

## STORY SUMMARY

What does a flower do? They may not seem active to human eyes, but for the creatures of the garden they dust a bumblebee, shade a frog, feed a hummingbird, and serve as the center of a buzzing, humming, thrumming community. *A Flower is a Friend* celebrates the many ways a flower cares for those around it, while rich back matter unfurls further information

about the partnerships within the garden ecosystem, including the ways these garden creatures are friends to flowers in return.

**Frieda Wishinsky** grew up in New York City, where she played in local parks and frequented the local candy store. After earning her BA in international relations and her Master of Science in special education, Frieda began to teach...and then to write. Her first title, *Oonga Boonga*, was an American Booksellers' Pick of the List. Since then, she has grown a magical garden and published more than seventy books, including her bestselling biography of Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Man Who Made Parks*. Frieda has earned many starred reviews and awards, including the Print Braille Book of the Year and the Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award. Today she lives in Toronto, where she still loves exploring parks and gardens.

### Pair this book with:

- *If Only...* by Mies van Hout

Illustrator, author, designer, and visual artist **Karen Patkau's** distinctive art can be found in more than twenty picture books for children, many of them about animals and ecosystems. She is the recipient of the Ezra Jack Keats Memorial Medal for *Don't Eat Spiders*, and *One Watermelon Seed* was a Bank Street Best Book. *A Good Trade* was a White Ravens Choice, a Bank Street Best Book, and a nominee for the OLA Blue Spruce Award and the Kentucky Bluegrass Award, among others. Karen's most recent books include *Triceratops Stomp* and *A Family for Faru*. She lives in Toronto, Ontario.



Picture Book Ages 3–6 | ISBN: 978-1-77278-280-6 | Pages: 36

## THEMES

The Needs of Living Things, Ecosystems, Nonfiction Elements

## BISAC CODES

JNF037030 JUVENILE NONFICTION / Science & Nature / Flowers & Plants  
 JNF003250 JUVENILE NONFICTION / Animals / Butterflies, Moths & Caterpillars  
 JNF003340 JUVENILE NONFICTION / Animals / Frogs & Toads  
 JNF003120 JUVENILE NONFICTION / Animals / Insects, Spiders, etc.  
 JNF022000 JUVENILE NONFICTION / Gardening

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

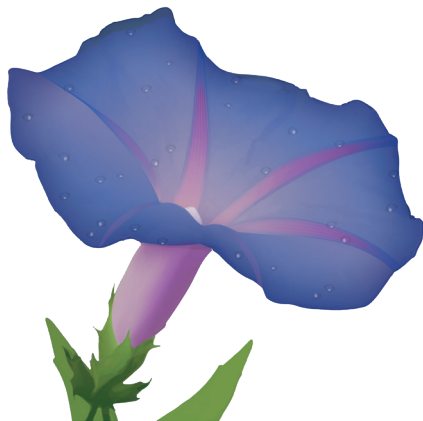
Language Arts: media literacy, nonfiction elements, retell skills; Drama; Social Science: timelines; Science: the needs of living things; Visual Arts

## READING LEVEL

Lexile Measure: AD440L | Fountas & Pinnell: K

**THIS GUIDE CONTAINS:**

ACTIVITY	MAIN SUBJECT AREAS	SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TOPICS
Read-Aloud	Comprehension Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activate prior knowledge</li> <li>• infer, predict, and make connections</li> <li>• use dramatic play to represent parts of the text</li> </ul>
Compare and Contrast Media Literacy	Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responding to and evaluating two different simple media literacy texts</li> </ul>
Nonfiction Elements	Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compare illustrative and photographic media</li> </ul>
A Day in the Life of a Flower	Language Arts Social Studies Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use retell skills to show the day in the life of a flower using a timeline sequence and relate this information to the interdependence of living things</li> </ul>
Art in Nature	Visual Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a variety of visual arts materials to recreate flowers and insects</li> </ul>



**THE READ-ALoud**

For this activity, teachers can choose the discussion points most appropriate for their particular group of students.

**Learning Expectations:**

Students will:

- identify reading comprehension strategies (e.g., activate prior knowledge, infer, predict, make connections) and use them before, during, and after reading to understand the text

**You Will Need**

- *A Flower is a Friend*
- chart paper
- markers

**How To:****Before Reading**

Activate students' prior knowledge by asking them to share what they know about the word *garden*. Answers can be shared orally or recorded on chart paper to refer to throughout the book.

Complete a picture walk through the book, showing each illustration.

Prompt students to identify the colors they see and consider extending their learning to warm and cool colors (visual arts connection).

