

Meshak's garden



Making stories fun!

Tips for reading books with young children

Children aged 4–5 years will enjoy this story.

National Curriculum Framework Birth to 4 years (NCF) level:
Towards Grade R

★ **Children love stories! They build important language skills when we read with them, especially when it is fun.** Involve the children when you read, use languages that they know, and talk about the stories together. Here are ideas to make storytime fun for the children ... and for you!

📖 **Get ready:** Include time for a story every day. You can read the same book many times! Choose a story, or let the children choose a favourite. Sit together and hold the book so that everyone can see the pictures.

📖 **Before** you read, introduce the story with the title. Show the front cover and read the story description on the back. Show the first few pages. Ask: What could this story be about? Do you think they will be able to save the plants?

📖 **During** the story, read with expression and use different voices to keep the children interested. Remember to show the pictures. Ask: How does Meshak feel now? What do they need to do next?

📖 **After** the story, discuss the book. Ask: What did you like about the story? Extend the learning with play-based activities:

Creativity: Children can plant seeds (sunflower seeds or peanuts) in cotton wool and a toilet roll. Water them, give them sun and watch them grow!

Motor skills: Go outside with a bucket of water. Let the children pretend to be Meshak watering his garden. They should carry water in a cup from a bucket (“the water tank”) across a small distance to the “garden”. They should try not to spill any water while still moving quickly to save the plants.

✅ **Let the children use the books.** Children need time to discover the books for themselves. Keep the books in a reading corner. Make it comfortable with a carpet and cushions. Encourage children to look at the books during free-play time.

Sharing books supports the **three themes of the NCF**: (1) I am a competent person, (2) My learning and development is important, and (3) I need strong connections with adults.

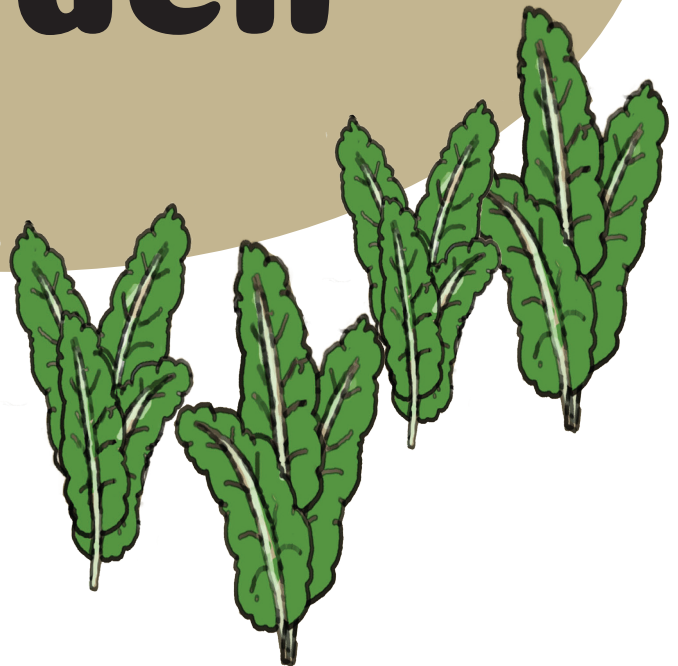
Books and reading build children’s skills in **all six of the Early Learning and Development Areas (ELDAs)**: (1) Well-being, (2) Identity and belonging, (3) Communication, (4) Exploring mathematics, (5) Creativity, and (6) Knowledge and understanding of the world.

This story aligns with early learning themes:

Food that helps us grow
Our outside environment
My home, where I live



Meshak's garden

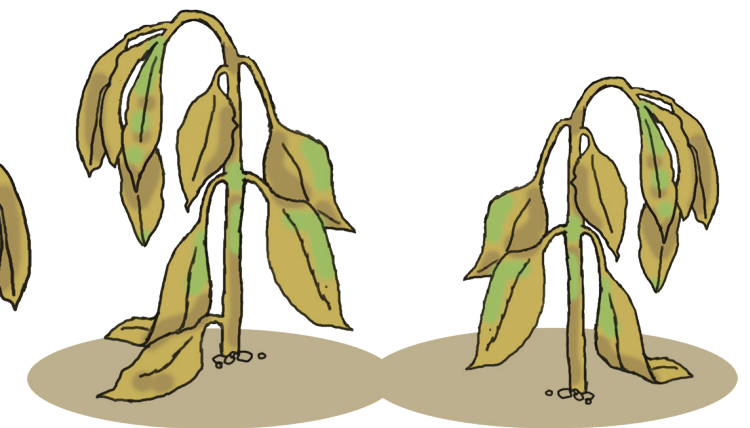




Meshak and his dad live in a small village. This year they have started growing vegetables.

One morning, Meshak goes to check the vegetable garden.

