

# The Food Forest Kids

Garden Missions • Books 1-10

Growing Food, Friendship, and Change, One Seed at a Time.

**Ten small ways to observe, grow, and share.**

For ages 6-9 with a trusted grown-up. Younger children can draw and talk together.

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# A note for grown-ups

A small mission is enough

Ask permission before using a site, plant, tool, ingredient, or water source. Follow school policies and local growing advice.

Check site history, clean water, drainage, allergies, heat, weather, access, and safe storage. Adults manage cutting, deep digging, compost, and food service.

Seeds, potting mix, compost, and seedlings are not snacks. Do not taste unidentified plants. Wash hands after handling garden materials.

Observe instead of promising results. Seeds, seasons, and gardens differ. The drawing alternative counts as participation.

These missions are simple learning activities, not recipes for every climate or a substitute for professional site advice.

# Start a Seed Corner

Book 1 · The Yard Next Door

You need: A trusted grown-up, untreated tomato seeds sold for planting, a clean small pot with drainage, seed-starting mix, water, and paper.

1. Ask a grown-up to help choose a locally suitable seed and planting season. Read the packet together.
2. Have the grown-up check drainage. Moisten the mix and plant at the packet's depth.
3. Give the pot the warmth and light the packet recommends. Check moisture; keep it damp, not soggy.
4. Draw what you see. Sprouting time varies. If nothing grows, ask what you could change and try again.

**Garden safely: Do not eat seeds, mix, or seedlings. Keep small seeds away from mouths. Wash hands after gardening. A sprout is for growing, not a snack.**

Another way: No planting space yet? Draw a seed corner and observe a grown-up's plant.

Wonder: What changed above the mix? What might be happening below it?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## I noticed...

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## I wonder...

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## Next time, I could...

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# A Soil Look

Book 2 · The Corner Crew

You need: A grown-up, a clean tray, a small adult-approved garden soil sample or container mix, a magnifier if available, and paper.

1. Let a grown-up choose a safe sample. Never collect beside roads, spills, animal waste, or unknown chemicals.
2. Look for particles, old plant pieces, and spaces. Sketch what you can actually see.
3. Notice differences between a garden soil sample and a container mix. They do not have to look the same.
4. Return the sample where the grown-up directs. Make a shared plant-care plan that begins with observing.

**Garden safely: Do not taste or breathe in loose soil or mix. Keep it away from food. Avoid dusty material; a grown-up can lightly dampen it. Cover cuts and wash hands afterward.**

Another way: Use a photograph or draw a soil world with particles and spaces.

Wonder: What did you see? What might be present but too small to see?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## I wonder...

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## Next time, I could...

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# Make a Place Plan

Book 3 · A Forest for Our School

You need: A grown-up, paper, pencil, and a permitted place to observe.

1. Choose a patio, balcony, school corner, or a place in a drawing. Ask before visiting or changing it.
2. Observe sunlight, shade, paths, water access, and what people already do there.
3. Draw one possible small planting place. Keep paths and play space.
4. Add three grown-up questions: Is the site safe? Which plants fit? Who will care for them when we are away?

**Garden safely: Do not dig, move containers, install water systems, or plant on shared land without responsible adult permission. Grown-ups check utilities, soil, water, and access.**

Another way: Design a pretend corner on paper, using what you know about light and space.

Wonder: How could your plan care for both plants and people?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Next time, I could...

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# Sort for Compost

Book 4 · The Scraps That Stayed

You need: A grown-up, paper or clean picture cards, and examples such as a dry leaf and a fresh vegetable peel.

1. With a grown-up, sort drawings or clean examples into suitable fresh plant scraps and suitable dry materials.
2. Make a separate do-not-add list for a simple home compost bin: meat, dairy, oils, pet waste, sick plants, and unknown treated materials.
3. If a grown-up already manages compost, observe from a safe distance and record one change over time.
4. Let the grown-up manage moisture, mixing, pests, and when the compost is ready.

**Garden safely: Do not open, stir, touch, or sniff moldy compost. Children with relevant allergies or breathing concerns can use pictures only. Wash hands. Do not use raw manure or pet waste.**

Another way: Picture sorting teaches the same idea without a compost bin.

Wonder: Which changes would you need more time to notice?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Next time, I could...

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# A Pollinator Pause

Book 5 · A Place for Wings

You need: A grown-up, paper, a pencil, and a safe flower-viewing place.

