

Sunflower House

by Eve Bunting

Rhythmic verse and full-page color illustrations beautifully tell the story of a boy, his fascination with sunflowers, and the world he creates by planting a garden.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *Have you ever seen a sunflower?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder what a sunflower feels like and smells like?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *Sunflower House*

- sow: to plant a seed
- sunflower: a tall plant with yellow-rayed flowers and a dark center
- shoo: a sound used to get animals to leave
- pesky: troublesome or irritating
- guaranteed: covered by a promise for high quality and durability
- mammoth: something enormous
- pale: having little color
- frilly: decorative and to dress up
- bulge: to be overfilled
- blue jays: a type of small bird, blue in color
- sparrows: small brownish songbird
- crows: a large black bird with shiny feathers and a raucous cry

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What type of flower did the boy want to plant?
- How did the boy plant his seeds?
- What started to grow first out of the seed? What grew after the roots?
- Describe what the sunflowers first looked like.
- What did the children play while they were in the middle of the sunflowers? Why didn't their parents play?
- What did the children play at night?
- Why did the sunflowers begin to fall over? How did they try and fix them?
- Why did the children gather the seeds? What were they planning on doing with the seeds?



Do

Counting Seeds

You will need: a bag of sunflower seeds

After reading the story, hand each child a handful of sunflower seeds (as many or as few as you want). Have the children arrange the seeds in a single line. Next, have the children count their seeds. Assist those who have a larger amount. Write down all the numbers and talk about who has the most, least or the same amount of seeds. If desired, take away or add more seeds to each pile. Recount and repeat the above steps.