



Recommended Reading

Inspiring Books for Kids, Parents and Teachers

Food and Cooking

For Kids

Simply in Season Children's Cookbook—Fun with Food from Garden to Table

By Mark Beach and Julie Kauffman, published by Herald Press; 2006

Fun, interesting recipes help kids make the connection between what they eat, where it comes from, and when it's in season.

The Vegetables We Eat

By Gail Gibbons, published by Holiday House; 2008

Detailed illustrations explore vegetables in depth in this fascinating picture book that clearly explains the many varieties and how they are grown both in a home garden and on a commercial farm.

Fanny at Chez Panisse: A Child's Restaurant Adventures with 46 Recipes

By Alice Waters, published by William Morrow Cookbooks; 1992

Famous Chef and school-garden advocate, Alice Waters describes the path food travels from the garden to the kitchen to the table.

The Redwall Cookbook

By Brian Jacques and Christopher Denise, published by Philomel; 2005

Recipes are fun to read and should inspire a little chef.

Growing Vegetable Soup

By Lois Ehlert, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; 1987

Interest Pre-K–1; Reading level 1.7

Bright, bold pictures show tools and seeds needed to grow the veggies used in soup. Ehlert uses colorful, uncomplicated cut-paper-style illustrations which are very child friendly.



Garden to Table- A Kid's Guide to Planting, Growing, and Preparing Food

Katherine Hengel, published by Mighty Media Junior Readers; 2014

Interest level grades 2-7; Reading Level 3rd

An excellent book to get young people started in gardening and cooking.

Grow It, Cook It

D K Publishers; 2009

Reading Level Grade 4-5

A children's cookbook and guide to healthy eating. Discusses roots, leaves, fruits and seeds, encourages early appreciation of food and its origins. All of the crops used in recipes can be grown in pots.

For Parents and Teachers

Food Rules—An Eater's Manual

By Michael Pollan, published by Penguin Books; 2009

A concise guide to what kinds of foods are healthy choices, a good book for families to read together.

Real Food for Healthy Kids—Advice, Resources, and Recipes for Busy Parents

By Tanya Wenman Steel and Tracey Seaman, published by William Morrow Cookbooks; 2008

Simple, wholesome, nutritious food that kids will eat.

The GastroKid Cookbook—Raising a Foodie Family in a Fast-Food World

By Hugh Garvey and Matthew Yeomans, published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 2009

Broaden kids' tastes-and put together simple but sophisticated meals that the whole family will love with this collection of healthy recipes.

Vegetable Literacy: Cooking and Gardening with Twelve Families from the Edible Plant Kingdom, with over 300 Deliciously Simple Recipes

By Deborah Madison, published by Ten Speed Press; 2013

Reveals the surprising relationships between vegetables, edible flowers, and herbs within the same botanical families, and how understanding these connections can help home cooks see everyday vegetables in new light.

Soil and Composting

For Kids

Soil, A True Book

By Christin Ditchfield, published by Children's Press; 2003

What is soil? This book explains how soil is formed and discusses the different types of soil.

Experiments with Soil

By Christine Taylor-Butler, published by Heinemann Library; 2011

Exciting, hands-on experiments that use the scientific method to illustrate simple experiments to young scientists.

Dig In! Hands on Soil Investigations

By National Science Teachers Association, published by NSTA Press; 2001

A dozen teacher-tested lesson plans on soil formation, habitats, animals that depend on soil, plants that grow in soil, land use and soil conservation.

Composting, Nature's Recyclers

By Robin Koontz, published by Picture Window Books; 2006

Learn more about composting and how you can use it in your garden.

Dirt

By Steve Tomecek, published by National Geographic; 2002

Interest Level Pre-K-3 Grade Level Equivalent 4.5

A friendly star-nosed mole shows off his garden and the creatures who live in the dirt. Children discover what soil is, how it is formed, and why soil is vital to plants, animals, and humans.

Garbage Helps our Garden Grow

By Linda Glaser, published by Millbrook Press; 2010

Interest Level K-2; Grade Level Equivalent 2.7

The reasons for composting are woven into a simple narrative that follows a little girl and her family through the seasons

What's Sprouting in My Trash?: A Book about Composting

By Esther Porter, published by Capstone Press; 2013

Interest Level Pre-K-2 Reading Level Grades 1-2

Kids may not know much about composting when they start this book, but by the time they're done with the simple overview, they'll have a good idea of what it is, how to do it, and the ways it can help the environment.

For Parents and Teachers

Let it Rot!: The Gardener's Guide to Composting

By Stu Campbell, published by Storey Publishing, LLC; 1998

The content is excellent, easy, and entertaining to read and contains advice for starting and maintaining a composting system, building bins, and using compost.

