

# Sunflowers



**Name**

Score

Level and grade





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A story by Nicola Moon

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# Useful words

wrinkled

droopy

autumn

withered

gust

# Billy's Sunflower

By Nicola Moon

Billy had a beautiful sunflower that he'd grown from a seed.

It was taller than Billy. It was taller than his big sister Laura. It was taller than his mum. It was even taller than his dad.



Every day Billy looked at its bright green leaves. Every day he admired its golden yellow petals. Every day he looked up at its tall straight stem.

"My flower is as tall as the sky," he told his friends.

## Practice questions

A What did Billy grow from a seed?

a daisy

a rose

a sunflower

a buttercup

B How tall was Billy's sunflower?

.....

C Who else was in the story with Billy?

Tick **3**

Ben

\_\_\_\_\_

Mum

\_\_\_\_\_

Laura

\_\_\_\_\_

Dan

\_\_\_\_\_

Dad

\_\_\_\_\_

Louise

\_\_\_\_\_

One day Billy noticed something different about his flower.

The bright green leaves didn't seem so bright.  
The golden yellow petals weren't quite so golden.  
And the tall straight stem wasn't quite so straight.

"What's wrong with my flower?" he asked Dad.

"Perhaps it needs water," said Dad, as he rushed off to work.

So Billy watered his flower.



1 How had the **leaves** changed?

They weren't quite so straight.

They didn't seem so big.

They didn't seem so bright.

They weren't quite so golden.



2 What did Billy ask Dad?

.....



But the next day it was worse.

The bright green leaves were wrinkled and droopy.  
The golden yellow petals were turning brown.  
And the tall straight stem had bent over at the top.



Billy looked up at his sad,  
brown sunflower.

3 Which part of the sunflower was turning brown?

.....

4 Which part of the sunflower had bent over at the top?

the stem

the roots

the petals

the leaves

“What’s wrong with my flower?” he asked Laura.

“It’s autumn,” said Laura, and ran off to play with her friends.

“What is autumn?” Billy asked the girls.

Sally said, “It’s when leaves turn brown.”



“And days  
become shorter,”  
said Clare.

“And flowers die,”  
said Laura.

5 Why did Billy want to find out about autumn?

because Laura was  
playing with her friends

because he was  
worried about his flower

because it was  
cold

because the days were  
becoming shorter



6 What did the girls tell Billy about autumn?

Write **2** things.

1 .....

2 .....





Billy ran indoors to Mum.

“My flower’s got autumn and it’s getting shorter and turning brown and Laura says it’s going to die!” he cried.

Mum dried his tears.

“Autumn is when the world gets ready for winter,” she explained. “The winter would be too cold and dark for your flower.”

Billy felt really sad. “I don’t think I like autumn,” he said.



7 Why did Billy run inside to Mum?

He was too cold to stay outside.

He wanted to show Mum the flower.

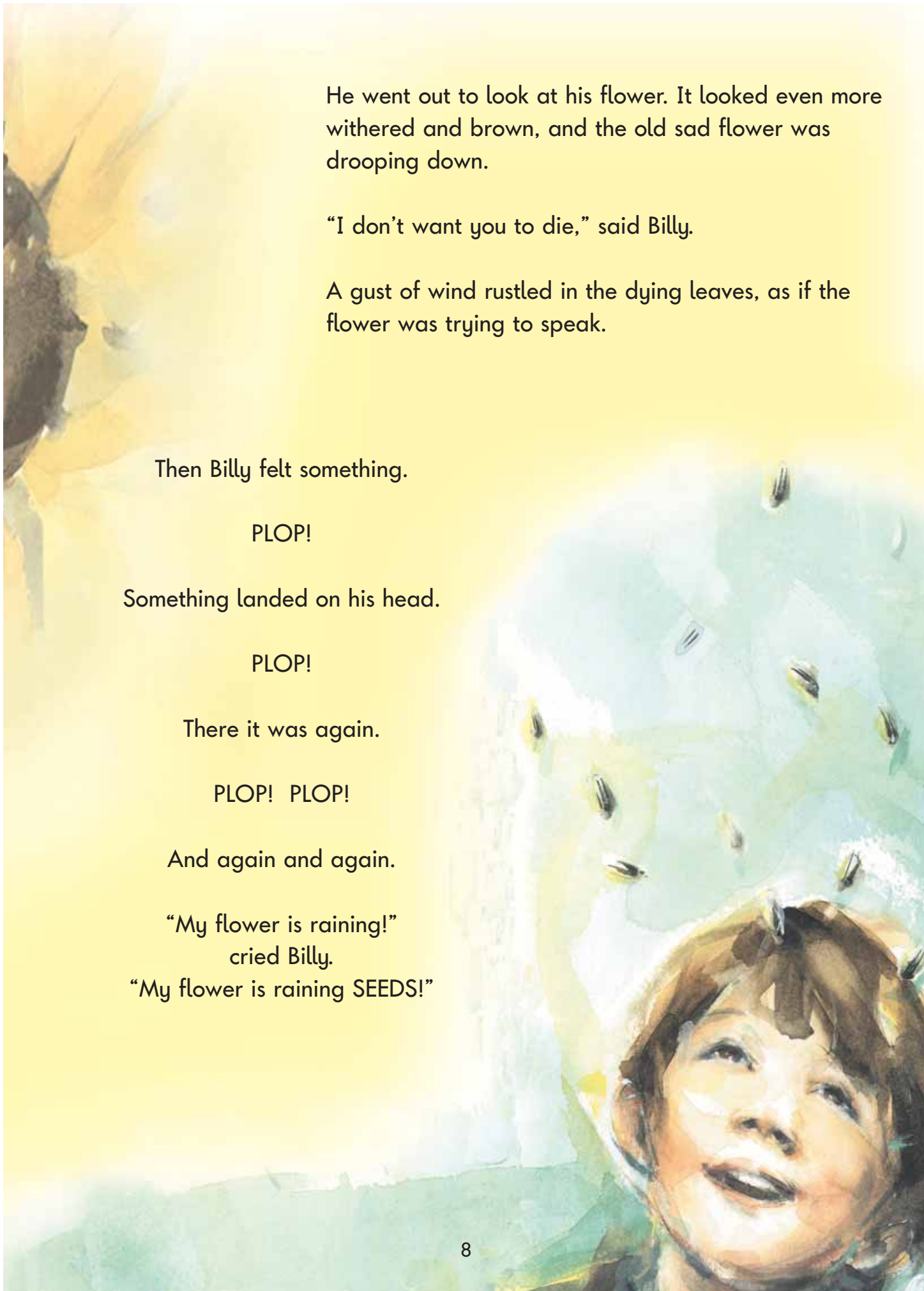
He didn’t have any friends.

