

# Nana's Garden

by RV staff writer J.C.

It was early spring and Nana was in the backyard with her grandchildren. Amy, Michael, and Justin were playing when Nana said, "I'm going to start planting my garden. Who wants to help me?"

"What are going to plant, Nana?" asked Amy. "I like big, yellow sunflowers."

"I'm going to plant vegetables. That way we can have them to eat when they are ready," said Nana.

"How long does that take?" asked Michael. He liked vegetables sometimes. Well, he mostly liked carrots.

"It will take a few months before anything is ready to eat," answered Nana. The children were surprised.

"Months? Why would you do all that work and then have to wait so long?" asked Amy. "You should just go to the store and buy them."

"Patience, my little Buttercup! Don't you know food always tastes much better when you grow it yourself?" replied Nana. "And if all of you come over here and help, it won't be too much work."

"I'll help you, Nana," offered Justin. He put down the soccer ball and went to look at the gardening tools Nana had laid out. There were gloves, trowels for digging, packets of seeds, and a watering can. "What do we do first?" Michael and Amy came over to look, too.

Nana taught Justin how to dig small rows of holes in the dirt of the garden patch. He wore the gloves and used a trowel to make small, even holes for the seeds. Next, Nana showed Amy how to pour a few of the seeds at a time into each hole. Then it was Michael's job to cover up the holes with soil. Finally, Amy wrote the vegetable names on sticks that Justin pushed into the ground. "This way we can remember which vegetable seeds we have planted," said Nana.

When they had planted everything, the children took turns filling up the watering can so that Nana could make the soil nice and wet for the seeds to start to grow.

"Now we just water them a little every day, and with some time and sunshine, we'll have some delicious things to eat in the summer," said Nana.

Whenever the grandchildren came to visit, Nana would ask, "Who wants to help me water my garden?" They would go look at how the garden was growing. They helped water the plants, and Nana showed them which plants needed pruning, or cutting back, and which needed tying up to grow tall and straight.

Spring turned into summer and finally, the plants started revealing their colorful secrets. Nana showed her grandchildren where the cherry tomatoes were starting to turn red, where the cucumbers were hiding under the green leaves, and how the peppers were growing bigger every day.

Finally, Nana said it was time to harvest the first of the vegetables. She gave them each baskets and, together, they gathered some of the lettuce, cucumbers, carrots, onions, peppers, and tomatoes.

They went into the kitchen and washed the dirt off the food. Nana chopped up the vegetables into small pieces. Then she tossed them together into a bowl and added oil and vinegar and a pinch of salt to make a salad dressing. It looked delicious!

"Who wants to help me eat this beautiful, fresh salad?" Nana asked.

"Me!" said Amy.

"I will!" replied Michael and Justin together.

"Okay," said Nana. "Amy, get the plates, Justin get the water and cups, and Michael get the forks and napkins. Let's eat!"

**Questions**

1. Why did Nana want to grow vegetables instead of buying them in a store?
  
2. What is a trowel?
  
3. What does "harvest" mean?
  
4. Put the events in order:
  - A) The vegetables were ready to harvest.
  - B) Amy put seeds into the holes.
  - C) Nana wanted to plant a garden.
  - D) Everyone ate a delicious, fresh salad.
  - E) Michael covered up the holes with dirt.
  - F) Justin dug holes in the dirt with a trowel.