





About the Book

Spend a quiet day exploring the outside world with award-winning

author-illustrator Aliki's *Quiet in the Garden*. In this beautiful and wonderfully accessible picture book, a little boy discovers that there is more than meets the eye when he steps into his garden. By sitting quietly and listening carefully, the boy observes the world around him and befriends the garden's animal inhabitants—all of whom are hungry! The boy collects fruits and vegetables from the garden and "with food enough for all," shares a picnic lunch with his new friends.

Before Reading

Thinking Ahead

Have children expand their imaginations by predicting what might happen in *Quiet in the Garden*. Read the book's title to your students and show them the jacket illustration. What kinds of animals can your students identify on the front jacket? What quiet activities do they think the boy might do in the garden? After slowly turning the first few pages of the book so that students can study the art, stop on the first illustrated spread. Which animals and plants can students identify on these pages? Can they locate the boy's hammock, which they first saw on the front jacket? What other things are in the garden?

How Plants Grow

Ask students to take turns naming things that are necessary to grow a garden. Make a class web of your students' ideas. Explain the importance of water, sunlight, soil, and fertilizer, and discuss how a gardener may help care for plants.

Gardens at Home

Ask students if their families have gardens. What types of flowers, fruits, vegetables, or other plants do they grow? Do any of your students help care for their families' gardens? How? At the end of the discussion, have each student draw a garden that he or she would like to plant and care for. Encourage students to include animals in their gardens.

Quiet in the Garden Classroom Activities

Class Garden



To help students understand how plants grow, have them create a garden on school property or in a nearby park. Secure a small area of land that receives lots of sunlight, and provide your students with water, soil, seeds, and any necessary gardening tools, such as small shovels, trowels, or rakes. Have students plant their garden by following the instructions on the front of this poster. Organize frequent class visits to the garden to take care of it and to check on its progress. What do your students observe when they sit quietly in their garden?

Planting for Spring

As an alternative to the outdoor planting activity, here's an easy in-class project in which students get to plant their own seeds. Prior to the lesson, prepare a plastic sandwich bag for each child, with a paper towel laid flat inside. Staple horizontally across the middle section of the bag, placing the staples close together to create a barrier. Have each student place a seed inside the bag, along the row of staples. Then have students fill their bags with approximately a quarter-inch of water, making sure that the paper towels are wet. The paper towels will slowly absorb the water from the bottom of the bag, providing the seeds with just enough moisture. After a few weeks, the seeds will sprout. When the sprouts reach about six inches, help your students take them out of the plastic bags and plant them in paper cups filled with soil. Watch as the sprouts continue to grow!

The Art of Eating

Read *Quiet in the Garden* aloud to your students, and make a list on the chalkboard of the following eight animals featured in the story: robin, butterfly, worm, squirrel, spider, turtle, frog, and fish. Then divide the class into small groups, supplying each group with a large piece of poster board divided into eight rectangles. Instruct students to draw each of the eight animals in its own rectangle. Then hand out pictures of the primary foods the animals eat in the story. The corresponding foods and animals are: berries for the robin, flower nectar for the butterfly, dirt for the worm, acorns for the squirrel, flies for the spider, moss for the turtle, gnats for the frog, and algae for the fish. Then have students try matching each food to its animal. After reviewing the correct answers, help students use glue or tape to fasten the food pictures on the drawings of the appropriate animals. Display the posters around the classroom.

Food for Our Friends

Have a class discussion about the similarities and differences between the foods the animals eat in the story and the foods your students eat. Then host an outdoor class picnic and serve some of the fruits and vegetables featured in *Quiet in the Garden*, such as apples, berries, radishes, carrots, or cucumbers. Invite students to bring along stuffed animals so that they can share the picnic with their animal friends.

Quiet in the Garden Classroom Activities (continued)

Natural Music

Just as the boy in *Quiet in the Garden* listens to the sounds of his garden, encourage your students to listen to nature's music, too. Take your class for a walk by a pond, lake, river, or stream. Have children point out plants or animals that they find interesting or have never seen before. The boy in *Quiet in the Garden* sees a frog, some gnats, a fish, a mouse, and algae at his pond. Can your students find any of these things during the nature walk? Take a tape recorder along, and while the class quietly listens to the sounds by the water, record the natural music for later listening. Back in the classroom, play the recording for your students. Ask them to recall what could have made the various sounds and what they remember about the animals and other wildlife by the water.

A Garden for All Seasons

Encourage students to explore their ideas about how seasonal changes affect plants and animals. Give small groups of students a piece of poster board and colored pencils. Ask each group to divide its poster into four equal sections and label the sections with the seasons: spring, summer, fall, and winter. In each box, have students draw the landscape from *Quiet in the Garden* as they imagine it would look during each season. For example, illustrations for spring might include lots of flowers, lots of animals, sunshine, and some rain. Ask the groups to share their posters with the class.

Eggshell Flowers

For this art project you will need to prepare at home by saving discarded eggshell pieces over a period of time and then dyeing them in several colors. Divide the class into small groups and provide each group with a piece of paper that has an outline of a flower. Then have students glue the colored eggshell pieces to the paper to create colorful, textured flower petals. When the masterpieces have dried, hang the flowers around the room to make your own classroom garden.

A Garden in Need

Taking care of a garden is fun, but keeping that garden (and the rest of the environment) clean and healthy takes hard work. Is there an outdoor area on your school grounds or in your community that needs to be cleaned up? Have children work together to care for a garden in need by removing litter, weeds, and dead plants.

Recycled Bird Feeders

Further explore the idea of caring for the environment by having students make bird feeders from recycled materials. Ask each student to bring in an empty two-liter plastic soda bottle from home. Remove the labels and cut a hole on one side of the bottle. Have each student decorate the outside of his or her bottle with paint and then tie a string to the top of the bottle. Students should take their bottles home and fill them with birdseed before hanging them outside. With these beautiful new bird feeders, some of your students may even be visited by a robin, like the boy in *Quiet in the Garden*!