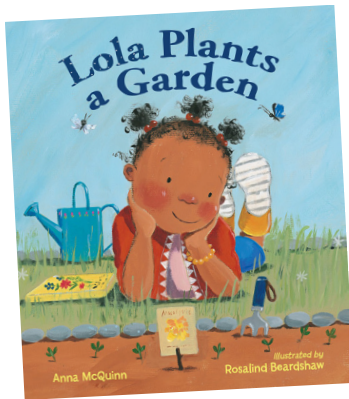


KIDS BOOK CLUB

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!



LOLA PLANTS A GARDEN

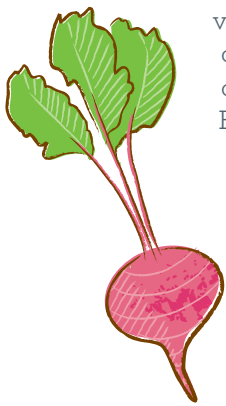
by Anna McQuinn

What It's All About

Lola decides that she wants to plant a garden, full of flowers. With the help of her mom and dad, Lola plants and grows a beautiful garden. To celebrate, Lola invites her friends over to play in her special garden.



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:

- **Seeds:** what plants grow from
- **Weeds:** a plant growing in the wrong place
- **Crunchy:** crisp; makes a loud noise like when eating

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:

- *Lola loves the poem about Mary Mary. It is filled with rhyming words. Mary and contrary both end with the /ry/ sound, bells and shells both end in the /ells/ sound, and grow and row both end in the /ow/ sound.*
- *When Lola and Daddy are hanging up the shiny bells, I see different color flowers, a butterfly, and a bumblebee. What color flowers do you see?*
- *Mommy planted a vegetable garden full of strawberries and peas. Lola planted a flower garden, full of different colored flowers. What types of plants would you put in your garden?*

Make Connections Beyond the Book

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

- Going to the library to check out books about gardens, just like Lola did!
- Creating a flower book, using crayons, markers, paper, scissors, and glue. Be sure to talk about the colors of the flowers and the size and shape of the petals.
- Taking a walk to see the different plants living around your house, yard, or neighborhood. What plants do you see?

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

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

PLANT A PIZZA HERB GARDEN

You can plant a garden just like Lola! A pizza herb garden is an easy project for beginning gardeners or small spaces, and can thrive indoors or outdoors.

1 Buy your pizza herbs and soil. Visit a garden center to find basil, oregano, parsley, and rosemary seeds or seedlings, and ask for help in choosing the right soil. Herbs usually grow well in basic potting mix or organic enriched peat. (Using dirt from your yard is not recommended because it may lack some essential nutrients.)

2 Choose your containers. Plant each variety of seeds or seedlings in its own container, such as a ceramic pot, plastic bucket, or a large coffee can. This makes it easy to move the plants around if they need a warmer or sunnier spot. Make sure your container has lots of drainage holes on the bottom; if not, ask an adult for help drilling more holes. Having enough drainage is critical to success.

3 Choose your location. Place your pots outdoors in a sunny spot, indoors in a south-facing window or under a grow light, or in any location where they will receive at least 6 hours of sunlight per day.

4 Water and transplant as needed. When watering your pots, make sure that all of the soil gets wet and that the water is draining out thoroughly and not puddling in the bottom of the pot. Allow the top 2-3 inches of soil to get completely dry before watering again. If a plant grows all the way to the edges of your pot, transplant it to a larger container.

5 Harvest your herbs. When you're ready to season a pizza with your herbs, clip off several inches from each stem, separate the leaves, tear or mince them, and sprinkle them on your pizza. You can also add fresh herbs to salads, soups, fresh veggie dishes, pasta dishes, homemade salsa, and many other recipes.
Tip: If you end up with more than you know what to do with, make pesto! Easy recipes can be found online.



BONUS: When you're ready for a new gardening challenge, expand your pizza garden to include tomatoes and peppers, which can also grow in containers.



Talking Points:

- Notice the different parts of your herb plants: the roots, stems and leaves. Which parts do you eat? What about the seeds?
- Did you know that many powdered spices are ground seeds? Coriander seeds, for example, are ground to a powder and used in all kinds of recipes; or you can plant them and grow a coriander plant, also known as cilantro!
- Fresh herbs, dried herbs, and ground spices add flavor to foods without salt, sugar or fats. What are some other healthy ways to boost flavor?