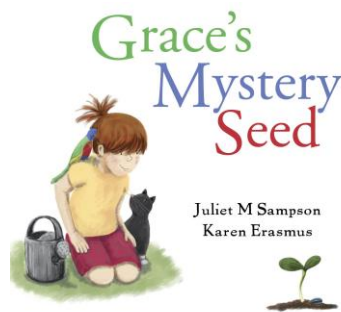


Teacher's Notes for *Grace's Mystery Seed*



Author: Juliet M Sampson

Illustrator: Karen Erasmus

Publisher: Ford Street Publishing

Grace learns how to grow a seed with the help of Mrs Marino. She's does not know what it will become.

Inspiration from the author Juliet M Sampson:



Grace's Mystery Seed was inspired by my love of sunflowers. Years ago, a famous writer gave me a seed to plant. I had never been a gardener and was wondering how I would manage to do this task. I enjoyed caring for this seedling and this is where the inspiration for *Grace's Mystery Seed* started.

Being a primary teacher, I know how inquisitive children can be. In my early years classroom, I would have students asking questions all the time. I love when this happens. It creates a sense of wonder, growth and understanding, three of many themes in *Grace's Mystery Seed*. I hope people will enjoy the book and that the story will touch the hearts of those who read it.

Attention: The Teacher's Notes include spoilers about the mystery.

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Inspiration from the illustrator Karen Erasmus:



When I first read the manuscript for *Grace's Mystery Seed* from Juliet a few things came to mind. My husband is a passionate gardener, and my father loved to grow vegetables. So, I've been lucky enough to have lived most of my life with a beautiful garden to enjoy. This is our garden now. Does it look familiar?



The fence to the left was just being built when I started illustrating *Grace's Mystery Seed*. For a while there wasn't a fence and the little kids from next door would come running into our yard with their big dog to find my older children. It was so much fun we put a gate in the fence.

Illustrating this book was a joy especially as the inspiration for the pictures was just outside the back door.



The parrots in a fruit tree in our garden

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Themes: Gardening, Growth, Friendship, Caring, Science, Environment, Outdoors, Teamwork, Measurement

Age range: 4 to 9

Curriculum Areas: English, Mathematics and Science

Additional notes from the author: *Grace's Mystery Seed* is the perfect match for the science curriculum. When teaching in the classroom, for me it was difficult to find a suitable picture book related to science and environmental studies. *Grace's Mystery Seed* is linked with the strands understanding, nature and development and science inquiry skills. It covers Foundation Level, Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4. The science concepts can be adapted according to the student's age. Later in the notes are suggested questions and activities linked to the Australian Curriculum.

The book is also suitable for Kindergarten children and anyone who loves picture books.

General questions for *Grace's Mystery Seed*.

For everyone to use:

(Readers, book clubs, librarians, parents, grandparents, teachers and anyone who loves books.)

Further in the notes, there will be questions and activities linked to the Australia Curriculum for teachers to use.

Question 1: What might you find in a garden?

(snails, birds, grass, seeds, stones, leaves, trees, watering can, pond, flowers, butterflies, ants, bees, goldfish, vegetables and fruit)

Make a list.

Question 2: What is in your garden?

Question 3: What did you see in Mrs Marino's garden?

(trees, grass, flowers, pond, fruit, butterflies, birds and goldfish)

Question 4: Name some different seeds?

(pumpkin seed, poppy seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds)

Question 5: What does a seed look like and feel like?

(small, large) (colour) (rough, smooth, hard)

Question 6: What can you do with a seed?

(plant it, use for cooking, eat it)

Question 7: What does a seed need to grow?

(soil, water and sunlight.)

Question 8: What do you think may happen to the seed when you plant it?

(It will grow into something)

Question 9: How long does a seed take to become a plant and then a flower?

(days, weeks, months)

Question 10: Discuss different people that may grow seeds?

(friends, teachers, parents, neighbour, gardeners)

Question 11: What changes happened to Grace's seed?

(a little green shoot, gets leaves, grows bigger, tall as the fence, bud, yellow petals, sunflower.)

Question 12: How tall might a plant grow?

Question 13: If you were growing a seed what would you need to do?

Question 14: Who helped Grace?

(Mrs Marino)

Question 15: What teamwork may be involved to grow a plant?

(People have different jobs to care for the plant. Take turns to water it. Check there are no bugs trying to attack it.)