He was upset about autumn.

8 How did Mum help Billy?  
Write **2** things.

1 .....

2 .....



He went out to look at his flower. It looked even more withered and brown, and the old sad flower was drooping down.

“I don’t want you to die,” said Billy.

A gust of wind rustled in the dying leaves, as if the flower was trying to speak.

Then Billy felt something.

PLOP!

Something landed on his head.

PLOP!

There it was again.

PLOP! PLOP!

And again and again.

“My flower is raining!”  
cried Billy.

“My flower is raining SEEDS!”

9



What do these words tell you about the flower?

.....

10 Which words tell you Billy cared about his flower?

"I don't want you to die."

"My flower is raining!"

Something landed on his head.

The flower was trying to speak.

11 Why did Billy think the flower was trying to speak?

It started to rain.

Mum called him.

The wind rustled the leaves.

He could hear Laura talking.

12 Why did Billy say **"My flower is raining!"**?

He wanted to water the flower.

The seeds were falling like rain.

It had started to rain.

He didn't want his flower to die.

9

He ran indoors to find Mum and Dad and Laura.

They collected up a big bag of seeds.

“We can put them on the bird table, when winter comes,” said Mum.

“The birds will be hungry in the cold weather.”



“Not all the seeds,” said Billy, picking out five of the biggest shiniest seeds. “I’m going to keep these ones.”

When the winter came, Billy watched the birds flocking to the bird table to eat the seeds from his flower.

13 Why did Billy run to find Mum and Dad and Laura?

to show them  
the seeds

because he  
felt sad

because he was  
getting wet

to show them  
the birds



14 What did Billy keep?

.....



And when the winter had gone at last, he took his five special seeds and planted them carefully in the garden.



“I’m going to grow the tallest sunflowers in the world!” said Billy.

“Taller than Dad?” asked Laura.

“Taller than anyone,” said Billy.

15 This story is both sad and happy. Explain why.

It is sad because .....

.....

It is happy because .....

.....

16 What did Billy find out about sunflowers?

Tick **3** things.

Sunflowers stay green in winter. \_\_\_\_\_

Sunflowers turn brown in autumn. \_\_\_\_\_

Sunflower seeds are shiny. \_\_\_\_\_

Sunflower stems are always straight. \_\_\_\_\_

A sunflower will never die. \_\_\_\_\_

Birds like to eat sunflower seeds. \_\_\_\_\_



# Useful words

famous

decorate

information

instructions

## So Many Sunflowers!

In the story, Billy had fun growing a sunflower in his garden.

Now you are going to read two sets of information. First you will read about an artist called Vincent Van Gogh who was famous for his pictures of sunflowers. Then you will find some instructions about how to make a paper sunflower.



### Practice questions

A What is the name of the artist you will read about?

.....

B What are the instructions for?

making a paper sunflower

making a newspaper

making a cake

making a paper poppy



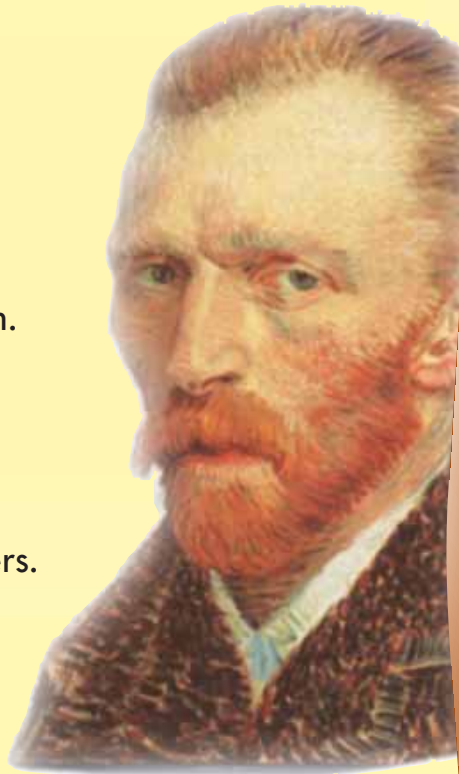
## Vincent Van Gogh

Vincent Van Gogh was an artist who lived more than a hundred years ago. He painted pictures of himself, and the people and places around him.



