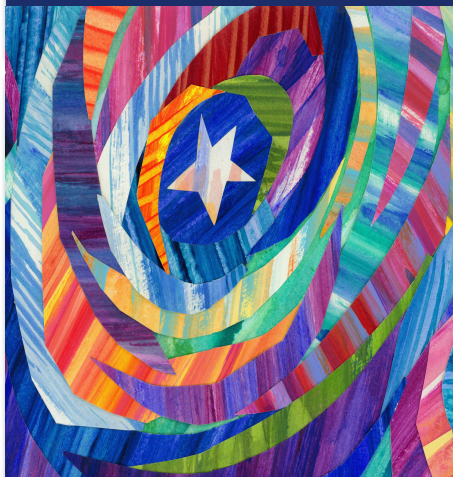


The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



Gwendolyn's Pet Garden

Written by Anne Renaud
Illustrated by Rashin
Kheiriyeh

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

Gwendolyn really wants a pet- something she can take care of and love. Her parents won't allow animals with fins or feathers or four legs (or more). What does that leave for Gwendolyn to care for and love?

Genre: Picture book

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Gwendolyn's Pet Garden* to introduce in your classroom:

tendrils	savvy
shimmy	sprouting
measure	possibilities

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*)

Social and Emotional
Development
Item D (*Emotions*)

Mathematics Item U
(*Measurement*), Item W
(*Data analysis*)

Science & Technology
Item BB
(*Observing and classifying*)

Reading Tips

Ask the children, "Who has a pet?" Create a chart that shows all children's pets. Introduce the book, "Gwendolyn has a pet, too but hers is not up on our chart. Let's see what kind of pet she has." Stop the read several times to review. There is a lot of information- feelings, ideas, "what ifs"- ask the children to predict what will happen on many pages. Gwendolyn uses many strategies to learn how to have this type of "pet". Ask the children what they would do if they had this opportunity.

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.

Use seed packets and actual items as a way to sort and group by various attributes at **Small Group Time**. Is it a vegetable, herb or fruit? Create charts to collect data.

Take rulers, pads and pencils along at **Outside Time** to document different types and sizes of plants seen and found in the outdoor play area and on walks.

Pretend to grow from seed to plant as part of **Large Group Time**.

Around the Room

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

Place potting soil, watering cans, small rakes and trowels in the **Sand and Water Area**.

Add stuffed animals of all kinds and props to the **House Area** to encourage children to pretend to take care of a "pet".

Include "Growing Vegetable Soup" by Lois Ehlert, "The Tiny Seed" by Eric Carle and "Lola Plants A Garden" by Anna McQuinn to the **Book 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 *Gwendolyn's Pet Garden*:

What would be your favorite pet? Why?

What would you grow in a garden?

What have you done that took a lot of time and patience?

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 *Gwendolyn's Pet Garden* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

While reading the story pause to talk about how Gwendolyn shows how much she wants a pet. She requests, pouts and gives her reasons but her parents say no. Talk with your child about how some requests will be a "no" but that does not mean parents don't love you! Problems can be solved- and Gwendolyn's parents help solve this by giving her something that met her requirement- something to take care of. Notice how much effort the garden takes and how much it gives in return. Plant flower or herb seeds in a small planter and enjoy the simple pleasure of watching it grow together.