

Teaching notes for

WE FOUND A SEED by Rob Ramsden.

Notes written by Janine Woolston.

'Out playing one day, two children find a seed and decide to keep it safe. But how do they make it grow? Finally, it grows, flowers... and leaves even more seeds. Children will love to look out for the ladybird in the delicately detailed illustrations... Part picture book, part early nature book, it's a lovely way to show young children the cycle of the seasons and the wonders of nature.'

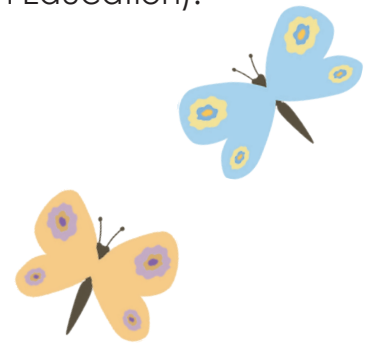
– Parents in Touch



Ages 2 to 6 (Early Years/EarlyKS1)

The areas of learning are, PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education):

- understanding the world
- sensory and exploratory play
- developing curiosity and confidence
- developing a sense of abilities
- personal, social and emotional development
- communication and language

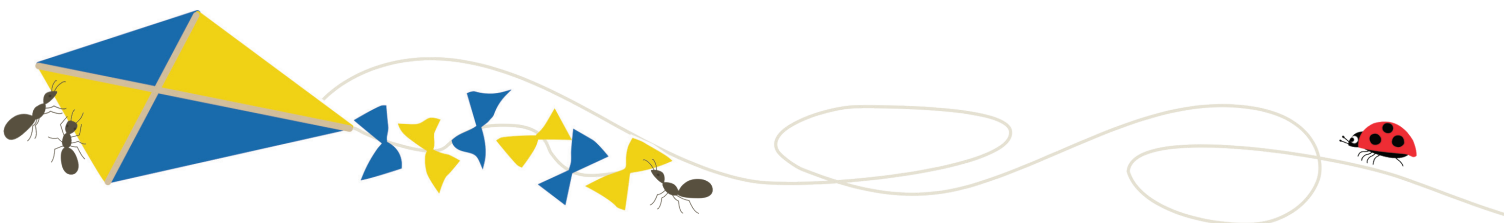


Nature provides a perfect playground for children to learn and explore. There is an abundance of opportunities for endless exploration, fun and adventure. A world of discovery that allows children to be curious and learn about themselves as well as introducing them to the wonders and joy of the natural world.

WE FOUND A SEED is a beautifully written and illustrated story where we meet two friends and join them on their very own journey of discovery as they learn about the cycle of life. This story is a wonderful way in which to encourage children to venture outdoors. Through a variety of activities we can support them to test out their capabilities, gain knowledge, have positive experiences in nature and learn what they can do and achieve through play and exploration.



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Page 4-5

"This is us."

Begin by engaging children into the story by setting the scene and inviting children to answer these questions with you:

- * Who are the children?
- * Wonder where they are, notice the pictures – what season could it be?
- * What are the children doing? How are they feeling? How do we know this?
- * Have you ever flown a kite?

Page 6-7

"We found a seed!"



- * What type of seed could it be? Where could it have come from? - Invite answers from the children.
- * Have they ever planted seeds? What happened? Encourage discussion of different experiences.
- * Wonder how the two friends are feeling – notice their facial expressions. Name feelings – excited, happy etc.
- * What might the children do with the seed? Be curious.

Page 8 - 9

"We put it in a box to keep it safe."



- * Why have the children put the seed in a box?
- * Wonder out loud, invite discussion. Will it be safe? Will the seed like being in the box?
- * Would we like to be put in a box to be kept safe? Imagine how this might feel.

"It didn't grow."

- * Be curious about why the seed didn't grow.
- * Can we think of ideas as to why nothing has happened?