- Question 16:** What is your favourite flower? And why?
Question 17: What did the seed become?
Question 18: How do sunflowers get their name?
Question 19: What is the mystery about the sunflower?
Question 20: Is there more than one mystery in this book?
 (Yes. What the seed becomes and that the sunflower follows the sun.)
Question 21: Who could you share seeds with? Or Who could you grow a seed with?
 (parents, neighbour, grandparents, friends, as a school class)
Question 22: What new ideas or facts have you learnt after reading the story?

General Activities for teachers to use with students for *Grace's Mystery Seed*

- Activity 1:** Walk students around a garden and observe what they see.
Activity 2: Make a list as a class of what you might find in a garden. Students can draw and write about it.
Activity 3: Design your own garden. What do you need? Students draw and design their own gardens.
Activity 4: Older students may have a word find worksheet with words to identify what is represented in a garden.
Activity 5: Have different seeds. For example, you could use seeds that are in the book. Look at each one. Discuss shape, colour and feel.
Activity 6: Students can bring in a seed to share with the class. Class discussion about what it is? What it looks like? What can you do with it?
Activity 7: Compare heights of students in the class. Students can stand in a line tallest to shortest.
Activity 8: Every student gets a seed. They plant it and see what it becomes?
Activity 9: Measure and write about the progress of a plant. The different stages and how you cared for it.
Activity 10: Look at different flowers
Activity 11: Create your own flower. Give it a name. Write about it and draw it.
Activity 12: Draw/paint/coloured tissue paper to make different flowers.
Activity 13: Label a sunflower: bud, petal, flower, stalk and leaf.
Activity 14: The Growth Game – What am I?
 Explain to students that all the answers to the riddles have something to do with things growing.
 Here are a couple of examples:
 I am usually small
 I need sun and water to grow.
 You can plant me in the earth
What am I?
Answer: A seed.
 I come in different shapes and colours.
 I am beautiful and usually smell nice
 I need water and sunlight to grow
 Bees enjoy visiting me.
What am I?
Answer: A flower

English

Grace's Mystery Seed is founded in language, literature and literacy. Responding to text, text structure, word knowledge, text in context and creating text.

Possible discussion:

How texts work

The use of questions

Compound words

Blends

High frequency words

Verbs

Quotation marks

Different characters
The role of an author

Year Levels: Foundation Year, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4

LINKING TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM FOR ENGLISH QUESTIONS:

Question 1: What is in your garden?

What is in Mrs Marino's garden?

Is your garden like Mrs Marino's?

Grass, trees, flowers, stones.

ACELT1575(F) ACELT1582(1) ACELY1666(2) ACELY1692 (4)

Question 2: Name the people in *Grace's Mystery Seed*?

Grace, Mrs Marino, Leo, Mrs Zammit, Jazmin, Rupert, Ali, Fletcher and Malee.

How do you know it is someone's name by looking at the text?

Discuss capital letters.

ACELA1432(F) ACELA1468(2)

Question 3: Who were the different people that Grace told about her seed?

Mrs Zammit, Jazmin, Rupert, Ali, Fletcher, Malee, Leo, Mum, Dad, dog and her class.

Related to discussing thoughts and feelings of the characters and events. **ACELT1783(F)**

Text in the book related to retelling events and joining in with chant **ACELT1578(F)**

Sound pattern: **ACELT1579(F) ACELA1448(1) ACELT1592(2)**

A little green shoot was pushing up through the soil.

'My seed has grown,' Grace told her mum.

'My seed has grown,' Grace told her dad.

'My seed has grown,' Grace told her dog.

'My seed has grown,' Grace told her class.

Question 4: How many questions are asked in the story?

What are they?

ACELA1449(1)

Question 5: Have you ever planted a seed like Grace?

ACELT1582(1)

Question 6: Who was involved in helping Grace grow the mystery seed?

ACELA1451(1)

Question 7: What changes happened to *Grace's Mystery Seed*?

ACELA1451(1)

Question 8: How do you think the different animals and birds were feeling about the mystery seed?

ACELT1590(2) ACELT1593(2) This relates to animals' feelings and behaviour and different points of view.

dog, cat, chickens, snails, butterflies and rainbow lorikeet

Question 9: How has this story been made exciting and interesting by the author and the illustrator?

ACELT1605(4)

ACTIVITIES:

Activity 1: Show the class the front cover of the book.

Read title for *Grace's Mystery Seed*.

Ask why a book has a title.

Ask what the book may be about? From the cover and title.

Talk about the word author and explain what the author's role is, person who writes the story.

ACELA1433(F) ACELA1463(2)

Activity 2: Look at the first page and text. Talk about spaces between words. **ACELA1433(F)**

Identify capital letters and full stops on the different pages. **ACELA1432(F)**

Activity 3: As a class, read through *Grace's Mystery Seed* and identify high frequency words, for example: the, and, is, as, it, and will.

