



Rochel's Garden of Patience

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities



Rochel's Garden of Patience

On the first warm day of spring, Rochel's mother hands her a packet of seeds.

"Sunflowers," says Mommy. "Let's plant them by the fence."

Rochel's eyes go wide. She's seen sunflowers before, tall and golden, with faces as big as dinner plates. She wants one right away.

They kneel in the dirt and poke small holes with their fingers. Rochel drops a seed in each one, then covers them over. She waters the soil gently.

"When will they grow?" she asks.

"Soon," says Mommy. "But not tomorrow. Maybe a week."

A week? Rochel's face falls. That seems like forever.

The next morning, she runs outside in her pajamas. She stares at the dirt. Nothing. Just brown soil.

"Where are they?"

"Still sleeping underground," says Totty. "Seeds take their time."

She comes back after lunch. Still nothing. She comes back at supper. Nothing. Before bed, she goes out with a flashlight and looks at the spot where the seeds are.

Nothing.

"I think they're broken," she tells Mommy.

"They're not broken. Growing happens where you can't see. The roots start first, deep in the dirt."

"Can't we make it go faster?"

"We can help it. Water, sunshine, and time. But we can't force it."

Rochel sighs. She decides to give it one more day.

On the fourth day, she checks again. Still nothing. On the fifth, same. On the sixth, she almost gives up.

Then, on the seventh day, she sees it. A tiny green curl pokes through the soil, like a baby's finger. Next to it is another. And another.

"Mommy! Totty! They came up!"

They all rush out. Seven little sprouts stand in a row, each with two round leaves.

"They're so small," says Rochel.

"But they're alive," says Totty. "And they're yours."

After that, she visits the garden every morning. She waters them. She pulls the weeds. She measures them with a ruler.

On day ten, they are one inch tall. On day twenty, four inches. On day thirty, ten inches. Each time she checks, they've grown a little, but she can never catch them in the middle of growing.

"They grow when I'm not looking," she says.

"Like most good things," says Totty.

By the end of June, the sunflowers stand taller than Rochel. Their stalks are thick and green. At the top of each one, a round golden head is beginning to open.

One morning, she wakes up and looks out the window. A huge yellow sunflower is blooming at the top of the tallest stalk, facing the rising sun.

Rochel runs outside. She stands beneath it, staring up. It is even bigger than she's imagined.

"I waited," she says.

"You did," says Mommy. "And look what you got."

Rochel picks the biggest one and puts it in a jar on the kitchen table. At Shabbos, it sits between the candlesticks, and everyone who comes in says, "Wow."

"I planted it," says Rochel proudly.

She saves a handful of seeds from the flower. Next spring, she thinks, she'll plant them again and wait.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What seeds does Rochel plant?

2. When do the first sprouts appear?

3. How many sprouts are there?

4. Where does she put the big sunflower on Shabbos?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Rochel checks the dirt with a flashlight. Fact / Guess
2. The seeds are broken. Fact / Guess
3. The sunflowers are taller than Rochel by June. Fact / Guess
4. Rochel saves seeds for next spring. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. What is something you waited for that was worth it?

2. What does Rochel do while she waits?

3. What could you plant or start this week?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: SUNFLOWER, SEEDS, GARDEN, SPROUT, WATER, PATIENCE

W	A	T	E	R	H	O	F	G	H	B
S	P	R	O	U	T	V	I	G	W	H
A	R	J	D	F	J	H	V	T	W	H
V	E	H	E	U	I	N	O	E	J	Y
L	W	F	G	I	E	F	J	C	S	B
E	O	B	A	D	D	R	B	N	E	F
K	L	S	R	I	N	P	B	E	E	W
P	F	K	D	Y	R	Y	B	I	D	B
Y	N	S	E	K	W	E	D	T	S	R
K	U	J	N	U	R	E	M	A	M	L
E	S	K	N	A	W	A	J	P	W	V



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. EESDS = _____

2. SRPTUSO = _____

3. GAEDRN = _____

4. LFROWE = _____

5. EFENC = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"Good things take time."

"I'll water them and wait."

"Look how much it grew!"

Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Growing Chart

Day	How tall	What I did
Day 7		
Day 20		
Day 30		



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw the tall sunflowers by the fence with golden faces turned to the sun.





Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. Sunflowers
2. On the seventh day
3. Seven
4. In a jar between the candlesticks

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: SEEDS, SPROUTS, GARDEN, FLOWER, FENCE

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.