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# A Four-Year-Old's Sunflower



*It grew up overnight.  
By Lindsey Stell*



One day, my neighbor's four-year-old daughter checked a picture book out of the library. The book told a story of how a simple seed turned into a beautiful flower. She read the book over and over and decided that she was going to plant her own garden.

The next day she was out in her yard digging a small plot near her house. I asked her if she needed any help, and she told me politely that, no, she had learned everything she needed to know from her book. She then said that I could watch, but only if I promised not to touch anything.

After making sure that her dirt was good and “turned up,” she pulled her seeds out of her pocket—a snack pack of sunflower seeds! She dug a few holes and filled them with the seeds. After covering the seeds with dirt, she ran inside to ask her mother for her “secret weapon.”

I was left outside, wondering what exactly a gardening secret weapon could be, when she came walking back out, very carefully carrying a glass of milk. As she began pouring the milk over her newly planted seeds, she informed me that “Milk makes things grow big and strong!”

I laughed a little, but she quickly scolded me, saying that she was a plant expert. “Are you a plant expert?” she asked.

I apologized and agreed that I was not an expert and that she should continue.

Next she reached into her pocket and pulled out two Flintstones vitamins (a Fred and a Wilma, to be exact). She said that her mommy always makes her take her vitamins because they keep you from getting sick. She pushed the vitamins down into the dirt, brushed her hands off on her clothes, and declared her garden perfect.

The next day, I heard a rapid knocking on my door. I opened the screen door to see a very excited four-year-old. “Come see! Come see!” she shouted as she grabbed my hand and began pulling me towards her garden. I was shocked! There in her little garden was the prettiest sunflower I had ever seen!

“I told you! I told you!” She said over and over. I told her that, yes, she was obviously quite correct in her gardening strategy and that her flower was truly beautiful. She smiled one more, satisfied smile at her sunflower and ran off to play.

I knocked on her front door and went inside. Her mother was standing at the sink, looking out the window at the little garden her daughter had planted.

“I know I will have to explain it to her one day,” she said, smiling. “But the look on her face is worth way more than the five dollars I paid for that flower.” ❖

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