ACELA1821(1) ACELY1659(1) ACELY1669(2) ACELA1780(4)

Activity 4: As a class, read through *Grace's Mystery Seed* and identify commas, discuss why they may have been used. **ACELA1465(2)**

Activity 5: Read through *Grace's Mystery Seed* and discuss what you might find in a garden. Then identify all the words that relate to the garden. Class can discuss and make a list.

ACELA1434(F)

Activity 6: As a class, read through *Grace's Mystery Seed*, then look at sh, st blends that may be in the text. This activity can be repeated another day focusing on a different blend.

ACELA1178(1)

Activity 7: As a class, read through *Grace's Mystery Seed*, and identify compound words. List them and look at the two small words in the word.

Some compound words in *Grace's Mystery Seed*.

goldfish, breakfast, coconut, anything, sunflower, sunset **ACELA1471(2)**

Activity 8: As a class, read through the book and identify verbs. List them.

ACELA1482 (3) for example: catch, feed, pick, dig, drop, plant and drink.

Activity 9: The teacher reads *Grace's Mystery Seed* while the students sit at their desks and while listening, write the high frequency words that they hear. **ACELA1486 (3)**

Activity 10: Students can write a few sentences about what they liked in *Grace's Mystery Seed*. Then later read it to the class.

Creating own written text. **ACELA1435(F) ACELT1586(1) ACELY1661(1) ACELY1673(2)**

Activity 11: Students write their own questions about *Grace's Mystery Seed*. For example: What was the mystery? **ACELA1449(1)**

Activity 12: After reading the book, students **draw** the seed and what happens to it.

Students have a paper with three sections beginning, middle and end. They **draw** what happens at the beginning of the story, in the middle and at the end.

Retell familiar text through the use of illustrations **ACELT1580(F)**

Activity 13: Students create and write a short **text** to **explain** what they need to do to grow a seed.

ACELY1651(F) ACELY1673(1) ACELA1780(4) ACELY1696(4)

Text in the book for discussion

'First we **find a warm, sunny spot** with good, rich soil.'

'Uh-huh.'

'We **dig a little hole, twice as deep as your seed**.'

'Uh-huh.'

'We **drop in the seed, and spread soil on top**.'

'Uh-huh.'

'Then we **give it a drink**,' said Mrs Marion.

'And we wait and see.'

Activity 14: Ask the class. How do you know if sentence is a question?

What questions did Grace ask about her mystery seed?

How did the questions help her to learn about growing the seed?

ACELA1446(1)

Activity 15: Students choose an animal or bird in the garden. Then they **write** a story about how that animal felt about the mystery seed. **ACELT1590(2) ACELT1593(2) ACELY1673(2)** dog, cat, chickens, snails, butterflies and rainbow lorikeet.

Activity 16: As a class, read the book. Look at how text provides sequence through time. For example: next, finally, firstly. Identify words and discuss. **ACELA1491(4)**

Activity 17: As a class, read *Grace's Mystery Seed* looking at sections in the book where people are speaking and where quotation marks are used. After reading through the book, students write a conversation with Mrs Marino about her garden using quotation marks. **ACELA1492(4)**

Mathematics

Grace's Mystery Seed is grounded with measurement, sorting and classifying, location and shape.

Possible discussion:

Identifying shapes

Measurement

Grouping

Comparing and recording

Sorting and classifying

Location

Year Levels: [Foundation Year](#), [Year 1](#), [Year 2](#), [Year 3](#), [Year 4](#)

LINKING TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM FOR MATHEMATICS

QUESTIONS:

Question 1: What is in your garden?

[ACMNA005\(F\)](#)

Sorting familiar objects.

Question 2: What does a seed look like and feel like?

(small, large) (colour) (rough, smooth, hard)

[ACMNA055\(F\)](#)

Question 3: Did you see any circles in the book? And if so, was it a circle shape or was it round?

(Look at the illustrations and also list them.)

[ACMMG009\(F\)](#)

soccer ball, sunflower face, avocado pip, a coconut, dog's collar tag, flower bud

Question 4: Name all the different shapes you saw in the book.

Recognising and classifying shapes [ACMMG022\(1\)](#)

Question 5: How long does a seed take to become a plant and then a flower?

(days, weeks, months)

[ACMMG021\(1\)](#)

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: As a class look at different plants small and large ones.

How tall might a plant grow?

