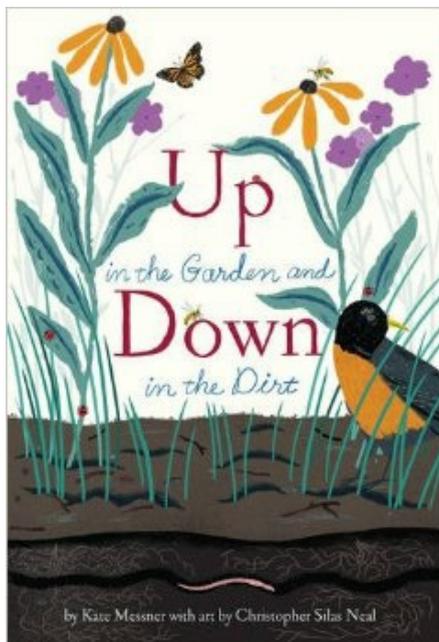


Literature Connections: April

Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt

Written by Kate Messner; Illustrated by Christopher Silas Neal



In this exuberant and lyrical follow-up to the award-winning Over and Under the Snow, discover the wonders that lie hidden between stalks, under the shade of leaves . . . and down in the dirt. Explore the hidden world and many lives of a garden through the course of a year! Up in the garden, the world is full of green—leaves and sprouts, growing vegetables, ripening fruit. But down in the dirt exists a busy world—earthworms dig, snakes hunt, skunks burrow—populated by all the animals that make a garden their home.



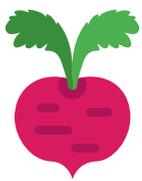
Before Reading:

- Do you have a garden or have you ever worked on seen one?
- What does a garden look like? What about under the ground? What do you think it looks like below the surface?



Reading Aloud:

- How do the pictures help to tell the story?
- What is happening in the garden/dirt during the different seasons?
- What different jobs to the creatures have in the garden? What role do they play in the growth of the garden?
- What happens in the garden at night?



After Reading:

- What was your favorite part of the story?
- What are some of the layers of the garden? What are some different things that are happening in each layer?
- What are some of the things that the garden needed to grow and produce flowers and vegetables?
- What happens in the garden in the fall? What does the garden do in the winter?

Activity Ideas:

- **Venn Diagrams!** Use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast life below and above. How is it different? How is it similar?
- **Observe Above and Below:** Plant a bean or sunflower seed in a clear cup. As it grows, make observations about what happens above and below the surface of the soil.

Up and Down Observation and Salad: Explore vegetables that grow above and below the ground. What do vegetables that grow below the soil have in common with each other? What do ones that grow above have in common? Make a salad out of these different vegetables. Compare texture and taste.