

Flowers Circle – March 2012

Narration

What did we do yesterday? Can you tell me about one of your books? Do you remember any of the stories we told yesterday? – French and English

Charlotte narrates family story of her selection or we can back-and-forth the narration: Momma and the Bear, When Daddy was a Baby, Daddy's Very Bad Day, Grandma and the River, or Uncle Bill and the Flying Squirrel

Story of Charlotte's birth, followed by her name song

Once upon a time, it was just Momma and Daddy. We loved each other very much and we were so lonely because it was just the two of us all alone in this house. And then YOU CAME! At first, you were very tiny. But then you grew and you grew and you grew. And because you lived in my womb, my uterus grew and grew and grew to fit you. And because my uterus is inside of my body, my belly had to stretch and stretch and stretch to fit you. And the more you grew, the more my uterus grew and the more my belly stretched.

One day, when I could not possibly stretch even a little bit farther, I went to your Daddy and I said, "It's time!" Your Daddy drove me to the hospital, where we talked to some doctors and some nurses. I said, "I am ready to have this baby!" The doctors and nurses said, "Just trust your body. It will tell you when the baby is coming." Soon, you were ready to come out. So I pushed and pushed and pushed and OUT! you came.

You were the most beautiful thing we had ever seen. Your Daddy cut your umbilical cord and he held you in his arms and he gave you your name. He said, "Welcome to the world, darling girl. Your name is Charlotte." Then he put you in my arms and I gave you milk and I cradled you close to me and I said, "Welcome to the world, sweet Charlotte. We love you so much."

Welcome songs

Good morning, dear Earth (Tim Cain)

Good morning, dear Earth
Good morning, dear Sun
Good morning to the trees
And the flowers, every one.

Good morning, dear bees
And the birds in the trees,
Good morning to you
And good morning to me.

Circle of Sun (Rebecca Kai Dotlich, set to music)

I'm dancing.
I'm leaping.
I'm skipping about.
I gallop.
I grin.
I giggle.
I shout.
I'm Earth's many colors.
I'm morning and night.
I'm honey on toast.
I'm funny.
I'm bright.
I'm swinging.
I'm singing.
I wiggle.
I run.
I'm a piece of the sky
In a circle of sun.

Story A

The Snowdrop (German)

Long ago, when the Earth was new only the flowers wore colors. Mother Nature asked the flowers to share their beautiful colors with the rest of the world so that there could be beauty throughout the year. So, little by little, the flowers loaned their colors to the other things in the world: green to the trees, brown to the dirt, blue to the sky. Pretty soon, the only thing in the world that was left without a color was the snow.

Every time the snow asked a flower to share its color, the flower scoffed. Snow was cold and brought with it bitter storms and none of the flowers wanted their color to be associated with something nobody liked.

Finally, the snow approached the last flower left to ask: the snowdrop. The snowdrop was honored and happily shared its color.

When Mother Nature learned how cruelly the other flowers had treated the snow, she was disappointed. As a sign of her gratitude to the snowdrop for its kindness, she gave the snowdrop the honor of being the first flower to bloom every spring. And from that day to this, the snowdrop has always been the most celebrated flower – all because of one kind action.

Movement Song A

To the tune of "The Mulberry Bush" (Jean Warren)

This is the way we sprout our roots, pop through dirt, stretch and grow, shoot up so tall,
open our buds, bend in the breeze, smile at the sun

Nursery rhymes

Mary, Mary, quite contrary, set to music

Mary, Mary, quite contrary
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells and cockle shells
And pretty maids all in a row

Oh, dear, what can the matter be?, set to music

Oh, dear, what can the matter be? Dear, dear, what can the matter be?
Oh, dear, what can the matter be? Johnny's so long at the fair.

He promised to buy a trinket to please me and then for a smile vowed he would please me
He promised to buy me a bunch of blue ribbons to tie up my bonny brown hair.