Which is taller? [ACMMG006\(F\)](#)

Measure and compare and record when using this outcome [ACMMG061\(3\)](#)

Text in book related to using suitable language for measurement attributes, tall and taller.

Before long it was as **tall** as Mrs Marino.

Soon it was as **tall** as the fence.

Then it was even **taller**!

Activity 2: As a class, sort different seeds into groups depending on their shape and then discuss. Write a list about the findings.

Discuss other ways you could sort the seeds into different groups. For example: colour or size.

[ACMMG022\(1\)](#)

Activity 3: In pairs, students sort different seeds into groups depending on their chosen focus of shape or size [ACMMG022\(1\)](#)

Activity 4: As a class, discuss what you might find in a garden. Make a list.

(snails, birds, grass, seeds, stones, leaves, trees, watering can, pond flowers, butterflies, ants, bees, goldfish, vegetables and fruit)

Then the list can be broken down into smaller groups for example, (animals in garden), (flowers in garden), (insects/bugs in garden), (vegetables and fruit) [ACMNA005\(F\)](#)

Mathematics related to sorting and classifying familiar objects with shared qualities. Sorting into different groups what you might find in a garden.

Text in the book related to classifying familiar objects.

Grace liked the **veggie patch**, and the **fruit trees**,
and the **fishpond**.
But the **flowerbed** was her favourite.

Grace was a good helper. She helped catch **snails**, and feed the **goldfish**, and pick the **fruit**.
But feeding the **birds** was her favourite job.

The class can then look at the illustrations to identify more.

Butterflies, grass, stones, trees and cat.

Activity 5: Look at the first page. Use language such as ‘next to’ and ‘near’ to describe where different objects are located in Mrs Marino’s Garden.

This activity is related to location **ACMMG010(F)**

The fishpond is near to the flower garden.

Mrs Marino is next to the flower garden.

Activity 6: Students can draw their own garden and then discuss where different objects are located. Using the words ‘next to’ and ‘near.’

ACMMG010(F)

Activity 7: Students can look at different garden maps finding key features on them.

ACMMG044(2)

Activity 8: Look at page one, Mrs Marino’s Garden. Then get students to create a map of a garden

ACMMG065(3)

Activity 9: Students can give directions about how to get to different areas in Mrs Marino’s garden.

ACMMG023(1)

Activity 10: As a class, study a picture of a sunflower. Identify shapes, circles and curved lines.

ACMMG042(2)

Activity 11: Every student gets a different flower seed. They plant it and record length of time it takes to grow in relation to days, weeks and months.

ACMMG021(1)

Activity 12: General discussion about how you might give directions to someone. Then locate north, south, east and west in the classroom. Then in pairs, students are given two different maps of gardens. They give directions to their partner. Also learn about north, south, east and west.

ACMMG090(4)

Science:

Grace’s Mystery Seed is biologically based with natural science and earth space science and changes in the landscape.

Possible discussion:

What is in a garden?

Growth

Stages of a seed growing into a plant then becoming a flower

Caring for the environment

Changes in landscape

Concept of the sunflower facing the sun

Year Levels: Foundation Year, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4

LINKING TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM FOR SCIENCE

QUESTIONS:

Question 1: What might you find in a garden? Make a list.

ACISIS011(F) ACSISO24 (1) ACSHEO21 (1) ACSHE034 (2) ACSSUS044 (3)

(snails, birds, grass, seeds, stones, leaves, trees, watering can, pond flowers, butterflies, ants, bees, goldfish, vegetables and fruit)

Question 2: What did you see in Mrs Marino's garden?

ACISO11 (F) ACSHE013 (1)

Text in the book.

Grace liked the **veggie patch**, and the **fruit trees**,
and the **fishpond**.
But the **flowerbed** was her favourite.

Grace was a good helper. She helped catch **snails** and feed the **goldfish**,
and pick the **fruit**.
But feeding the **birds** was her favourite job.

Pictures show: Trees, grass, flowers, people, fruit, chickens, cat, fish, snails, butterflies, goldfish, birds,
stones and water.

Question 3: What does a seed look like and feel like?

(small, large) (colour) (rough, smooth, hard) **ACISO11(F) ACSHE013(F) ACISO25(1)**
ACSHE034 (2) ACSIS037(2) ACSIS038(2)

Question 4: What are some different types of seeds?

Guided investigation to explore answers **ACISO25(1)**

Text in the book.

That day, in Show and Tell, Grace told her class she was growing a seed.

'**What kind of seed?**' Mrs Zammit asked.

'It's a mystery,' said Grace.

'Hmm, let me see. **What kinds of seeds can we think of?**' said Mrs Zammit.

