Title/Author:  *Zinnia’s Flower Garden*, by Monica Wellington

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (Recommendation: at least 20 minutes per day)

Common Core grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.7, RL.K.10, W.K.2; W.K.8, SL.K.1, SL.K.5, SL.K.6, L.K.1, L.K.4

Lesson Objective: Students will listen to a picture book read aloud and use literacy skills (reading, writing, discussion and listening) to understand the changes that are part of a simple life cycle of a plant: seed, seedling, plant, flower, and fruit.

Teacher Instructions

**Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. ***Please do not read this to the students***. This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

Key Understanding:

The weather in each season impacts how Zinnia cares for her garden.

Identify supporting text features that the author uses to inform the reader. (journal, labels on pictures)

Synopsis

Zinnia plants her flower garden in the spring. As summer, fall and winter approach, she has to do different things to keep her flower garden looking perfect! She keeps a diary of what is happening in her garden, how she is taking care of it and what she does about those weeds and little green bugs.

1. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind, and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
2. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: you may want to copy the questions vocabulary words and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s questions and vocabulary work.*

*Note to teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs): Read Aloud Project Lessons are designed for children who cannot read yet for themselves. They are highly interactive and have many scaffolds built into the brief daily lessons to support reading comprehension. Because of this, they are filled with scaffolds that are appropriate for English Language Learners who, by definition, are developing language and learning to read (English). This read aloud text includes complex features which offer many opportunities for learning, but at the same time includes supports and structures to make the text accessible to even the youngest students.*

*This lesson includes features that align to best practices for supporting English Language Learners. Some of the supports you may see built into this, and /or other Read Aloud Project lessons, assist non-native speakers in the following ways:*

* *These lessons include embedded vocabulary scaffolds that help students acquire new vocabulary in the context of reading. They feature multi-modal ways of learning new words, including prompts for where to use visual representations, the inclusion of student-friendly definitions, built-in opportunities to use newly acquired vocabulary through discussion or activities, and featured academic vocabulary for deeper study.*
* *These lessons also include embedded scaffolds to help students make meaning of the text itself. It calls out opportunities for paired or small group discussion, includes recommendations for ways in which visuals, videos, and/or graphic organizers could aid in understanding, provides a mix of questions (both factual and inferential) to guide students gradually toward deeper understanding, and offers recommendations for supplementary texts to build background knowledge supporting the content in the anchor text.*
* *These lessons feature embedded supports to aid students in developing their overall language and communication skills by featuring scaffolds such as sentence frames for discussion and written work (more guidance available* [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion)*) as well as writing opportunities (and the inclusion of graphic organizers to scaffold the writing process). These supports help students develop and use newly acquired vocabulary and text-based content knowledge.*