**During Reading**

**Pages 4–5:** Read the first page aloud to students. Then, draw attention to the punctuation on the page. The first sentence has an exclamation mark. Discuss the use of an exclamation mark and have students infer why the book might be starting this way. Model reading the first sentence, "We are flowers!", with the intended strong feeling of confidence and importance. Next, focus on what the flowers are saying about themselves, as well as their friends. Notice that they are giving compliments to themselves as a group (flowers) and their friends (those who help the flowers). Relate this



concept to friendship and how friends help one another. Look at the different colors of text on the page. Ask students why the book's designer might do this. Read the question on this page, "Why are ladybugs and flowers friends?" aloud to students and have them predict some reasons about the helpfulness of ladybugs. Finally, turn to the "Ladybugs" entry in the back matter to read about why and how ladybugs help flowers.

**Pages 6–7:** Draw attention to the lack of punctuation on this page. The first spread had four different punctuation marks on it, while this spread only has one. Continue to notice this as you read through the story. Ask students to identify if they wake to the sunlight each day or another way (alarm clock, family member, dog or cat, etc.). Have students stand up. While standing, have them curl their upper body into their knees as they bend down. Then have them slowly stretch upwards until they are fully standing to represent a flower waking to the sunlight. Read aloud the question, "Why would a morning glory be happy to see a dragonfly?" Have students share some of their ideas. You can prompt students by asking them to think about what makes them happy to see someone that they care about. Once students have shared their predictions, read the information about dragonflies in the back matter.

**Pages 8–9:** Ask students if they are in charge of feeding any animals in their home as part of their chores or home responsibilities. Have students predict how a flower can feed an insect (Build on prior knowledge). Read aloud the question, "What attracts a hummingbird to a honeysuckle?" Have students share their predictions. Read the information shared about hummingbirds in the back matter.

**Pages 10–11:** Focus on the word *dust*. Ask students to show you what they think dusting an object looks like. Is it fast or slow? Hard or soft? After they have shared their interpretation of how a flower dusts a bumblebee, read aloud the information on bumblebees provided in the back matter. Ask students to show you again, now having this new information, how a flower

dusts a bumblebee. Have them examine the two different interpretations as a whole class discussion or by discussing with a partner.

**Pages 12–13:** Ask students to identify what they believe the word *burst* means. Prompt by asking if they can think of any time that they have heard this word. Model for students how to demonstrate “bursting” with something (color, joy, excitement, etc.) by crouching down low and then jumping high as quickly as you can. How does this relate to a flower being able to “burst with color?” Examine the fifteenth spread to explore the answer to “How is a gecko a friend to a bird of paradise?”

**Pages 14–15:** When we think about what we need to survive, we know that we need food, water, and air. Something else that is really important is our connection to others. We need the love of our families, our friends, and ourselves. In this illustration, the flower is shaped to suit the butterfly’s body, and it provides the butterfly nectar for food. The butterfly shows love and care to the flower by landing gently to sip the nectar, and by carrying pollen with it from other flowers. They are both dependant on each other for survival. Continue to explore the theme of how living things depend on connections with each other throughout the story. In the back matter, read more about why butterflies are so important to flowers.

**Pages 16–17:** Humans have to drink water in order to survive. This is also true for plants. Have students predict how flowers can “drink the rain.” In the back matter, explore how snails are helped by the rain and by moisture in plants.

**Pages 18–19:** One way that humans can cool themselves down during hot, sunny weather is to find shade. Ask, “Why do you think the frog would need shade for protection? Can you explain how the waterlily provides shade for the frog?” Read information about frogs in the back matter to see if your prediction was correct. Based on what you’ve learned, have students predict if they think other creatures might need shade to help them survive.

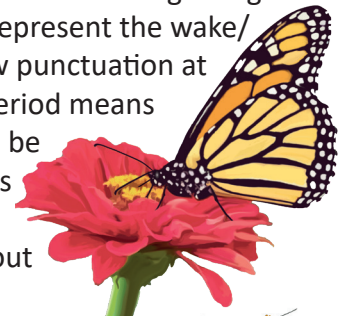
**Pages 20–21:** Stand up really tall with your hands raised above your head. Make a swishing sound as you sway back and forth as if you are dancing in the wind. Ask students why plants or tree branches don’t break as they “dance with the wind”. Ask, “How can we relate this flexibility to the emotional regulation that is so important for humans?”

Beetles are drawn to magnolia flowers. Read about why on the sixteenth spread.

**Pages 22–23:** “Why would it be important for a mouse to be able to hide within a flower?” “Is it important to the survival of animals for them to be able to hide in safe shelter? How do you know?” Read about why a mouse might decide to sleep in a tulip in the back matter, and how this act can help flowers.