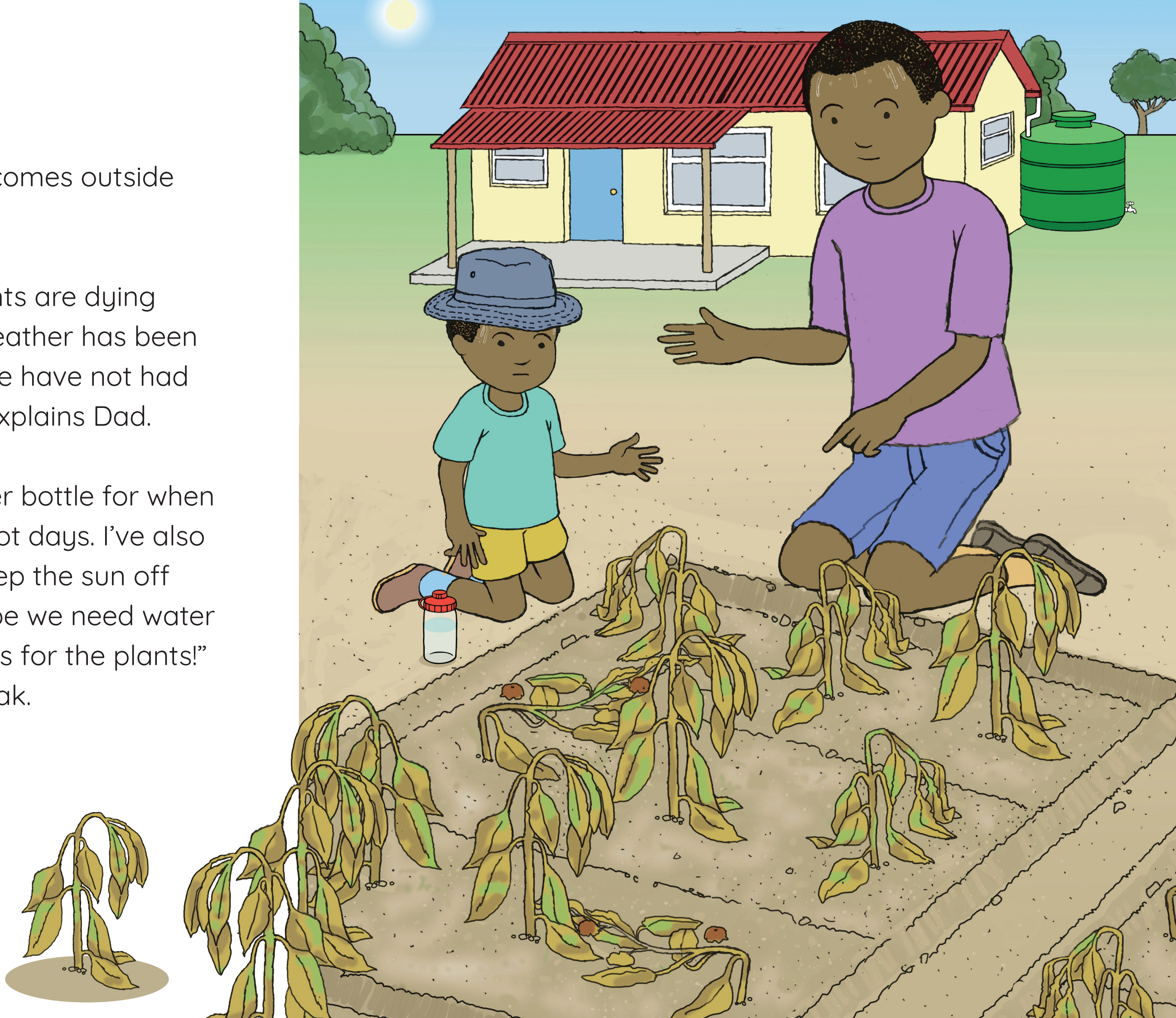
“Oh no!” he says. “All our plants look like they are dying. I’d better tell Dad.”



Meshak's dad comes outside to see.

"I think the plants are dying because the weather has been very hot and we have not had enough rain," explains Dad.

"I've got a water bottle for when I'm thirsty on hot days. I've also got a hat to keep the sun off my head. Maybe we need water bottles and hats for the plants!" suggests Meshak.





“There’s a gardening page in the newspaper,” says Dad. “Let’s see if we can find some tips to help us save our plants.”

“Look, Dad,” says Meshak, pointing to a picture. “They have put some netting over the plants for shade. If we do that, it will keep our plants cool and that’s easier than giving each plant a hat!”

“Yes!” laughs Dad. “There are lots of other ideas here. Let’s make a list of all the things we will need.”

The next morning, they visit the plant nursery in town.

