



Grow, Munch, Move!

A Garden-to-Playground Adventure

By Bob LePage

A read-aloud story for ages 5–9



A garden surprise

Maya, Ben, Ruby, and Leo hurried outside with their teacher, Ms. Green.

“Today we will meet some foods before they reach our plates!” she said.

Carrots hid below the soil. Beans dangled from vines. Apples hung from a tree.

From seed to snack—follow the path!



Ready, set, wash!

Maya carried an apple. Leo carried a carrot.

“May we eat them now?” asked Leo.

“First, clean hands and clean food,” said Ms. Green.

They washed their hands with soap and water. An adult helped rinse the produce under running water.

Wash, rinse, ready to crunch!



A rainbow for lunch

Ruby found red tomatoes, orange carrots, yellow corn, green broccoli, and purple cabbage.

“Our lunch looks like a rainbow!” she said.

Different fruits and vegetables help our bodies in different ways. The friends were ready to explore.

More colors, more to explore!



Food helps us grow

Ben spooned rice and beans beside his vegetables. Maya added fruit and a cup of milk.

“Food gives us energy to learn and play,” said Ms. Green.

“We need different kinds of food as we grow.”

The friends ate, talked, and enjoyed their lunch.

Mix it up as we grow!



A little taste adventure

Ben looked at his broccoli. “I have never tried this.”

“You can look, smell, or taste when you feel ready,” said Ms. Green.

Ben took a small bite. “Crunchy!”

Ruby was still exploring. That was okay. New foods can take time to feel familiar.

Look, smell, taste—at your pace!



Thank you, growers!

Later, the friends helped in the garden.

“People grow food on farms, in gardens, and in orchards,” said Ms. Green.

“We can enjoy fruits and vegetables fresh, frozen, or canned.”

“Thank you for our food!” called the friends to the gardeners.

From the ground to our plate—growers are great!



A water break

After playing, the friends paused in the shade.

“My mouth feels dry,” said Ben.

“Let’s have some water,” said Maya.

They sipped from their bottles and rested. Water helps our bodies work. It is a good drink to choose throughout the day.

Sip, sip, hooray—water through the day!



Everybody can play

“Tag!” called Ruby. The friends ran, rolled, and laughed. They changed the game so everyone could join. “You do not have to be the fastest,” said Ms. Green. “Find a way to move that feels right for you.” Playing together was the best part.

Run, roll, or sway—move your way!



Jump, hop, balance!

Maya jumped rope. Ben hopped over a line.

Leo balanced like a flamingo. Ruby tried a gentle stretch.

“Movement helps our hearts, muscles, and bones,” said Ms. Green.

The friends made room for one another and practiced safely.

Jump, hop, play—a little every day!



A classroom wiggle

Back inside, the friends had been sitting for a while. Ms. Green turned on music. “Movement break!” They danced standing up or sitting down. They reached, waved, and wiggled. Then they took a quiet breath, ready for their next adventure.

Pause, stand or stay—wiggle your way!



Our happy habit

At the picnic, the friends enjoyed fruit, vegetables, and bean dip.

“I like growing food,” said Maya. “I like trying tastes,” said Leo.

“I like playing with friends!” said Ruby.

Ben smiled. “Tomorrow, let’s do it again!”

Together they cheered:

Grow, munch, move—find your happy groove!

Say it together!

Repeat these original call-and-response phrases during everyday routines.

BEFORE LUNCH

Teacher: What can we explore?
Children: More colors, more to explore!

BEFORE EATING

Teacher: Ready to crunch?
Children: Wash, rinse, ready to crunch!

TRYING A NEW FOOD

Teacher: How do we explore?
Children: Look, smell, taste—at your pace!

PLANNING A MEAL

Teacher: What helps us grow?
Children: Mix it up as we grow!

WATER BREAK

Teacher: Sip, sip, hooray!
Children: Water through the day!

STARTING RECESS

Teacher: How can we play?
Children: Run, roll, or sway—move your way!

JUMPING OR HOPPING

Teacher: What can we say?
Children: Jump, hop, play—a little every day!

MOVEMENT BREAK

Teacher: Ready to move?
Children: Find your happy groove!

GARDEN LESSON

Teacher: Where does food start?
Children: Seeds, soil, sun—a growing work of art!

CLOSING THE LESSON

Teacher: What do we do?
Children: Grow, munch, move—me and you!

A 20-minute lesson

Read, explore, move, and repeat. Suitable for kindergarten through grade 3.

1 • READ & NOTICE | 7 minutes

Read the story aloud. Invite children to repeat the chants. Ask: “Where did the apple grow?” “What helped the friends include everyone?”

2 • BUILD A COLORFUL MEAL | 5 minutes

Use food pictures or drawings. Add fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. Include familiar foods from children’s homes. Ask which foods began as plants.

3 • MOVE YOUR WAY | 3 minutes

Try 30 seconds each of marching or seated arm swings, gentle reaching, dancing, hopping or rhythmic hand taps, balancing or seated reaching, then an easy cool-down. Leave personal space; offer choices.

4 • MAKE A PLAN | 5 minutes

Each child names or draws one fruit or vegetable to explore and one way to move. Repeat: “Grow, munch, move—me and you!” Invite families to share a favorite food or active game.

No food supplies needed: pictures, stories, and pretend play work well.

Teach with encouragement

Help children build joyful habits and feel welcome in every activity.

A balanced message

Plant-grown foods are the story's focus, alongside the variety children need. Encourage meals and snacks from different food groups. Avoid calling foods or children “good” or “bad.”

Explore without pressure

Offer opportunities to notice texture, color, and smell. Tasting is optional. Respect hunger and fullness cues, sensory needs, food allergies, and family food traditions. Follow school food-safety rules before any tasting activity.

Make movement welcoming

Offer standing, seated, and wheeled options. Value participation and enjoyment. Adapt activities to each child's abilities and care plan. Keep water and rest breaks available.

A daily goal for adults

For ages 6–17, CDC guidance is at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity daily, accumulated across the day. Most should be aerobic; include vigorous, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening activities at least 3 days each week. Short classroom breaks contribute to a larger daily routine.

Sources for adults • Checked October 6, 2026

USDA MyPlate: Healthy Eating for Kids

[Open the USDA family tip sheet](#)

CDC: Physical Activity Guidelines for School-Aged Children and Adolescents

[Open the CDC activity guidelines](#)

My grow, munch, move plan

Name: _____ Date: _____

A fruit or vegetable I want to explore:

Draw it here. Where does it grow?

A way I enjoy moving:

Draw yourself playing. How can a friend join you?

Grow, munch, move—me and you!