

Spring Gardens All Year Long

by Betty G. Birney



In *Spring According to Humphrey*, Humphrey and his classmates are frustrated because the signs of spring are LATE-LATE-LATE! But you can have spring any time of the year by creating an indoor garden with things you have around the house.

LENTIL FOREST

Spread a single layer of lentils over a saucer. Add enough water to moisten them, but not enough to make the lentils float. Keep them moist and in a light place. In about 10 days you'll have a forest of green sprouts!



AVOCADO TREE

Take the pit of an avocado and wash it. Use three toothpicks to suspend it broad-end down over a water-filled glass to cover about an inch of the seed. Put the glass in a sunny place and add water as needed. Roots and stems should start to sprout in about 2-6 weeks.

SWEET POTATO VINE

Most people already know you can grow a huge vine from a simple sweet potato, but have you ever tried it? Just use toothpicks to suspend it in a jar or tall glass with the tip of the sweet potato in the water. Keep it in a sunny window. As the vine starts to grow, take a few strings up the window and the stems will climb up them. Be patient – it takes about two weeks for the sprouts to appear.



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TINY ORCHARDS



There are many things in the kitchen that will grow. Seeds from apples, pears, oranges, grapefruits can be sprouted between two layers of moist paper towels. Keep the towels moist for three to four weeks. Once the sprouts appear, put them in a clean can filled with earth. Keep the orchard in a sunny window and water it regularly.

CARROT TREES

Trim off most of a carrot (beets and turnips work, too), leaving just a stub and the leafy top. Place the piece of carrot in a shallow dish of pebbles and water. Keep it watered and in a light place. New shoots will appear in a few days.



NOTE:

This will not grow carrots that you can eat, but it will make a nice green plant.

MEET ROY G. BIV

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Roy is a very helpful guy! He can help you remember the colors of the rainbow, in order from top to bottom. In *Spring According to Humphrey*, our hamster hero sees his very first rainbow!



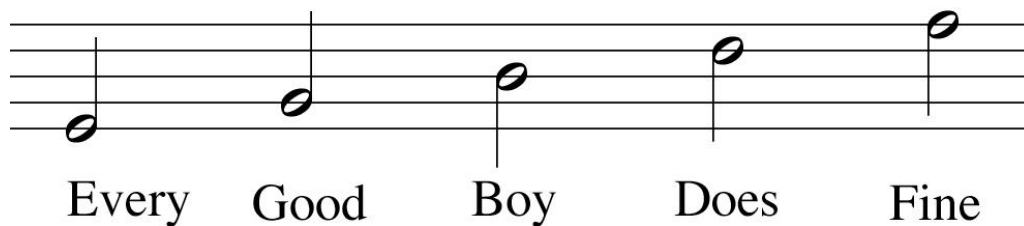
You could reverse it from bottom to top and get Vib G. Yor.
But since Roy is a real name, it's easier to remember.

There are many other phrases to help you remember things. They have a funny name: mnemonic devices. There aren't many words that start with "mn...."

Here are a few I've used in my life.

First, when I started playing piano, I learned, "**Every Good Boy Does Fine.**" Those are the lines of the treble clef when you are learning to read music. EGBDF

NOTES ON THE LINES



Also, I learned My Dog Has Fleas when learning to tune a ukulele. It's a little melody that helps you hear if your ukulele is in tune.

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There are mnemonic devices for science, geography, languages – you name it.

Here is one for learning the Great Lakes in America: HOMES
That stands for the lakes **H**uron, **O**ntario, **M**ichigan, **E**rie and **S**uperior
– and it's helped many students get through tests!



I liked this one for memorizing the planets but now Pluto has been downgraded from a planet so it doesn't work any more:

"My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Naming Planets"

- each of the initial letters matches the name of the planets in our solar system (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, [Pluto]).