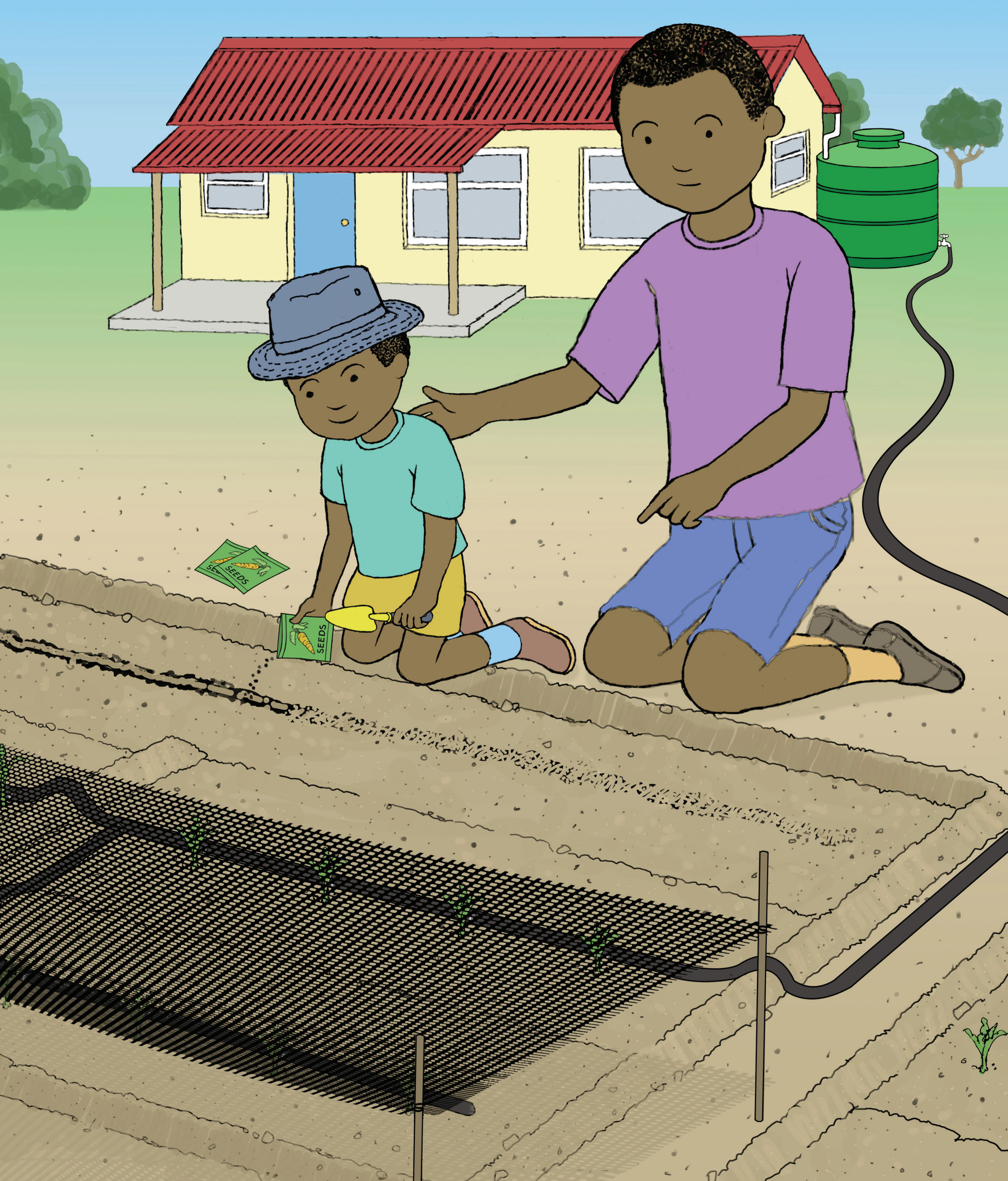
First, they find a long pipe.

“We can use this to take water from our water tank to the vegetable garden,” explains Dad.

Then Meshak finds the netting.

“Now all we need are some new vegetable seeds. Why don’t you choose some and put them in our trolley?” suggests Dad.





As soon as Meshak and Dad get home, they start work.

First, they unroll the pipe. They make sure it reaches all the way from the water tank to the vegetable garden.

Then they plant the seeds and cover them with the netting.

“I think these plants are going to be much happier than the other ones,” says Meshak.

Meshak and Dad check their vegetable garden every day. Their plants start growing.

“With all this help, I think our plants are going to be big and strong like me!” laughs Meshak.

“Yes,” says Dad, “but we must keep watering them!”





Meshak is right! Their plants do grow to be big and strong.

After a few months, their vegetables are ready to harvest. Meshak and Dad have enough to share with their neighbours.

“We did it, Dad!” says Meshak proudly. “We worked out how to save our plants!”

Meshak's garden

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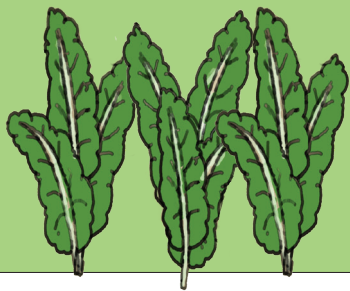
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It's very hot and Meshak's vegetable garden is dying. Together, he and his dad come up with a plan to save the plants ... but will it work?



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