Gardening and Growing

For Kids

How Groundhog's Garden Grew

By Lynne Cherry, published by Blue Sky Press; 2003

A young groundhog is told not to steal food, but rather to grow his own garden, an

informative story about plants, gardening, and environmental respect.

A Seed is Sleepy

By Dianna Hutts Aston, published by Chronicle Books; 2014

Each page offers a gem of information pertaining to seeds.

Blue Potatoes, Orange Tomatoes: How to Grow a Rainbow Garden

By Rosalind Creasy and Ruth Heller, published by Sierra Club Books for Children; 2000

A whimsical guide to growing unusually colored vegetables and fruits organically.

Vegetable Garden

By Douglas Florian, published by Voyager Books; 1996

Interest Level K-2 Grade Level Equivalent 1.7

A colorful picture book; very young children can follow along with a family as they plant, tend, and harvest a vegetable garden.

Messy Bessy's Garden

By Patricia and Fredrick McKissack, published by Scholastic; 2002

Interest Level K-2; Grade Level Equivalent 2.2 Rookie Reader Level C

A simple story about a little girl who plants her seeds and makes them grow.

The Surprise Garden

By Zoe Hall, published by Blue Sky Press (Scholastic); 1998

Interest Level K-2; Reading Level 2.5; Lexile 470L; DRA 16; Guided Reading 1

When some children each receive a handful of seeds from their mother, they plant them and wait to see what will grow. Bright illustrations/collages. Good tie-in with the planting of Veggie U Primary's mystery seeds

How a Plant Grows

By Bobbie Kalman, published by Crabtree Publishing Company; 1997

Well-illustrated and with organized text, this book informs young readers about the

growth, development, and importance of plants.

Secrets of the Garden: Food Chains and the Food Web in Our Backyard

By Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld, illustrated by Priscilla Lamont, published by Alfred A. Knopf; 2012

A wonderfully informative and enjoyable journey through one family's backyard garden, this story covers planting, composting, worms, harvesting and talking chickens.

Vegetables (See How Plants Grow)

By Nicola Edwards, published by Power Kids Press; 2008

Introduces germination and the start of plant growth, photosynthesis and how plants make food. A look at the variety of food we get from vegetable-leaves, roots, stems and flowers Glossary, Index, great for young readers learning to use a reference tool

Plants Bite Back!

By Richard Platt, published by DK Readers; 1999

All about plants that prickle, sting or even eat insects for lunch! Clear, concise text and illustrated with lots of pictures

For Parents and Teachers

The Garden Primer

By Barbara Damrosch, published by Workman Publishing Company; 2008

A one-volume wonder! This comprehensive, easily understood guide to all aspects of gardening is great for both the beginning and accomplished gardener. It even includes a chapter on houseplants!

Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots: Gardening Together with Children

By Sharon Lovejoy, published by Workman Publishing Company; 1999

Loaded with gardening lore, tips, and whimsical ideas for adults to share with children, this delightfully illustrated idea book will spark creativity and a lifelong fascination with gardening.

All About Vegetables

For Kids

Vegetables on My Plate

By Mari Schuh, published by Capstone Press; 2013

Interest Level PreK-2 Reading Level K-1

Part of the "My Plate" series, tools to help you eat in a more healthful manner.

Vegetable Food Group

By Megan Borgert-Spaniol, published by Bellweather Media; 2012

Blastoff reading series, level 2

Offers early readers a bit more challenge through varied simple sentences, increased text load, and less repetition of high-frequency words.

All About Vegetables

By Victoria Parker, published by QEB Publishing; 2009

From growing food to eating it, find out everything you need to know about the main food groups. With delicious recipes, hands-on activities, and amazing facts.

Vegetables

By Sally Hewitt, published by Wayland; 2008

Reading Level Grade 4-5

Short chapters, great pictures, a good reference book.

Vegetables, Vegetables

Rookie Read about Science Series

By Fay Robinson, published by Children's Press; 1994

Interest Level K-2; reading level 2.9

A great supplement for science curriculum and to reinforce independent reading.

Vegetables

By Honor Head, published by Franklin Watts Ltd.; 2006

Reading Level 3-4

Introduces young children to the variety of food we eat, including where it comes from and how it is prepared and cooked.

Vegetables

By D.H. Dilkes, published by Enslow Publishers; 2012

Interest Level ages 4-7 Guided Reading Level D Reading Recovery 5-6 DRA 6

Introduces vegetables in everyday meals to pre-readers using repetition of words and short, simple sentences with photos and illustrations to enhance the text.

The Incredible Vegetable Group

By Marcie Aboff, published by Capstone Press; 2012

Part of the "My Plate and Healthy Eating" series; cartoon pictures of kids planting and eating vegetable. Nice Glossary, Index, Reading List for young readers learning to use reference tools.

