fruits and vegetables in your own garden, what would you grow?

Do you ever hum a favorite song while you work or play?

*For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact **The Family Connection:***

website—
www.famconn.org

Facebook—
@famconnsjc

phone—
574-237-9740

@ Home

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Joy Takes Root* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

As you read with your child, recall any fun memories of helping alongside your grandmother and what the experience taught you. Stop during the read aloud and ask questions like, "Why does Joy's grandmother tell her that?" or, "How will this help Joy later?" Recall the story at the grocery store in the produce section. Ask, "If you could plant a garden like Joy and her grandmother, what would you plant?" Look at the items your child points to or says. While preparing fresh fruit or vegetables, notice any and all seeds or pits. On a paper towel, your child can sort and examine the seeds. Consider planting one or 2 to see what happens. An egg carton works wonders for small starter gardens!