Oh, dear, what can the matter be? Dear, dear, what can the matter be?
Oh, dear, what can the matter be? Johnny's so long at the fair.

He promised to bring a basket of posies, a garland of lilies, a gift of red roses
A little straw hat to set off the ribbons that tie up my bonny brown hair.

Oh, dear, what can the matter be? Dear, dear, what can the matter be?
Oh, dear, what can the matter be? Johnny's so long at the fair.

Story B

The Woodcutter's Wishes (Brothers Grimm)

There was once a poor woodcutter who lived in a cabin in the woods with his wife. One day, when he went out to cut wood for the day a beautiful woman appeared beside the tree he had just struck. "I am a wood nymph," she told him, "and this is my home. If you cut it down, I will cease to exist for a wood nymph cannot live without the tree which gives her life. I will grant you three wishes of your choosing if only you will leave this tree alone."

The woodcutter dropped his ax in astonishment. "Thank you very much for your kindness," he said to the wood nymph. "I am sorry if I caused you any angst or harm. I will make sure not to cut down this tree in the future."

After the wood nymph thanked the woodcutter, he ran home as swiftly as he could to tell his wife of their good fortune.

The woodcutter and his wife were so excited that they laid out a great feast over which to discuss their wishes. As soon as the woodcutter's wife took a taste of the wine they opened, she licked her lips. "This is wonderful wine. I wish I had some savory sausage to accompany it."

No sooner had she uttered the words than a string of sausages appeared on the plate before her. "Foolish woman! You just wasted one of our wishes! I wish those sausages were stuck to your nose!" cried the woodcutter.

And just like that, the string of sausages attached to his wife's nose.

"What have you done?" cried the woodcutter's wife in horror. "The sausages are stuck to my nose now and they'll be stuck here forever! What are we going to do?"

But, of course, there was only one thing left to do. "We wish that these sausages were no longer attached to my nose," said the woodcutter's wife. The only thing left of the three wishes the wood nymph had granted them was the string of sausages left on a serving plate on the table.

"We may be poor," the woodcutter and his wife comforted each other, "but at least we're still happy together."

Fingerplay Poem A

A hand is a bud (traditional)

A hand is a bud
Closed up tight
Without a tiny
Speck of light

Then slowly the petals
Open for me
And here is a beautiful
Flower I see!

Poem A

Recipe for Green (Jane Yolen) – set to music

Take one seed,
Take one plot
Of deep, dark earth.
(But not a lot)

Dig a bit,

Leave a while.
(More than a minute,
Less than a mile.)

Take some rain,
Take some sun
Now your work is
Almost done.

Up from under,
Out from in,
Look out, Sprout,
Time to begin.

Movement Song B

I like the flowers (BeatBoppers, YouTube)

I like the flowers
I like the daffodils
I like the mountains
I like the rolling hills
I like the fireside
When the lights are low
Boom de-ah-da (x8)

Poem B

The Pansy (Eben E. Rexford)

Out in the garden, wee Elsie
Was gathering flowers for me;
"Oh, mamma," she cried, "hurry, hurry,
Here's something I want you to see!"
I went to the window. Before her
A velvet-winged butterfly flew,
And the pansies themselves were no brighter
Than this beautiful creature, in hue.

"Oh, isn't it pretty?" cried Elsie,
With eager and wondering eyes,
As she watched it soar lazily upward
Against the soft blue of the skies.
"I know what it is, don't you, mamma?"—

Oh, the wisdom of these little things
When the soul of a poet is in them—
"It's a pansy—a pansy with wings!"

Movement Song C

First you take the seed and you plant it in the ground
Next a rain cloud comes and waters all around
Next the sun shines brightly, without a sound
And in just a few days, a flower is found!

Fingerplay Poem B

Five little flowers (unknown)

Five little flowers all in a row
The first one said, "We need rain to grow!"
The second one said, "Yes, we need water."
The third one said, "It sure is getting hotter!"
The fourth one said, "I see clouds in the sky."
The fifth one said, "Eek! Storms give me a fright!"

