



**citysprouts**  
Public school gardens for teaching and learning

**Teacher Forum  
Spring Session 4:**

# **Garden Storytelling**

**April 9, 2015**



**Boune Siliphaivanh**

**Kindergarten**

**Teacher**

**David Ellis School**

**Boston, MA**



## Preparation for activity

Email CitySprouts Garden Coordinator prior to the garden visit to work on an objective that would be suitable for the 3, 4, and 5 year olds.

All the supplies including garden tools, seeds, and plants were set out and ready for our visit

# Building Garden Experiences for Storytelling

- Michele did a great job of having different stations set up so each of my K0/K1 students were given opportunities to dig using hand shovels and plant seeds, cover the seeds with dirt, and then water the seeds.
- We observed the various vegetables that were growing such as chives, broccoli, basils, tomatoes, lemons, and even fruits such as strawberries. We use our senses to touch and smell the different items.
- We looked at the various seeds that different fruits and vegetables contained. The students learn that seeds come in various shapes and sizes. Some seeds were edible like strawberries and peas.
- In the classroom we magnified the seeds under the microscope and students drew their observations.

# Storytelling about the Garden

- In the classroom we explored how we can use our experience in the garden for storytelling.
- Storytelling is a wonderful vehicle for developing oral language in young children. Through storytelling children strengthen speaking and listening skills.
- Storytelling builds creativity and forms a community in the classroom. By connecting the garden to storytelling the children were able to have experiences to help them with telling a story about nature.
- Students do storytelling as a whole group with students volunteering to provide sentences to add to the development of the story.
- We use a “Story in a Box” method by placing the following items in the box: seed, Lego girl, and flower. The item was pulled one at a time to create an action for the story.

- *There was a little girl and her name was Bella. And she wanted to build a sunflower. And then the brother came out and was seeing what his sister was doing. First she put the seeds in the hole and she covered it with dirt. And she watered the plant and it grows and grows and grows. And she watered it again. And then a medium flower grows and grows and she gave it to her brother.*



**Students volunteering to provide sentences for storytelling.**

*Once upon a time there was a little girl and her name was Alpina. And she grew a beautiful flower and then everybody saw it. They were all amazed and Alpina gave one of the flowers to the kid and the other kids were starting to get angry. And then Alpina grew more for them. Everybody was happy.  
(Told by Jair)*