Page 10-15

**"We played with the seed. We danced for the seed. We sang to the seed
It didn't grow.**

We asked the seed, "What must we do?"

We listened, we waited, and then we knew..."



As you read these pages be curious about what the friends are doing with the seed. Continue to lead children into discussion about it and ask them if they played, sang or danced for a seed, what would they do?

Try out any suggestions from the children. Let them express themselves outdoors. Sing, dance, play. Pay attention, be alongside them and be interested in their actions. Notice what they are doing, name sensations and feelings that they express. Join them in their laughter, joy, happiness and be aware of children who perhaps find it more difficult to be expressive by being there to guide, co – adventure and encourage.

- * In the story when the characters ask the seed **“what must we do?”** invite answers, acknowledge ideas, try them out and experiment.
- * Draw attention to the character’s faces, wonder what they could be thinking and feeling while they listen and wait.

Pages 16-17

“Plant me” And so we did!

Plant seeds, nurture and care for them.



Set up an activity for children to plant seeds in different growing environments. Use their suggestions as well as putting some in a box – see what happens! Predict the outcome. Keep a diary, provide simple booklets for children to draw or write what happens.

Spend time creating a garden area for children to develop, create and explore.

Together draw a plan of what you might like in the garden – vegetables, flowers, a pond, bug habitats.

Take time to listen to the birds.

Hear the different sounds bugs and insects make, hunt for the creatures seen in the story – Butterflies, Ladybirds, Snails, Ants.

Notice textures, colours and sounds outdoors.

Think about what your seeds will need to grow, and create an indoor or outdoor display to show the life cycle of a Sunflower.

Pages 18-23

Autumn, Winter and Spring pages.

As well as focussing on a life cycle, these pages may be linked to topics involving weather and the changing of seasons. The opportunities for

outdoor sensory exploration, creativity, observation, fun and adventure are endless.

Autumn.

“We heard the wind blow autumn leaves.”

- * Do we think that seeds and plants can feel and hear the wind too?
- * Notice the characters' faces in the story and discuss what they are doing and feeling.
- * Talk about how being outside in the wind feels for us.

On a windy day go outdoors – feel, listen, hear the wind, notice what it does to trees and plants – engage in a purely sensory experience.

Make piles of fallen leaves and allow children to play with them.
Notice the different colours and textures.

Create leaf print pictures with paint and leaves.

Make collages from autumn leaves.

Make kites, like the characters have at the beginning of the story, and test them outdoors. Allow children to fully immerse themselves in and share their experience.

Winter.

“We felt the icy winter rain.”

- * Do we think the seed can feel the rain too?
- * Will it help the seed?
- * How do the children in the story feel about being out in the rain?
- * What are they doing? Notice their facial expressions, name feelings.

Go outside in the rain!

Put on your wellies and wet weather clothing, splash in puddles, dance in the rain, sing in the rain! Let children have fun and explore.

Create a mud area where children can dig. Think about how the soil changes when it rains. Touch and feel the soil, talk about how it feels and extend vocabulary by using descriptive language – soft, squelchy, sticky, gooey etc. Let them get messy and dirty!

Look for insects and bugs that might be out in the rain – what do you see?

Look at the sky, notice the clouds.

Look at the plants, trees and flowers –
notice what the rain does to them.



Spring.

“We were warmed by the sun in early spring.”

“The seed was too. It grew...”

Early spring is the most exciting time to see and understand how nature transforms.

Outside, ask children to feel the sun on their face, think about how it makes them feel and how seeds and plants might feel too. Notice the changes as trees begin to blossom, leaves and plants begin to grow and insects appear.

Using the book, be curious and excited about the changes you see. Think about what the seed needed to be able to grow and talk about how it needed care, food, water, shelter, just like we do.

Pages 24-27

**“and it grew, and it grew...
and it grew.”**



- * Express excitement and be curious about the plant that is growing.
- * Notice and emulate the characters actions as the plant grows.
- * What will it grow into? Invite answers from the children and engage them in suggesting ideas.