But the flowers weren't scared no no no
Because all that rain helped them to grow grow grow.

Story C

Ohi'a and Lehua (Hawaiian)

Many years ago there was a young woman named Lehua whose father was a well-respected man in their village. One evening her father hosted a bonfire and a young man named Ohi'a attended. Ohi'a and Lehua had never met before, but as soon as they laid eyes upon each other they fell in love.

Ohi'a and Lehua courted for some time and then they were married. Never was a couple so well-suited for one another. They were as two parts of the same soul and they were very happy together for many years.

Then came the day when the goddess Pele saw Ohi'a working in the fields. Ohi'a was a strong and handsome man and when Pele saw Ohi'a at work, she wanted to marry him. She tried to woo him, but he paid her no attention. Then, at midday, Lehua came into the fields bringing lunch for Ohi'a. As soon as he saw his wife coming toward him, Ohi'a's face lit up with joy and love.

Struck by jealousy, the goddess Pele laid a curse upon Ohi'a and turned him into a hideous tree with a tangled, knotted trunk.

Lehua was devastated. She ran to the tree that stood where Ohi'a had once been and she wept bitterly for her lost love. She felt as though her very heart had been ripped from her chest.

The gods saw what Pele had done to Ohi'a and they saw the grief it caused Lehua and they were angry with Pele. They could not reverse her curse, so instead they changed Lehua into a beautiful red flower that grew directly out of the trunk of the Ohi'a tree. And in this way, the two lovers who were so perfect for each other have stayed together through all time.

Discussion time with books

The Complete Book of the Flower Fairies, by Cicely Mary Barker

Eyewitness: Flowers

The Reason for a Flower, by Ruth Heller

The Flowers' Festival, by Elsa Beskow

What flowers do you see in our yard? What are some of the differences between Grandma's sweet pea flowers and the flowers that bloomed on our pea plants this year? Which flowers in our garden can we eat?

Information: parts of a flower, how plants grow, the role flowers play in the garden

Concluding songs

A little flower (WomanTalk.org)

A little flower lays asleep in his bed.
A warm sun is shining overhead.
Down came the rain dancing to and fro.
The little flower awakens and now begins to grow.

Gnome song (Jzinius, YouTube)

When the gnomes go underground
With the flowers they have found
With seeds bags on their back
They march in boots of black

When the cold winds blow 'neath the roof of snow
They dance and work and sing

With the seeds they store in a cave dug before
They sleep and wait for spring

When the gnomes go underground
With the flowers they have found
With the seeds bags on their back
They march in boots of black. (x3)

Recitation

Mohawk Thanksgiving Address, adaptation (Chief Jake Swamp)

To be a human being is an honor and we are grateful for all the gifts of life.

Our mother the earth, we offer thanksgiving for providing everything we need. It gives us joy to care for our earth as she has cared for us since the beginning of time. We thank you many waters for quenching the thirst of all living things. Water is life.

We give thanks to green plants for the beauty you bring to the earth's floor. Thank you, good foods of the earth, for sustaining our lives. All the trees in the world, we are thankful for the shade and warmth you give.

We thank you, all the animals of the world, for the lessons we learn from you. We are reminded by you that all life is a balance and a circle. We give thanks to you, gentle four winds, for bringing clean air for us to breathe and new seasons to cherish.

Our brother the sun, we offer thanksgiving for shining your light and sharing your warmth. Our sister the moon, thank you for growing full every month to govern the ocean and light the dark. Our cousins the stars, we give you thanks for sparkling in the night and guiding us home.

Teachers of the past and present, we thank you for showing us ways to live in peace with one another and in harmony with our mother the earth.

We appreciate all the love and happiness that surrounds us. It is an honor to care for our family and our world. We offer thanksgiving for all the gifts of life.