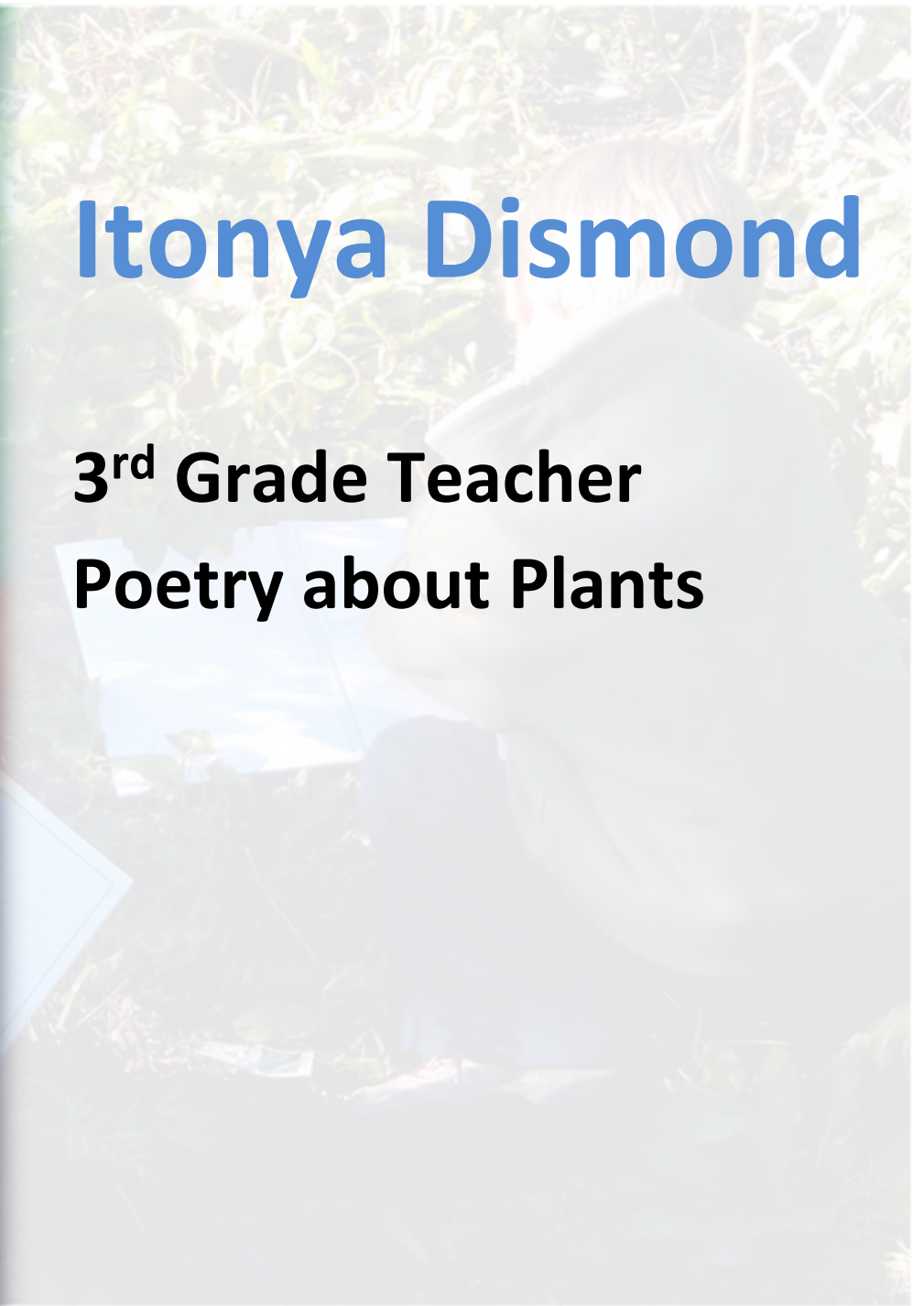
*Once upon a time it was sunny and all my friends were outside with me and we went to the garden. And then we planted sunflowers. And some of them planted leaves. And then we went to the apple cider. And then we went to wash our hands. And then we tasted apple cider and it was, "Yummy".  
(Told by Gabriella)*



# Itonya Dismond

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher**

**Poetry about Plants**





## Preparation

I start with a KWL graphic organizer to discover what they are knowledgeable of, what they want to learn and later what they have learned.

My academic area of concern after testing my students was the need to increase their language, writing and reading most of all. I wanted them to learn and connect the garden then to a writing assignment.

Each month I assign them a writing assignment. Based on the school's science MCAS scores last year, a school wide challenge was to increase science scores, specifically detailed responses.

# Description of Activity

- My students learned about the garden plants collectively
- Each student 'adopted a plant' and had to research beyond what was posted in the garden, information about their plant, complete a poem
- (Art was tied into the assignment as well as learning about measuring, arrays and finding the perimeter).
- Students did a class presentation with family feedback. Several families were delighted to see the results, grades, and wanted to explore the 'adopted plant' after learning about it with their child! "We are going to try collard greens!" was just one of the comments.

*Tyre Hendren*

*Hot peppers*

*Hot*

*Or hotter*

*Temper*

*Peppers*

*Eat them I dare you!*

*Pepper*

*Peppers*

*Each one*

*Rows and rows of peppers in the garden*

*Same as the next hot, hotter, hottest*

Jordan

Collard greens

Cat in the garden

odd colors

lock

loly

ants crawl around them

rats might eat them

green is the color

red is my color

eat some and like it

end

net

snack you may like it

# Outcomes

- The students had the opportunity in small garden stations outside to prepare a group salad & dressing with Michele and give her verbal feedback.
- They learned about healthy eating, responsibility, and independent things they could do at home in their own kitchen; making salad, salad dressing, and simply helping with a meal.
- They were then able to complete their KWL graphic organizers, and discuss their new learning as a whole group.

**Susan Minihane**

**4th-Grade Teacher  
David Ellis School  
Boston, MA**



# Overview of Lesson

At the time of our garden visit, students were studying free verse poetry.