Specific Vegetables:

Pumpkins

By Ken Robbins, Published by Roaring Brook Press; 2006

Grade Level Preschool-3

Simple text, beautiful photograph, portrays the pumpkin from seed to fully fledged fruit, then back again.

Pumpkins

By Jacqueline Farmer, published by Charlesbridge; 2004

Grades PreK-2

Facts, history, legend and growing tips; a brief list of pumpkin world record.

The Pumpkin Book

By Gail Gibbons, published by Live Oak; 2004

Grades PreK-3

Explains pumpkins belong to squash family; provides a history of pumpkin use. Includes some activities.

Potatoes

By Melanie Mitchell, published by Lerner Publishing Group; 2003

Reading Level Grades 3.4 Interest Level K-2

A basic overview of the life cycle of a potato.

From Eye to Potato

By Ellen Weiss, published by Scholastic News Nonfiction Readers: How Things Grow; 2008

Interest Level Grades Pre-K-2; Reading Level 2.6

Photographs show how potatoes are grown and harvested.

Carrots

By Inez Snyder, published by Scholastic; 2003

Interest Level K-2; Reading Level 1.5

How the vegetable is grown, picked, and winds up ready to eat.

Carrots Grow Underground

By Mari Schuh, published by Capstone; 2011

Interest Level 2-3rd grade; Reading Level 2nd

From seeds to harvest, this book follows root vegetables and up close photos illustrate the text.

The Life Cycle of a Carrot

By Linda Tagliaferro, published by Capstone; 2007

Grades PreK-2

Watch tiny carrots grow into carrots we eat.

Tomatoes

By Elaine Landau, published by Children's Press; 2000

Interest Level Grades 2-7 Grade Level Equivalent 4.5

The story of tomatoes, from the early cultivation by the Aztecs to the introduction of the tomato to Europe, to modern cultivation.

Tomatoes (Grown your Own)

By Helen Lanz, published by Sea to Sea Publications; 2012;

Interest 3-6, Reading Level High 4th

Gives instructions on how to grow tomatoes including how to care for the seedlings and harvest the tomatoes.

Worms

For Kids

Worms Eat Our Garbage: Classroom Activities for a Better Environment

By Mary Appelhof, Mary Frances Fenton, Barbara Loss Harris and Nancy Kostecke, published by Flowerfield Enterprises; 2003

Worm-related activities that will help develop problem solving and critical thinking skills, in addition to being lots of fun!

Diary of a Worm

By Doreen Kronin, published by HarperCollins; 2003

Written in diary form, this hilarious picture book tracks the ins and outs of worm's life.

Wiggly Worms at Work (Lets-Read-and-Find-Out Science 2)

By Wendy Pfeffer, published by HarperCollins; 2004

This book covers the basics about the animal's body structure, movement, diet, and reproduction and also describes how worms improve the quality of soil.

Worms

By Sian Smith, published by Capstone Press; 2013

Re-K-K; Reading Level Pre-K-K Lexile AD570L

Describes different types of worms and their physical characteristics.

Yucky Worms: Read and Wonder

By Vivian French, published by Candlewick; 2011

Interest Level Ages 4-8

Kids are invited to find out where worms live, see how they move, and understand why gardeners consider them friends with the help of this humorous and informative look at worms.

Garden Wigglers: Earthworms in Your Backyard

By Nancy Loewen, published by Capstone Press; 2005

Interest Level PreK-3

Vivid pictures show the physical characteristics, life cycle, and behavior of earthworms. Includes anatomy diagram and activity.

Earthworms: Underground Burrowers

By Adele D. Richardson, published by Capstone Press; 2001

Interest Level Grades 2-4; Reading Level Grades 2-3

Wonderful up-close photos of worms and their eggs, hatching and babies, enemies, and much more.

Worm

By Robin Nelsons, published by Lerner Publications; 2009

Interest Level Grades K-2

Simple text and color photographs describe the life cycle of a worm.

Worms

By Valerie Bodden, published by Creative Education; 2011

A basic introduction to worms, examining where they live, how they grow, what they eat.

An Earthworm's Life

By John Himmelman, published by Nature Upclose, Children's Press; 2001

Interest Level K-2; Reading Level 2.7 DRA 18; Guided Reading K

Explains vital role that earthworms play in planet's ecosystem.

Wonderful Worms

By Linda Glaser, published by Millbrook Press; 1992

Interest Level K-3; Grade Level Equivalent 2.1 DRA 16 Guided Reading J

Simple Informational text, explains vital role that earthworms play in the planet's ecosystem.

For Parents and Teachers

The Worm Book: The Complete Guide to Gardening and Composting with Worms

By Loren Nancarrow and Janet Hogan Taylor, published by Ten Speed Press; 2001

For more detailed instructions demystify the world of worm wrangling, including how to build a home worm bin, make your garden worm-friendly, pamper your soil, and much much more.