**Pages 24–25:** Ask students if they have ever smelled a flower that had a strong scent. We can think about a flower’s scent as nature’s perfume. “How do you think perfume, something that we smell with our noses, can be spread by a flower?” “Here we see a spider in the lower right-hand corner of the page. How do you think a spider can help plants?” Information on how a spider specifically helps the Queen of the Night flower can be found in the back matter.

**Pages 26–27:** When you read the second spread, students acted out how flowers might wake to the sunlight. Now, have them act out again how flowers wake to the sunlight, but add the next action of closing at night. Do this as a few times as a movement sequence to represent the wake/sleep cycle of the flower. Notice that there is now punctuation at the end of the sentence again in this spread. A period means the end of a sentence. Ask students how this can be true. While flowers close at night, some creatures are just waking up. Introduce the vocabulary word *nocturnal* and read further information about bats in the back matter.



**Pages 28–29:** Put this image under a document camera for all students to see. Have students identify what friends of flowers they see. Consider having a vocabulary list (with picture supports, if needed) up on the board to help students identify which friends are hiding in the illustration.



**Back matter:** Use for reference of information throughout the read-aloud.

**Index:** Introduce the nonfiction concept of an index page. Explain to students what this means and why it helps the reader in nonfiction texts.

### After Reading

- Consider comparing the creatures in this book to those from *If Only...* by Mies Van Hout. What is similar? How do both books discuss the topic of friendship in different ways? How do both use adjectives to help describe the plants and creatures?
- Go back to the beginning of the story and review each illustration under a document camera. Ask students what they notice about the background of each illustration.

### ACTIVITY 1: COMPARE AND CONTRAST MEDIA LITERACY

Students will respond to two different media forms (book and video) and express their personal thoughts and opinions on how each form relates to the other.

#### Learning Expectations:

Students will:

- express personal thoughts and feelings about simple media works (book and video)
- orally explain their responses about how the information in each one is similar and/or different

#### You Will Need

- *A Flower is a Friend*
- access to the internet
- computer

#### How To:

1. Read *A Flower is a Friend*.
2. Watch the *National Geographic* video “A Delicate Dance Between Flowers and Insects.” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cz6YFs3Qyc>).
3. Encourage students to think about how the book and video each made them feel. Were the feelings different?
4. Ask students what insects and flowers they noticed that were in both the video and the book.
5. Have students orally express what information they learned from each form of text. Have them analyze which format impacted them more.
6. As a final discussion point, have students share one thing that surprised them about the video.

## ACTIVITY 2: NONFICTION ELEMENTS

Students will examine photos of flowers from different sources and compare these to the illustrations of flowers within the text.

### Learning Expectations:

Students will:

- learn about an index and how this text feature helps readers understand a text
- use the index to compile images of the flowers to compare to the illustrated versions within the text
- use specific vocabulary when speaking about what they notice (stem, petal, bud, nectar, etc.)

### You Will Need

- *A Flower is a Friend*
- access to technology (iPad, Chromebook, etc.)
- access to the internet
- optional: reference books on flowers, plants, and insects

### How To:

1. Inform students that this text is nonfiction. The illustrations within the text were painted realistically from photos.
2. You can choose to compile images ahead of time of different examples of flowers listed in the index of *A Flower is a Friend*, or you can have students (depending on age) be responsible for researching one flower and presenting it to the class.
3. Discuss how an index in a nonfiction text can help us as readers.
4. Students will examine the difference between a photograph of a flower and an illustration of one. For each flower, have students explain what they notice.
5. *Optional:* Ask a florist to donate a few stems of different flowers for students to examine, as another form of comparison.

6. *Extension:* Using an app like Bookcreator, have students each create a page for their assigned flower (choose from the index of *A Flower is a Friend*). This class text can then be read alongside *A Flower is a Friend* for comparison.

## ACTIVITY 3: A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FLOWER

Students will practice story retell skills by creating a timeline of “A Day in the Life of a Flower” and use this information to explain how living things rely on other living things for survival.

### Learning Expectations:

Students will:

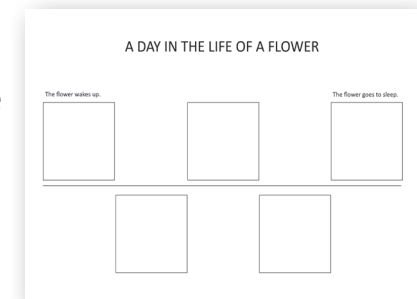
- learn what a timeline is and why this is an effective tool to use for retelling important events
- retell important parts of the story by drawing and/or writing parts of the day that the flower experiences
- use their timeline to help them explain to others how living things provide for the needs of other living things

### You Will Need

- *A Flower is a Friend*
- “A Day in the Life of a Flower” blackline master
- chart paper
- markers

### How To:

1. Read *A Flower is a Friend* to the whole class.
2. On chart paper, create a timeline of the important parts of the day for the flower, as they are explained in the book.
3. Provide examples of other uses of the timeline sequence (i.e., to explain important events from birth to present day, to recount important parts of a family vacation, etc.).



