

Let's Get Growing!

This extract is from a gardening book for children by garden writer Lia Leendertz and children's television gardener Chris Collins, who has appeared on *Blue Peter*. In this extract, the authors write about how to get involved in gardening and the benefits that gardening can bring.

Let's get growing!

On a sunny spring morning, I cannot wait to get outside and check the seedlings that I planted a few days before. It's so exciting!

Whether you plant one special sunflower or a whole plot of vegetables, seeing things grow is one of the real wonders of life.

What if I haven't got a garden?

You don't need masses of space or even a garden to be a great gardener – a window-box can give you fresh herbs for pizzas, pasta, salads and sandwiches. Why not try growing a strawberry fountain or use a hanging basket to grow tomatoes? They are great fun to grow and things you pick from your own plants are going to be fresher and far more tasty than anything you can buy in the shops. There is nothing like it. Remember though, give your plants a little bit of your time every day – don't forget to feed, water and give your plants lots of love.

Be a wildlife warrior

When you dig a piece of ground or turn over the soil to take out weeds and stones, it's great fun to watch how many birds you attract to your veg plot. Bees, butterflies, and other helpful insects can be encouraged to visit your garden by planting certain flowers. In turn, these insects will help your plants to grow by spreading pollen and seeds and eating pests. If you work with wildlife, they will do a lot of the work for you.

So now you're a gardener

As you pick your first fruit and veg, you will see what fun it is to grow things. Everyone loves to be given great things to eat, but don't forget that you can give away some of your baby plants as well – in that way even more people can have fun gardening. Being a gardener will keep you and your friends busy, happy and well fed and there's no better way to enjoy the great world outdoors.

An extract from *Grow Your Own for Kids* by Chris Collins and Lia Leendertz.

1

In what ways are the title and the first paragraph different from the rest of the text?
Why do you think this is?

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.....

☐

2 marks

2

Why do the authors recommend home-grown produce?

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☐

2 marks

3

What do you think the authors mean by "give your plants lots of love" in line 13?

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☐

1 mark

4

How do the authors feel about gardening? How can you tell?

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.....

☐

2 marks

5

What do you think the purpose of this text is?

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☐

1 mark

6

Do you think being a gardener is important? Explain your answer.

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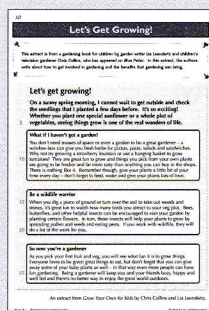
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2 marks

Total
out of 10

Let's Get Growing!



Question Book:

Year 3, pages 10-11

Author / Source:

Chris Collins and Lia Leendertz

Genre:

Non-fiction — persuasive text

Cross-curricular links:

- Science (bees and pollination)
- PSHE (growing your own food)
- D&T (designing a garden)

Introduction

This book is published by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). The RHS encourages people to “grow your own” because it believes in knowing where your food comes from, being self-sufficient and eating healthily. This book aims to introduce children to these principles and to encourage them to get out into the garden by showing them how much fun gardening can be.

Answers

1. The font is larger and in bold. E.g. It's the introduction to the rest of the text, so this makes it stand out, and helps the reader learn what the text is going to be about.
2. E.g. Because it's fun to grow, and it's fresher and tastier than what you buy in the shops.
3. E.g. Take good care of your plants.
4. E.g. They really like gardening. They say that it's “so exciting” to grow plants, and they say that growing things is “fun”.
5. E.g. To persuade more people to take up gardening.
6. Any appropriate answer. E.g. Yes, because it can be very rewarding. For example, you can grow your own herbs and vegetables to eat, and you can enjoy being outdoors at the same time.



Extra Activities

- Discuss as a class what features suggest this extract is a persuasive text. You might want to discuss the use of rhetorical questions to encourage children to do what the author is suggesting, or exclamation marks to make what the author is saying more exciting.
- Invite pupils to turn this extract into a poster which aims to interest people in gardening. Ask them to condense the text so the poster gets across the main messages contained in the extract. They should think about layout, colour and use of images in order to make the poster look as appealing as possible.
- As a class, or in groups, research the role of bees and other insects in helping plants reproduce through pollination. Explain how pollinators are in decline, but how gardeners can help by planting flowers rich in pollen and nectar. Research the types of plants that are best for this.
- Split the class into groups of three and give each child a topic — knowing where your food comes from, being self-sufficient, and eating healthily. Introduce the topics beforehand, and then ask the pupils to discuss them in their groups.
- Ask pupils to research different varieties of fruit, vegetables and pollen-rich flowers that can be grown in British gardens. Give each pupil a piece of A4 paper and ask them to design their own garden, including some of the plants that they have found out about. Ask them to annotate their gardens to explain the reasons for their choices.