'**Poppy seeds,**' said Jazmin.

'**Pumpkin seeds,**' said Rupert.

'**Sesame seeds,**' said Ali.

'**Avocado pips,**' said Fletcher.

'**A coconut!**' said Malee.

Question 5: What can you do with a seed?

(plant it, cook with it and eat it)

ACISO24(1) ACSHE034(2) ACSIS037(2)

Question 6: What does a seed need to grow? How can we care for it?

(soil, water and sunlight)

ACSSU002(F) ACSHE021(1) ACSIS037(2) ACSHE035(2) related to people using science in their
daily lives when caring for their environment and living things.

Text in the book

'First we **find a warm, sunny spot with good, rich soil.**'

'Uh-huh.'

'We **dig a little hole, twice as deep as your seed.**'

'Uh-huh.'

'We **drop in the seed, and spread soil on top.**'

'Uh-huh.'

'Then we **give it a drink,**' said Mrs Marino.

'And we wait and see.'

Question 7: What do you think may happen to the seed when you plant it?

ACSHE013(F) ACISO24(1) ACSHE021(1) ACSSU030(2) ACSHE034(2) ACSIS037(2) ACSSU072
(4)

Question 8: How long does a seed take to become a plant and then a flower?

(days, weeks, months)

ACSHE034(2) ACSIS037(2) ACSHE050 (3)

Question 9: What changes happened to Grace's seed?

(a little green shoot, gets leaves, grows bigger, tall as the fence, bud, yellow petals, sunflower)

ACSIS233(F) ACSHE013(F) ACSHE021(1) ACSSU033(2) ACSHE034(2)

ACSIS037(2) ACSHE050(3) ACSSU072(4)

Question 10: How tall might a plant grow?

ACSIS055(3)

Question 11: If you were growing a seed what would you need to do?

ACSIS233(F) ACSSU002(F) ACIS025(1) ACSIS037(2) ACSHE050(3)

Question 12: What teamwork may be involved to grow a plant?

ACSIS054(3)

Question 13: What is the mystery about the sunflower?

ACSSU048(3)

Question 14: What new ideas or facts have you learnt after reading the story?

ACSISO42(2) ACSIS215(3) ACSIS065(4)

ACTIVITIES:

Activity 1: Walk students around a garden and observe what they see.

ACSISO24 (1)

Activity 2: Make a list as a group of what you might find in a garden. Students can draw and write.

ACSISO25 (1)

Activity 3: Plan and design your own garden.

ACSISO25 (1)

Activity 4: As a class, students can sit in a circle. A variety of different seeds are placed in the middle. Look at the seeds. Discuss size, big, small. Discuss shape and colour. Maybe even purpose of that seed.

ACSISO25 (1)

You could use seeds that are in the book if you like. Poppy, pumpkin, sesame, avocado, coconut and sunflower, for example.

Activity 5: Every student gets a seed. Plant it and see what it becomes.

ACSIS215(3) ACSIS058(3) ACSISO60(3) Possibly the stages ACSSU072(4) Possibly comparing results ACSIS216 (4)

Activity 6: Discuss the stages of a plant's growth. Compare with students: Tall as your knee from the ground then to your hip, then to your shoulder and then maybe to your head.

Starting as a little green shoot and then could possibly grow as tall as a fence.

Related to using informal measurements to record observations ACSIS026 (1)

Text in book

'Soon it **came up to her middle**. Then it **came up to her head**. Before long it was **as tall as Mrs Marino**.'

'Soon it was **as tall as** the fence.'

'Maybe it's a **beanstalk!**' said Grace.

'Maybe it will **reach the sky!**' said Leo.

Activity 7: Label the parts of a sunflower: bud, petal, flower, stalk and leaf.

Identify common features of a plant.

Living things have a variety of external features ACSSU017 (1)

Activity 8: Mystery of a sunflower

Questioning and predicting **ACSI024 (1)**

Earth and space sciences: Observable changes in the landscape **ACSSU019 (1)**

Earth and space sciences: recognising the sun as a source of light: **ACSSU048 (3)**

Text in the book

‘How do you think sunflowers got their name?’ asked Mrs Marino.

‘It’s because they always turn their faces towards the sun.’ Sunflowers are amazing.’

The next day, Grace **woke early** and ran over to see her sunflower. Sure enough, **it was facing the morning sun.**

By **evening**, her flower was **facing the sunset.**

It really was amazing.

Another note from the author:

Thank you for your interest in *Grace’s Mystery Seed*.

Keep spreading sunshine and inspiration.

Best wishes

Juliet