1. Ask a grown-up to choose a viewing spot away from nests, stings, roads, and sprayed areas.
2. Watch from a respectful distance for a short comfortable time. You may see no visitors.
3. Draw what you actually notice: a landing, a visit, a movement, or no movement.
4. Wonder which locally suitable flowers could provide habitat in an approved place.

**Garden safely: Do not touch, catch, chase, feed, or approach insects or nests. People with sting allergies need their grown-up's safety plan. Never taste flowers you find.**

Another way: Observe through a window or use a grown-up-selected nature video or photograph.

Wonder: What do you know from watching, and what is still a question?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Next time, I could...

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# The Mulch Look

Book 6 · The Thirsty Afternoon

You need: A grown-up, two matching drained cups, container mix, a little locally suitable clean mulch, water, and paper.

1. Have a grown-up prepare matching cups of mix with the same starting moisture. Do not put plants in them.
2. Leave one surface bare. Cover the other lightly with mulch.
3. Keep both in the same safe place. Ask the grown-up to help compare moisture later.
4. Record what happened in your test. Different weather or materials may give different results.

**Garden safely: Avoid dusty mix and unknown treated mulch. No standing-water containers. Do not dig beside roots. Wash hands after handling materials.**

Another way: With permission, observe a mulched bed and draw what you see; it is an observation, not a controlled comparison.

Wonder: What would you keep the same if you repeated your comparison?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Next time, I could...

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# Leaf Clue Journal

Book 7 · The Garden Detective

You need: A grown-up, paper, pencil, and a safe adult-approved plant.

1. Look at the whole plant. Draw a leaf and any change you notice.
2. Ask a grown-up to help observe both sides without harming it. Record only what you actually see.
3. Visit again if allowed. Is damage changing? Is the plant still growing?
4. Let the grown-up identify any problem and choose whether help is needed.

**Garden safely: Do not touch unknown insects, spiders, nests, or damaged plants. Do not mix sprays or use pesticides. Wash hands after gardening. Observe sprayed areas only when an adult says it is safe.**

Another way: Compare two grown-up-selected plant photographs.

Wonder: Which part of your record is an observation, and which part is a guess?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Next time, I could...

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# A Plan with Room

Book 8 · Room to Grow

You need: A grown-up, paper, pencil, and a safe place to observe.

1. Draw a small garden idea for your own space or an imaginary one.
2. Show paths, places to reach plants, and room for their grown sizes.
3. Ask who will use the space. What would make reaching and moving easier?
4. Choose one improvement on paper before a grown-up decides whether to change the real place.

**Garden safely: Do not move heavy pots, alter paths, cut trees, or build raised structures yourself. Adults check stability, utilities, access, and plant suitability.**

Another way: A paper container-garden plan can use ideas from food forests without needing trees or land.

Wonder: Which space on your plan is for plants, and which space is for people?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## I wonder...

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## Next time, I could...

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# A Food Story

Book 9 · The Table We Made

You need: A grown-up, one adult-identified food, paper, and a pencil.

1. Choose a food with a grown-up. It can come from a garden, market, or shop.
2. Draw the journey you know: growing, harvesting, traveling, or preparing. Put a question mark where you are unsure.
3. If you prepare or taste it, wash hands and let the grown-up check allergies and food safety.
4. Share one thing you learned. Listening or drawing counts as taking part.

**Garden safely: Eat only food a responsible adult identifies and approves. Wash produce under clean running water, not soap. Adults handle knives, storage, and food-service decisions.**

Another way: Use a photograph and draw the food's possible journey without eating it.

Wonder: Who helped this food reach your table? What could you share besides food?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## I wonder...

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## Next time, I could...

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# Share a Small Beginning

Book 10 · One Seed, Many Yards

You need: A grown-up, paper, pencil, and a willing person to share with.

1. Draw one small food-growing idea for a real or imaginary place.
2. Add the questions your grown-up needs to check: plants, light, safe water and materials, permission, and ongoing care.
3. Share the idea with someone who wants to listen. Ask what their place needs.
4. Choose one supervised next step, or keep learning on paper. Starting small counts.

**Garden safely: Ask permission before changing shared spaces. Do not send seeds or plants to another area without grown-up checks of suitability and movement rules. Adults supervise tools, tasting, and care.**

Another way: Teach a friend one observation from a book, photograph, or a plant you can safely see.

Wonder: Which idea can travel, and which choice needs local advice?

# My garden notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## I wonder...

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## Next time, I could...

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