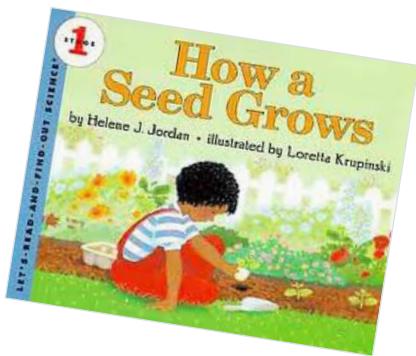


# KIDS BOOK CLUB

## READING TIPS AND ACTIVITIES

**Jumpstart**  
Children first.™

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!



### HOW A SEED GROWS

by Helene J. Jordan

#### What It's All About

This book explains seeds and what they need to grow. The book provides illustrations to show what happens to a seed when it is buried in soil as it begins to grow.



#### Discover a World of Words

Throughout the story, introduce new vocabulary words using gestures, tone of voice, pointing to illustrations, or providing brief explanations. Examples include:



- *Numbered*: with the number written on it
- *Soaks*: gets very wet
- *Shoots*: a part of a young plant

#### 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:

- *What does a baby tree look like after a tree seed has grown for only a few days? What does the tree seed look like after it has grown for many years?*
- *What are some of the things that a seed needs to grow?*
- *What part of the plant is growing before the stem and leaves shoot out of the soil?*



#### Make Connections Beyond the Book

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

- Completing the experiment as described in the book, or completing the "find out more about seeds" activity in the back of the book.
- Visiting a hardware store or garden nursery and discussing the seedlings you see there.

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

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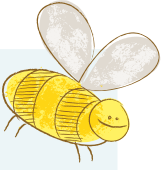
Jumpstart is a national early education organization working toward the day every child in America enters kindergarten prepared to succeed. Learn more at [jstart.org](http://jstart.org).

## Together Time Activity

**BE THE SEEDS:** This dramatic activity helps kids understand the complete life cycle of a plant. Explain what happens as the “seeds” begin to grow and encourage the kids to act out each stage as you say it. Get creative with playful props to make it even more engaging.

- 1** Ask each child what type of seed they would like to pretend to be (vegetable, fruit, tree, flower, etc.). For a group, have each child choose a different kind.
- 2** “Plant the garden” by putting a jacket or other extra piece of clothing on each child to represent their “seed coats.” Then arrange the children in a row. Make it fun by pretending to cover the “seeds” with imaginary dirt. When planted, each child curls up in a ball on the ground.
- 3** Next the “sun” and water come and the seeds slowly break through their coats (jackets come off). Make the “seeds” sprout by adding light and water. Simulate sundown and sunrise by turning the lights off and on or simply asking the children to close and open their eyes. Simulate rain by lightly misting each child with a spray bottle filled with water or give each child a sprinkling of water droplets on top of their heads.
- 4** As more light and water are added, the seeds begin to shoot out roots (arms and legs stick out), then grow bigger and taller (children slowly stand up and stretch tall), then produce leaves and fruits and flowers and vegetables (hands and fingers wiggle out). Have some pollinators (bees and other insects) visit the garden and buzz around (use a wand or feather boa to tickle or tap each seed to represent a visit from a pollinator). Then after they are done growing, the plants die and go back into the ground (children slowly shrink back down and curl up into a ball again). Explain that any fruit or seeds left behind by the first plant can grow into another plant.

## Talking Points



- Serve sunflower seeds in shells as a snack after this activity. Ask the children what they think the sunflower seeds would become if they were planted. Ask them to explain what they just learned about how this seed will grow.
- Talk about the different plants everyone pretended to be during the activity. How long would each plant take to grow if it were real? Look up information about each one. Talk about the seasons and what grows in each season. For older children, ask them to read about and write a paragraph or a one-page report about their plant.
- Explain the varying growth rates and life cycles of different kinds of plants. Examples: Some plants are green all year while other grow in certain seasons. Many vegetables and herbs grow quickly, in just a few weeks, and then become part of the earth again until the next growing season. Other plants, like shrubs or trees, can continue to live and grow for many, many years, and they may drop seeds that can grow into other trees. Some trees produce fruits that only come in certain seasons.