The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks

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| **Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks** | **Expected Outcome or Response (for each)** |
| FIRST READING:  Before the first read, identify the title, author/illustrator of the story. Read aloud the entire book (or chapter) with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused. | The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both writing and pictures, and to experience it as a whole. This will give them some context and sense of completion before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully. |
| SECOND READING: SECTION 1 SPRING PAGES 1-15  Note: Ensure journal entry is read to students on all pages where it is embedded in the picture.  **Reread page 4**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  ***rake*** - a tool used for smoothing the ground; Raking means to smooth out the ground.  (Teacher: Point to the rake Zinnia used to smooth out the dirt. Ask students to help name the other tools on this page.)   * What season is it? * How does Zinnia get her garden ready for planting in Spring? * What was the weather like in the spring when Zinnia started planting her garden?   **Reread page 6**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  ***gently***-not hard or forceful  (Teacher: demonstrate by using your fingers to gently touch the top of your hand.)  ***sprinkles* -** to drop or spread small pieces or amounts of something over something  (Teacher: Point to the watering can Zinnia used to sprinkle the ground with water.)   * What steps does Zinnia take to carefully plant flower seeds? * What two important things is Zinnia making sure her plants have? * What pictures do you see around the text on page 6? * This little book is called a garden journal. What type of information does Zinnia record in her Garden Journal? * What day does Zinnia start recording notes in her journal? Zinnia started recording in her journal on May 3rd.   **Reread page 8**  What is another word on this page that means the same thing as sprout? What makes you think that? (Turn and talk to your neighbor.)  **sprout** - to begin to grow   * Why does Zinnia have to wait for the seeds to sprout? Listen carefully as I read this sentence: The seeds need the sun to shine, the rain to fall and many days to pass before her seeds grow. (Say: Restate this sentence in your own words.)   **Reread page 10**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  **seedling**- the first sign of a growing plant  Look at the picture of the seedling, turn and talk to your neighbor about what the seedling looks like.   * What does Zinnia find after checking her garden every day? (Stop and draw a picture on the class chart here.)  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Spring**   * plant seeds * Zinnia got her dirt (garden) ready * watered the dirt | Summer | | Autumn/Fall | Winter |  * How long does Zinnia wait before she sees the first seedling?   **ACTIVITY:**  **Note: Display different illustrations of the book under document camera for students to review.**   * Students identify the topic of Zinnia’s journal and write about the progress of her garden using at least 3 details from the text.   **Reread page 12**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  Teacher: Point to the roots in the 4 pictures located at the top of the page. Show students what Zinnia said about the stems getting taller and leaves getting bigger.   * What do you notice about the roots? So what do you think burrow means?   Teacher Note: Encourage students to look at the class calendar to help answer this question.   * How long does Zinnia wait before Zinnia’s garden is full of green sprouts? How do you know?   Now let’s look back at what we have read in this section:  What was the weather like in the spring?  What did Zinnia do in her garden?  How did the plants change in the spring?  NOTE: Turn and talk to a partner:  Why do you think the plants changed?  **Reread P. 14**   * Why is Zinnia’s garden dry? | * Spring * Zinnia digs up the soil takes out stones, and rakes the dirt smooth. * It was warm. The text says that the warm sun feels good as she works. * Zinnia covers the seeds with dirt and pats it down very gently, then sprinkles the ground with water. * She is making sure her plants have soil and water. * Seeds, watering can, birds, nest, gloves, journal and pencil * Zinnia records the date and important things to remember about her garden. She said that she was busy planting seeds. * Zinnia started recording in her journal on May 3rd. * **Grow** - two sentences almost say the same thing. The first sentence says: Zinnia waits for the seeds to sprout. And the last sentence says: It is hard to wait so long for her seeds to grow. * The seeds need the sun to shine, the rain to fall and many days to pass before her seeds grow.   The seedling looks like little green leaves.   * Zinnia finds the first seedling in her garden. * Zinnia planted her seeds on May 3rd. She saw her first seedling on May 20th. She waited 17 days for her first seedling. * As the stems get taller, more roots dig or burrow deeper into the earth; **Burrow** means to move or press under, through, or into something. * Zinnia waited 26 days before her garden was filled with green sprouts. Her calendar says that it is May 29th and we already know that she planted the seeds on May 3rd. * Rainy & sunny * She planted her garden, she watered the garden, she waits for it to sprout. She checks it everyday. * The little stems get taller, little leaves get bigger, and little roots burrow deeper into the earth. * It has not rained for a week and the sun is hot in June. |
| THIRD READING: SECTION 2 SUMMER PAGES 16-27  **Note: Ensure journal entry is read to students on all pages where it is embedded in the picture.**  **Reread page 16**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  ***pesky -*** making someone annoyed or irritated  ***crowd*** *-* to fill (something) so that there is little or no room for anyone or anything else : to take up much or most of the space in (an area or space)  ***inspects*** - to look at something carefully  ***greedy*** *-* having or showing a selfish desire to have more of something   * What season is it? * What does Zinnia do that helps her plants get bigger and bigger?   **Reread page 18**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  **buds *-*** *a small part of a plant that grows and develops into a flower*  scribe the size of the buds that Zinnia sees on her plants. \*Turn and talk to your neighbor.   * What does Zinnia find in her garden in the summer?   **Reread page 20**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  **bloom -** a period of flowering  Teacher: Explain that the bud opened up and became a flower. It bloomed!   * How does Zinnia know that many more flowers will come? * About how long has it taken for Zinnia to finally see her first flower?   **ACTIVITY:**  **Given a vocabulary journal, students will illustrate and label the 5 words below.**   * sprout * seedling * burrow * buds * bloom   **Reread page 22**  Teacher: Explain that **blossoming** is the flowering of a plant.  Point to the picture on page 23.   * Say: Describe what the garden looks like now that it is growing with blossoming flowers.   (Stop and draw a picture on the class chart here.)   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Spring   * plant seeds * Zinnia got her dirt (garden) ready * watered the dirt | **Summer**   * a lot pretty flowers * the flowers finally grew * flowers taller than Zinnia | | Autumn/Fall | Winter |   **Introduce vocabulary:**  ***picnics* -** a meal that is eaten outdoors   * What does Zinnia want to remember about her sunflowers? What makes you think that?   **Reread page 24**  **Introduce vocabulary:**  ***abundant -*** plenty  ***bouquets -*** a group of flowers that are picked and often tied together  ***fragrant*** - having a sweet or pleasant smell  ***swirl*** - to move in a whirling motion  **Reread page 26**   * What do Zinnia’s customers think about her flowers? How do you know? | * Summer * Zinnia pulls up pesky weeds and inspects her plants for bugs. * Zinnia finds buds growing on many of her plants. * There were lots of buds on her plants so they will bloom into beautiful flowers soon. * It has taken more than two months, almost 3 months for Zinnia’s first flower to bloom. That’s 83 days! It has taken a long time. * The garden is colorful and full of lots of different flowers. * Zinnia notes in her journal that her sunflowers have grown taller than she is. That’s important to her so she wrote it in her journal. * Zinnia wrote in her journal that everyone loved her flowers. The customers gathered bunches of flowers and she was making a lot of money. |
| FOURTH READING: SECTION 3 FALL P. 28-29  **Note: Ensure journal entry is read to students where it is embedded in the picture.**  **Reread page 28**  Teacher: Explain that **ripe** seeds are fully developed and ready to be planted. Say: *For example, we eat our fruit once it is ripe. Most of us wait until our bananas are yellow because they are ripe and ready to be eaten. Green bananas are not ripe.*   * What season is it? * During which month does it start to get colder? * **Note:** Display page 28 under the document camera and ask the following question- What does Zinnia’s garden look like in the autumn as it gets colder?   (Stop and draw a picture on the class chart here.)   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Spring   * plant seeds * Zinnia got her dirt (garden) ready * watered the dirt | Summer   * a lot pretty flowers * the flowers finally grew * flowers taller than Zinnia | | **Autumn/Fall**   * it got cold * she got the last flowers * she found seeds for next year | Winter | | * Fall * Her journal says that it is October and it is autumn/fall in October. * The flowers start to die and turn brown. |

FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

* Given a manila sheet of paper, divided into 4 sections for the seasons of the year, students will use pictures and words to explain what happened to Zinnia’s garden in each season as the weather changed. Students should draw at least one picture and note at least one change in each box.

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| **Spring**  **(There should be at least one change noted in each box.)**     * plant seeds * Zinnia got her dirt (garden) ready * watered the dirt | **Summer**   * a lot pretty flowers * the flowers finally grew * flowers taller than Zinnia |
| **Autumn/Fall**   * it got cold * she got the last flowers * she found seeds for next year | **Winter**   * there was snow on the ground * it was cold * the flowers were dying |

Vocabulary

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| **These words merit less time and attention**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/  processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students ) | **These words merit more time and attention**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with) |
| **Page 4 -**  ***rake*** - a tool used for smoothing the ground  **Page 6 - *gently***-not hard or forceful  **Page 6** - ***sprinkles* -** to drop or spread small pieces or amounts of something over something  **Page 16** - ***pesky -*** making someone annoyed or irritated  **Page 16** - ***crowd*** *-* to fill (something) so that there is little or no room for anyone or anything else : to take up much or most of the space in (an area or space)  **Page 16** - ***inspects*** - to look at something carefully  **Page 16** - ***greedy*** *-* having or showing a selfish desire to have more of something  **Page 22** - ***picnics* -** a meal that is eaten outdoors  **Page 24** - ***abundant*** *- plenty*  **Page 24** - ***bouquets*** *- a group of flowers that are picked and often tied together*  **Page 24** - ***swirl*** *- to move in a whirling motion*  **Page 30 -*****dim*** - not bright or clear | **Page 8 - sprout** - to begin to grow  **Page 10 - *seedling***- the first sign of a growing plant  **Page 12 - burrow** - to move or press under, through, or into something  **Page 18 - buds *-*** *a small part that grows on a plant and develops into a flower*  **Page 20 - bloom -** a period of flowering  **Page 22 - blossoming** - the flower of a seed plant  **Page 28** - **ripe** - fully grown or developed |

Extension learning activities for this book and other useful resources

* Follow the steps at the end of the book to grow your own sunflowers.
* Reinforce the knowledge and vocabulary that students have learned about plants by watching informational videos or reading informational texts. *Note: This is particularly supportive of English Language Learners.* Here are some examples:
  + <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl2bNGmF1Js>
  + *From Seed to Plant* by Kristin Baird Rattini

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

1. **Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.



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1. **Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension\*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

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| * Why is the order of events in this story important? The weather in each season impacts how Zinnia cares for her garden. * Identify supporting text features that the author uses to inform the reader. (journal, labels on pictures)   Meaning/Purpose | * Pictures and labels used to enhance comprehension * Journal used to show elapsed time & key events * Sequential   Structure |
| Language   * Simple sentences * New vocabulary | Knowledge Demands   * Seasons & Weather * Gardening |

\*For more information on the qualitative dimensions of text complexity, visit <http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion_to_Qualitative_Scale_Features_Explained.pdf>

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

**What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?**

Students will be challenged by some of the vocabulary words and the lapse of time between the stages of growth and/or between seasons. As a class, we will discuss the challenging vocabulary words and review what we have learned about the months in each season and the weather.

**How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?**

Students will learn how the weather in each season affects the the growth and development of a garden.

1. **Grade level**

**What grade does this book best belong in?** Kindergarten

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*Zinnia’s Flower Garden*

Name: Date:

Use the text and pictures to complete a class chart by season.

Provide each student with a single sheet of paper per season to record their observations.

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| **Spring** | **Summer** |
| **Fall** | **Winter** |