4. Explain to students that they will be creating a picture of the flower waking up and going to sleep. They will then choose three parts of the day, as explained in the book, to show what else the flower experiences during a day. For example, the flower feeds a hummingbird.
5. Students can share their timelines to the class as a whole or in partners during a think-pair-share activity. Have students focus their discussion on what their timeline shows about how living things rely on other living things for survival. If students share with a partner, the partner can be responsible for sharing what was on their partner's timeline with the rest of the class.

#### ACTIVITY 4: ART IN NATURE

Students will use watercolor paints or modelling clay to recreate organic flowers or insects that they saw in the book.



#### Learning Expectations:

Students will:

- look at the organic shapes of flowers and use watercolor paints to replicate what they see (size, color, arrangement), or
- use modelling clay to create a small sculpture of an insect from the text

#### Bibliography

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/language18currb.pdf>

<https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/arts18b09curr.pdf>

<https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/science-technology>

<https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/elementary-sshg>

#### You Will Need

- *A Flower is a Friend*
- watercolor paper
- watercolor paints
- paint brushes in a variety of sizes
- modelling clay (any color)
- real flowers for students to examine

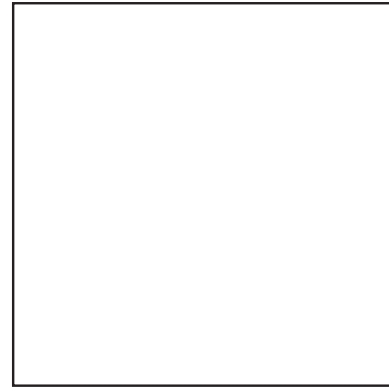
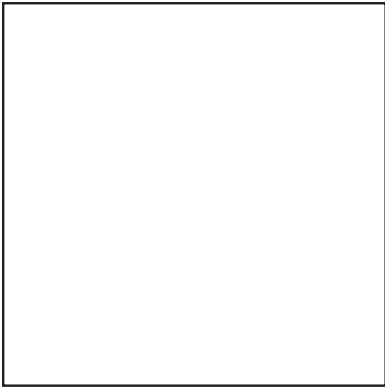
#### How To:

1. Read *A Flower is a Friend*.
2. Look at the illustration in the first spread. Ask students to notice how each flower illustration appears differently depending on how close it is to the viewer.
3. On a piece of watercolor paper, have students sketch their organic flower image in the background (to look like it's in the distance) and in foreground (to look like it's close up).
4. Once students have completed their sketch, they can use watercolor paints to color in their designs.
5. Students that would prefer to complete a sculpture of an insect can refer to the book to choose one.
6. Once all students have finished, set up each creation around the room to do a gallery walk of the artwork.
7. *Optional:* Invite other classes to come and view the art pieces.

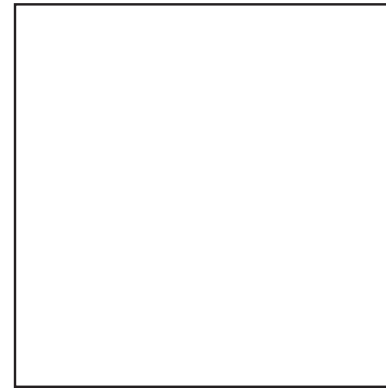
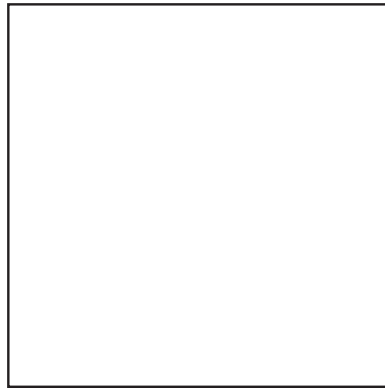
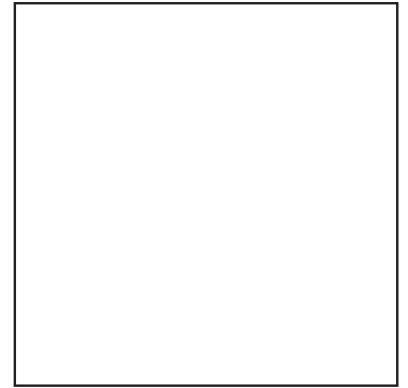
This guide was created with support  
from Ontario Creates

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FLOWER

The flower wakes up.



The flower goes to sleep.





# CAN YOU FIND THE FRIENDS OF THE FLOWERS?