Fall

Ah, I can feel  
the wind blowing  
through my hair.  
I can smell the aroma  
of the wet wood  
in trees.

A beautiful rainbow is in  
the bright blue sky.  
Leaves of all colors  
orange,  
yellow,  
and  
red

are beautiful to me.  
I can feel the sun's rays  
on my skin.

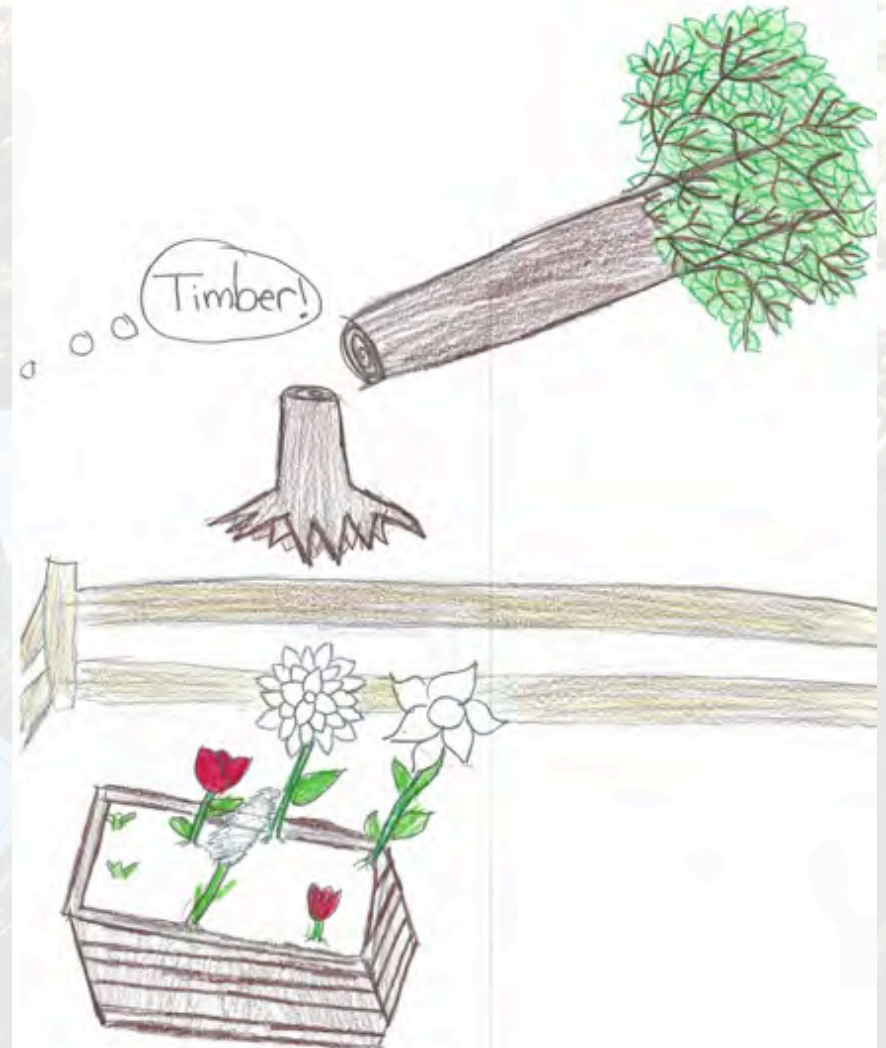
Oh how I wish  
this would never end!

Kiana Romero

## Interesting

I love the  
interesting sight  
of the flowers  
rising from the ground.  
I like the interesting way  
the trees  
are being chopped  
down.  
I bet for a  
good cause.  
Ah, everything  
is all right  
and very interesting.

Vilmarie Satana



# Activity in the Garden



Students were instructed to go to the garden / garden area and using their five senses, write a free verse poem.

Before beginning to write, students were asked to pause and give some thought as to how the use of their five senses could impact their writing.

Students who completed their poem were asked to sketch a picture that would go along with their poem.



# Student Outcome

When we returned to the classroom, students were eager to share their poems with their peers.

Students were excited and motivated to complete this assignment.

