

One summer day a farmer received a packet of yellow sunflower seeds for his birthday. 'I can plant these beautiful seeds and grow lovely sunflowers!' he said happily.

The following week, he climbed over the gate into the flower field. He found a nice sunny spot and planted his seeds. Then he watered them and left. After three days one sunflower seed turned into a little shoot. All the other seeds 'oohed' and 'aaahed' at its tiny leaves. After eight days, four seeds turned into shoots. At the end of the fortnight four more seeds grew into the tiny little shoots. The tenth seed didn't move!

A blackbird flew down from a nearby tree. 'Why aren't you growing?' he asked. 'Because I'm not as good as the others' sighed the seed. 'Or because the farmer didn't sing to you,' said the bird. 'Oh yes! Please sing to me' begged the seed. So the little bird began to sing her favourite song: 'All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all...'

'Nothing's happened' sighed the seed 'but good try!' and with that, the blackbird flew home.

The next day, four other shoots had grown into stems with leaves, and another five two days later, but still the seed had not moved.

A frog hopped out from a nearby pond and went up to the seed. 'Why are you the odd one out?' he croaked. 'I am not as good as the others' cried the seed. 'That's because the farmer didn't water you properly' said the frog, 'I'll water you'. So he filled his cupped webbed hands and took up some cool, refreshing water from the pond, then he tipped it over the poor little seed. 'Oh you're drowning me!' cried the seed. 'Sorry!' said the frog. 'But good try' sniffed the poor seed. And the frog hopped home.

The next day all nine stems turned into big beautiful sunflowers, but the seed didn't move.

Presently a little cat that belonged to the farmer passed by. 'Why aren't you developing like the others?' he asked. 'I'm not as good as the others' said the poor seed. 'Maybe that is because the farmer didn't pat you!' said the cat. 'Pat me?' 'Yes, like this' said the cat and he lifted up his paw and patted the

seed. 'Ouch' cried the seed 'you're squishing me!' 'Sorry!' called the cat as he scampered away. 'Maybe I'll never grow' sighed the poor seed.

A week later the farmer's wife came to check on the sunflowers. 'Oh – one seed hasn't grown' she said. So she scooped up some water from the pond...sang to the seed...and patted it gently. More days passed...Suddenly when the sun came out on a Saturday morning...there was the most beautiful, tallest sunflower EVER