

Families for Literacy Program Newsletter

April, 2018

Tutors: please go over this newsletter (whatever is appropriate) with your adult student and encourage him/her to visit the Story Times with their children, it's a lot of fun!



Middletown Library: 21256 Washington Street, Middletown, **Tuesdays, 11:30 am**

Redbud Library, 14785 Burns Valley Rd. Clearlake, **Thursday, 11:00 am**

Upper Lake Library, 310 2nd St, Upper Lake, **every 1. Thursday of the month, 2 pm**

Lakeport Library, 1425 N. High St. Lakeport, **Fridays, 10:15 am and 2:30 pm**

Spring Time - Garden Time

Most children enjoy being outdoors and love digging in the soil, getting dirty, creating things and watching plants grow. Without even noticing your little gardeners learn and develop important new skills from growing things, like

- gaining responsibility as they take care of the plants
- learning to be patient as they wait for the seeds to grow and
- getting a better connection with the earth and developing love and respect for nature while at the same time learning about the growth process and more.



An added bonus: Children (and adults) get more physical activity doing something fun and productive.

How to get your children interested in gardening?



- Keep it simple and short.
- Encourage your kids to dig in the dirt - younger children love making mud pies.
- Use lightweight, easy-to-handle, correct-sized tools and garden equipment.
- Give children their own garden space - start with a large container or a few pots.
- Involve older children in the planning and design of the garden.
- Grow interesting plants such as sunflowers, corn, pumpkins, tomatoes and strawberries.
- Plant flowers that attract butterflies, ladybugs and hummingbirds.



Here are some fun ideas:

◇ Grow Your Name.



What You Need: Small Box (roughly the size of a shoe box), Seeds, and Potting Soil.

What You Do: Line the box with plastic, and fill it with potting soil. Have your children scratch out their name in the soil and let them sprinkle cress seeds or grass seeds into the name. Gently cover it with damp soil and soon you will have their name growing in a garden. You can even harvest the cress and put it on eggs or bread.

◇ **Plant Something You Can Eat:** We all want our kids to be diverse, healthy eaters. When it comes to vegetables, children are much more likely to eat it if they watched it grow and picked it themselves. Choose seeds that quickly reward young gardeners such as radishes, squash or pea.



◇ **Create a Pizza Garden:** Grow the vegetables and herbs you need to flavor your pizza - tomatoes, oregano, thyme, basil and rosemary grows so well in Lake County! Get your toddlers to help look after them and when they are ready, help you prepare delicious pizza with your homegrown vegetables and herbs.

Is it still too cold to grow from seeds outdoors? Make a simple and affordable egg carton greenhouse with your children! Take an empty egg carton and cut the top off. Let your little ones fill the bottom with potting soil and plant the seeds. Then mist it with water and cover the carton with a clear plastic bag to keep the moisture in and to avoid water to leak out the bottom.



Pictures: <https://teaching2and3yearolds.com>



Seeds (Sung to: "Twinkle, twinkle little star")
Dig a hole deep in the ground, spread some tiny seeds around.
Pat them down - so they will keep, they are lying fast asleep
Rain will help the seeds to grow, sunshine keeps them warm I know.



The Flower Song
(Sung to: "Do You Know the Muffin Man")
Curl up like a tiny seed, a tiny seed, a tiny seed.
Warm sun is what you need, now you can start growing.
Drink the rain and start to rise, start to rise, start to rise.
Stretch up tall, arms open wide, now a flower's showing.

The Seed Cycle
(Sung to: "Farmer in the Dell")
The farmer sows his seeds.
The farmer sows his seeds.
Hi-Ho the dairy-o,
The farmer sows his seeds.
More verses:
The rain begins to fall...
The sun begins to shine...
The seeds begin to grow...
The plants grow big and tall...
The farmer cuts his corn...



Zora's zucchini, by Katherine Pryor:

The first zucchini of a summer garden is always exciting, but what happens when the plants just keep growing ...and growing...and growing?

Plant the tiny seed, by Christie Matheson:

Plant a seed to watch it grow. Press on the cloud to make it rain. Jiggle the book to scatter the seeds... Interactive text teaches very young children how flowers sprout and mature

If you plant a seed, by Kadir Nelson:

While planting seeds in their garden, two animals learn the value of kindness.

The forever garden, by Laurel Snyder:

Each day, rain or shine, Honey works in her garden, and each day, the little girl who lives next door is right by Honey's side. A heartwarming picture book that shows how friendship-just like a garden- grows. But... what happens when one friend moves away?

All these books are available at your local library!

♦ **Carrot on a String**

Core out the top of a carrot and carve a hole in order to hang the carrot from a string somewhere where it can get sun. Have children put water in the cored out top. In a few days your kids will love the results

