

My Grampa's Garden

By Sheila Stone Dill

I got to stay with Gramma and Grampa Stone last weekend. After breakfast, Grampa said, "I'm going to start my garden this weekend. You want to help me?" "Sure," I said.

First, Grampa and I dug up soil in the backyard. Then we mixed in compost, egg shells, and coffee grounds. Compost is old leaves and plants, and that sat in the garden until they rotted. Compost doesn't smell bad. It smells like a garden. The worms love it, they were everywhere. Grampa has been using egg shells and coffee grounds in his garden his whole life.

The digging took all morning. We had to drink gallons of water and by noon we were worn out. Gramma brought out sandwiches, apples, carrots, and cookies. We all relaxed in the backyard and ate. I watched Grampa, he even fell asleep for a while. While we rested, the next door cat visited. He sniffed all over the garden. I said, "Oh, oh, he'll dig up the garden." Gramma just smiled. "There's something we can do," she said.

Then we planted the garden. We made a row of snow peas. That's my favorite. We planted three kinds of lettuce seeds. Grampa said, "These are some of the early spring vegetables that we can grow now." Then he brought out seeds for radishes, beets, and carrots. He told me later on we can plant all the warm weather seeds like beans, corn, and tomatoes. "If we put them in right now, we might get a frosty night and they could die," he said.

Before I left with mom and dad, I showed them the garden. Nothing had come up yet. Gramma said, "Be patient. Come back in 3 weeks."

When I came back, all the seeds had sprouted. The beet leaves were reddish just like beets. The carrots were lacy topped. The lettuce was red, green, and lime colored. Grampa pointed to the leafy radishes. "I'm going to pick some for our salad," he said.

He showed me the catnip plant at the end of the garden. While I was watching, the next door cat rolled all over that plant. "Cats love catnip," said Grampa, "It'll keep them out of my vegetables." There were a few robins in the garden, too. Grampa said they were looking for worms for their babies.

A month later, when I came back, Grampa couldn't wait to show me the garden. The vegetables had almost covered over the dirt. I could see tiny green tomatoes on the plants. The lettuce was big enough to pick a few for a salad. And the radishes—they were huge. Grampa picked handfuls. We had enough to make a salad and his favorite, radish sandwiches.

Constructed Response
"My Granmpa's Garden"
CR Question and Samples from Donna Chaney, 5th grade teacher

Constructed Response Instructions: Using details from the passage to support your answers, provide two reasons why the worms and catnip were such important components of Grandpa's Garden.

Work with your students to create a rubric that could be used to assess constructed responses to the question above.

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Then use the rubric you've created to have students assess the eleven samples on the next page.

1. Why were catnip and worm so important components of Granpas Garden. Well one reason is that the catnip is so that the cats don't eat or throw the other plants and make them die. In the Story it says the cat was rolling all over that plant. Another reason is that the worms were there for the birds so they can get some for the baby. In the story it says that there was robins looking for worms.
2. Because the cats lived and worms liked the garden. So they both had an interest.
3. It is important because cats lik the plant. The worms like the smell of the garden.
4. The catnip was so important because the cat nip plant at the end of the garden. The cat rolled over all the catnip plants. "Cats Love catnip!" And the worms are important because there are a few robins in the town and the Robins just had babies. The robins feed the worms to there babies.
5. Worms and Catnip are so important components of Grandpas Garden because Cats love Catnip and they worms love they smell of the garden.
6. The catnip was important because it keeps the cats away from the vegetables like the nieghboors cat. The worms were important because they fed the birds.
7. The worms and catnip are important because the catnip was for the next door cat, they put there so the cat wouldn't get into grampa's garden, cats love catnip. The worms were important because the robins would get them to feed their babies.
8. The worms were important because they help fertilize the plants. And helps compost fertilize plants and worms love it. And Catnip help to keep the cats out of the garden and they love it.
9. Worms were important because they liked compost and are food for robins. Catnip were important because it kept cats from digging up the garden and cats like to roll around on them.
10. Worms and catnip were such important components of Grandpa's Garden because of two reasons. #1 is that the catnip kept the cats away from the rest of the garden. #2 is that the worms are food for birds so that birds don't eat the plants. Compost attracts worms. Worms love it, they were everywhere. The next door cat visited. He sniffed all over the garden. He showed me the catnip plant. The next door cat rolled all over that plant. "Cats love catnip. It'll keep them out of my vegetables," said Grandpa. There were a few robins in the garden too. They were looking for worms for their babies.
11. The catnip was to keep the next door cat away from the garden, and worms were for the robins to stay away. So the catnip and worms were there to keep cats and birds away from his masterpiece garden.