Pages 28 – 29

**“It gave us a flower!
It shone like the sun all summer long.”**



- * Notice how the pictures have changed, ask the children to say what they can see – flowers, blue sky, bugs and insects.
- * Name everything in the picture, ask how has it changed? Why has it changed? What season is it?
- * Look at the characters, notice their facial expressions and body language. How are they feeling?
- * Be expressive, name and acknowledge what children tell you they can see.

Paint pictures of the flower.

Make collages using fabrics and natural materials,
or using different art materials.

Use chalks to draw flowers and plants on the ground.



Pages 30 – 31

**“Then autumn came.
Our flower died and we were sad. “**

Notice the change to the pictures.

- * How has the sky, grass, leaves, flower changed?
- * Again, ask children to say what they can see and acknowledge this.
- * Wonder how the characters are feeling – look at their expressions and body language; name and acknowledge answers on how they think they are feeling and why.

During autumn, take children outside and notice the changes in colours to the plants, trees and sky. Relate this to what you see in the story.

Think about the weather and how it is changing too.

“But it left us a gift.”

- * Discuss with children what the gift could be.

Think about what they have seen in the story.

Page 32

“It gave us seeds! We knew just what to do.”

- * What are the characters doing?
- * Can the children tell you what is going to happen next?
- * What will the seed need to grow? What will the seed grow into?
- * How are the characters feeling and what have they learned?

Other Suggested activities

Make a scrap book or display using photos, drawings and children's work.

Create and tell your own story of a life cycle and go on your own journeys to discover the wonderful transformations that occur in nature.

Create a story box or basket for children to explore during free play –

Fill with props – dolls to represent the characters, an umbrella, items of clothing such as a scarf, hat and coat so children can dress up as them. A kite, laminated pictures of the insects, puppets, soft toys, a seed, a box, items to represent the seasons seen in the book, to help children independently act out the story and interpret in their own way.

Read and act out the story as a group, ask children to imagine they are the seed and as you read the book, model the seed's experience of the weather and then growing. Use actions, intonation in your voice and movement to encourage the children to imagine into the world of the seed.



Useful Links

Scallywag Press Resources – <https://www.scallywagpress.com/resources.html>

The Pollinator Promise – <https://xpollination.org/pollipromise/>

Bumblebee Conservation Trust – <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/learning-zone/>

RHS – Get Children Gardening – <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=682>

Royalty Entomological Society – <https://www.royensoc.co.uk/>

Wildlife Trust – <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/kids-and-families>

Empathy Lab – <https://www.empathylab.uk/>

Follow twitter accounts to connect with other schools and outdoor learning, and here are some Twitter accounts to begin connecting:

@msnewman1001– Wildlife gardener and educator, inspiring people to connect with nature.

@katemacrae – Wildlife Enthusiast! Consultant, Teacher, Blogger & Mum.

@CultivationSt – A national campaign, encouraging gardening in schools.

@RHSSchools – Updates from the RHS Campaign for School Gardening.

@GrowingTeacher – A teacher keen to transform our grounds, create an allotment, enhance biodiversity and improve habitats.

This hashtag – #outdoorlearning – will take you to other relevant tweets

Janine Woolston

Janine has worked as a Teaching Assistant and LSA in primary schools for the past 12 years. She is Level 3 qualified in Specialist Support for Teaching and Learning in schools. Primarily working in Early Years and KS1, often specialising in 1:1 support, she quickly developed an interest in enhancing social and emotional development. Janine is a qualified Licensed Thrive Practitioner and using a therapeutic approach, specialist techniques and activities, works with children in school both individually and in groups. Through using the arts and nature, Janine supports children to build confidence and resilience to allow them to develop both socially and emotionally and be ready to engage with life and learning.



If you've enjoyed this book, look for the companion title **I Saw A BEE** Where a little boy is surprised when he discovers a bee...

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