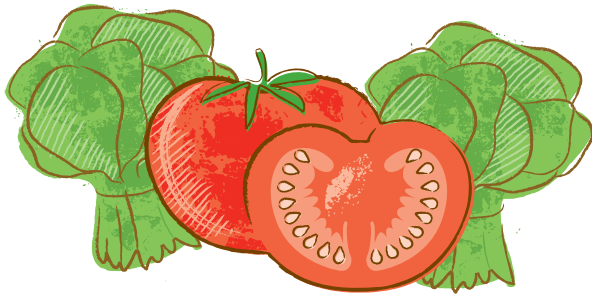


Reading with children can improve their language, literacy, and social-emotional skills, increasing their knowledge of the world around them. With the right book choices, reading can introduce children to healthy eating habits too!

GROWING VEGETABLE SOUP by Lois Ehlert

What It's All About

Watch as vegetables are grown from seeds in the garden, tended, then harvested, and chopped up to make a delicious soup!



Discover a World of Words

Throughout the story introduce new vocabulary words using gestures, tone of voice, pointing to illustrations, or providing brief explanations. This will be easy because so many words are called out with special diagrams!

Make Connections Beyond the Book

After reading the story, make connections to an aspect of the child's life by:

- Talking about your favorite vegetables to put in vegetable soup.
- Making vegetable soup! Wash and chop the vegetables, then put them in a pot of water or broth.
- Planting seeds or little sprouts and helping them grow into vegetable plants.

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Some definitions taken from Biemiller, A. (2010). *Words worth teaching: Closing the vocabulary gap.*

Growing Vegetable Soup



Lois Ehlert

Dig into the Story

Develop children's comprehension of the story by discussing higher-level information (e.g., link characters' feelings to their actions and /or events in the story, predict what might happen, summarize chunks of text). Use prompts throughout the story, such as:

- *Growing a garden can take many weeks or months. Gardeners have to be patient and tend to the baby sprouts so that they can grow up into healthy big plants with vegetables.*
- *There are lots of ways that gardeners help their plants grow. Can you find some examples in the book of jobs that gardeners need to do in order to help their plants grow?*

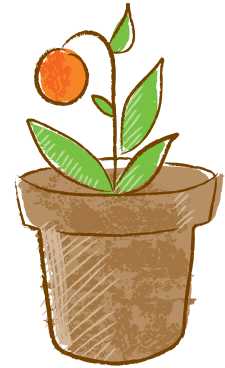
Jumpstart

Jumpstart is a national early education organization working toward the day every child in America enters kindergarten prepared to succeed. Learn more at jstart.org.

Together Time Activity

HOW DID YOUR SOUP GROW?

Identify and investigate all the garden-grown ingredients in your favorite soup recipe.



1 What's in your favorite kind of soup? Whether it's homemade from a recipe or comes from a can, look carefully at the list of ingredients and figure out which ones started out as a plant. You might be surprised to realize that even less-nutritious ingredients like oils and sugars were plants once!

2 Pick a few ingredients to investigate. Look up a picture of each ingredient's plant online or in a book. Does it look the way you expected it to? Is the plant a shrub, tree, vine or another type of plant?

3 Look for the part of the plant that we eat. Is it the root, shoot, fruit, vegetable, leaf, flower, or seed of the plant? Does that part grow above ground or underground?

4 Take the investigation deeper. Find out what kind of climate the plant grows in. Can it grow where you live? How does the part we eat get separated from the plant? Does the ingredient get altered or processed in any way after it leaves the plant or farm and before it ends up in your soup?

BONUS: Choose at least one ingredient from your favorite soup to try growing at home, indoors or out. If you've never gardened before, start with something simple. For instance, herbs can grow almost anywhere, even in a small pot on a windowsill.

Talking Points:

- If you find out an ingredient is grown locally in your area, teach your child how to look for it at the grocery store or visit and talk with a nearby farmer who grows it!
- Take another look at your complete list of soup ingredients and identify which ones are NOT from a plant. Talk about where those ingredients come from: an animal, a factory, or other source? If you're not sure, look it up online.
- If your child picked a store-bought soup instead of a homemade one, notice how many ingredients are in it. Some canned soups contain a lot of ingredients compared to homemade. Are there words on the ingredient list that are unfamiliar? Are all of the ingredients natural or are some of them artificial?
- Have a family lesson on how to read the Nutrition Facts label on store-bought items. For a detailed guide, visit: www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/LabelingNutrition/UCM410486.pdf