*Vase with Fourteen Sunflowers, 1889*

Vincent also painted flowers, and he loved painting sunflowers.



*Self Portrait 1886–1887*

17 What was Vincent Van Gogh?

.....

18 When was Vincent alive?

he is still alive today

ten years ago

last year

more than a hundred years ago

## Painting for Friends

Vincent painted pictures of sunflowers to decorate his house when his friend Paul was coming to stay.

Paul painted a picture of Vincent at work, painting the sunflowers.

Paul liked Vincent's pictures of sunflowers so much that he kept two of the paintings with him. He even ordered some sunflower seeds so he could grow some sunflowers for himself.



*Van Gogh Painting Sunflowers, 1888*

19 Who did Vincent paint the sunflowers for?

his mother

his friend

his teacher

his father



20 What did Paul do that tells you he liked Vincent's paintings?

.....





*Van Gogh's Bedroom, 1889*

## Pictures for Sale

When Vincent was alive, he only sold a few drawings and

one or two paintings, so he did not have very much money. Sometimes, he even had to stop buying food so he could buy paint, and carry on with his work.



*Starry Night, 1889*

Now Vincent's paintings are on show all over the world and are worth a great deal of money.

21 Why was Vincent poor?

He was always buying food.

He gave his money away.

Not many people bought his paintings.

He sold paintings to a small museum.



22 How can you tell that people like Vincent's paintings today?

.....

.....



# Making a Paper Sunflower

## What you need:



a clean paper plate

sticky tape

yellow paper

seeds

green paper

a wooden stick

glue stick

petal shape

scissors

leaf shape



23 What does the list on page 18 tell you?

how to play a game

how to make a paper hat

what you need to make a cake

what you need to make a paper sunflower



24 What do you need to use?  
Tick **3** things.

yellow paper \_\_\_\_\_

blue paper \_\_\_\_\_

a cardboard box \_\_\_\_\_

seeds \_\_\_\_\_

leaf shape \_\_\_\_\_

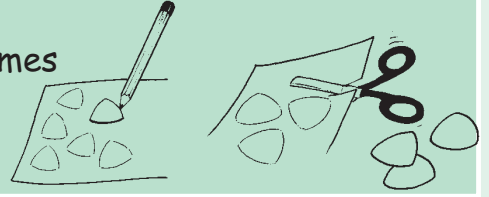
paper clips \_\_\_\_\_





## What to do:

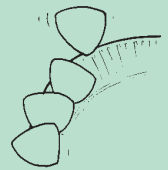
- 1 Draw around the petal shape 14 times on the yellow paper and carefully cut out the petals.



- 2 Make sure your plate is the right way up, then put some glue around the rim.



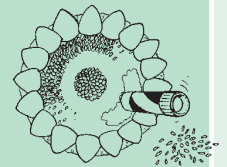
- 3 Stick the petals all the way around the rim, making sure they touch each other.



- 4 Spread some glue over the middle of the flower and stick on your seeds.

***Do this quickly so the glue does not dry out!***

You can make a pattern if you like.



- 25 What kind of text is in the boxes?

a story

a letter

instructions

labels

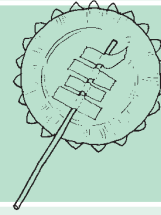
- 26 Why must you stick the seeds on quickly?

.....

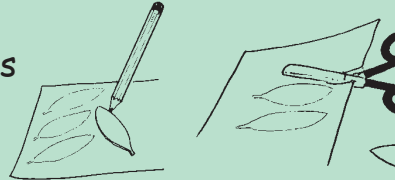
.....

5 Leave your sunflower to dry.

6 Turn your sunflower over and tape the wooden stick to the back of the flower. Make sure you use plenty of sticky tape!



7 Draw around two or three leaf shapes on green paper and cut them out.



8 Tape the leaf shapes to the stick.



9 When you have finished choose a place for your sunflower where everyone can enjoy looking at it.



27 What are you told to do after you cut the leaf shapes out?

.....  
.....



28 Why do you think each instruction has a number?

to tell you which order to do things

to make it look nice

to tell you what you need

to help you read what it says





*Billy's Sunflower* © Nicola Moon and illustrated by Karin Littlewood 1997. Published by Little Hippo (Scholastic Limited).

*Making a Paper Sunflower* adapted from *Making Sunflower Mosaics in Seasonal Crafts: Summer* by Gillian Chapman. 1997 Wayland.

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