Just for Fun--Poetry, Songs, Fables, Folk Tales, Humor and Cheers!

Busy in the Garden

By George Shannon, published by Scholastic Press; 2006

Interest Level K-3 Reading Level 2.2

Filled with short poems about gardening and vegetables.

Green Beans, Potatoes, and Even Tomatoes

By Brian Cleary, published by Lerner Publishing; 2011

Interest Level 1-4; Reading Level 4

A rhyming exploration of what makes up the vegetable group.

The Vegetables Go To Bed

By Christopher King, published by Crown Publishers; 1994

Reading Level 2.6

A wonderful bed time read-aloud for young children, in the style of Good Night Moon most likely found in a well-supplied public library.

The Vegetable Show

By Laurene Krasny Brown, published by Little, Brown and Company; 1995

Animated vegetables introduce children to the basics of healthy eating while performing circus acts with Eeny-Weeny Zucchini, Bud the Spud and the Tip-Top Tomato Twins. A great read-aloud; may be difficult to find in print other than in a well-supplied public library.

Vegetables in Underwear

By Jared Chapman, published by Abrams Appleseed; 2015

Simultaneously celebrates vegetables and the glories of wearing underwear. Perfect for the pre-school set!

Veggies with Wedgies

By Todd H. Doodler, published by Little Simon; 2015

The veggies in Farmer John's garden pull his underwear off the clothesline; hilarity ensues! Great read aloud for preschoolers.

Vegetables on My Plate

Songs by Patience Clements, label: Healthy Kids Music

A wonderful CD of songs with catchy lyrics that focus on healthy eating and veggies; great for pre-school-2nd.

I Like Vegetables- A Touch and Feel Board Book

By Lorena Siminovich, published by Candlewick Press; 2011

Each page has one vegetable created out of bright colors and different paper textures. Great for preschoolers. Might inspire older students to create a book of their own!

How Are You Peeling?

By Saxton Freymann, published by Scholastic Bookshelf; 2004

Interest Level Pre-K-1

A read-aloud using clever photos of vegetables to illustrate feelings.

Fast Food

By Saxton Freymann, published by Scholastic Bookshelf; 2004

Interest Pre-K-1

A board book which shows various modes of transportation which are created using...vegetables!

Baby Food

By Saxton Freymann, published by Scholastic Bookshelf; 2004

Interest Pre-K-1

A board book which shows baby animals created out of fruits and veggies.

Curious George Grows a Garden; A Double Reader

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 2012

Interest Level ages 5-7; Guided Reading 1, Lexile Level 390, Reading Recovery 15-16

This double early reader features two Curious George stories, Curious George Plants a Seed and Curious George: The Perfect Carrot. George make a few planting mistakes but grows a beautiful prize carrot.

The Enormous Carrot

By Vladimir Vasil'evich Vagin, published by Scholastic Press; 1998

Interest level K-2; Grade Level Equivalent 3.1

Variation on the Russian folktale; two rabbits find an enormous carrot growing in their garden and get help from neighbors to pull it out. Great for a read aloud with audience participation. Very creative use of language, also wonderful illustrations.

The Enormous Potato

Aubrey Davis, published by Scholastic Press; 1998

Interest Level K-2; Grade Level Equivalent 1.5

A simple repetitive text allows beginning readers to participate in the reading.

The Gigantic Sweet Potato

By Dianne De Las Casas, published by Pelican Publishing; 2010

Ma Farmer gets help from Pa, Bessie Cow, Ralphie Dog and Kittie Cat as she tries to pull up her huge sweet potato. A mouse may be the one to solve the problem.

Rah Rah Radishes! A Vegetable Chant

By April Pulley Sayre, published by Little Simon; 2014

Interest Level Preschool–Grade 2

Lively pictures and rousing cheerleader chants for vegetables from bok choy to Swiss chard. Lots of fun!!

Picky Eaters

Eat Your Peas Louise!

By Pegeen Snow, published by Scholastic; 2011

Interest Level K-2; Reading Level 1.4- 2.8

Louise's brother tries to get her to eat peas. He has to try many different ways before he is successful.

DW the Picky Eater

By Marc Brown, published by Little Brown Books for Young Readers; 1997

Interest Level K-2; Reading Level 2.9

DW has a fit in a restaurant...and may never go out to eat again unless she changes her ways.

I Will Never, Not Ever, Eat a Tomato

By Lauren Child, published by Candlewick; 2003

Lola is a very fussy eater. Her older sister uses lots of creative imagery to encourage her to eat....peas become "green drops from Greenland"; mashed potatoes become "cloud fluff from Mount Fuji."

A Bad Case of Stripes

By David Shannon, published by The Blue Sky Press; 2004

Just for fun, a cautionary tale about what can happen if you can't admit to loving lima beans.