Question of the Week

How do people and nature interact?

Key Comprehension Skill
Draw Conclusions

Concept Words
flavor window box
snipped seedlings
supermarket

Learning Goals
• People can grow plants.
• Herbs add flavor to food.
• You can grow an herb garden at home.
Nana lived in Italy before she moved to New York. She moved to New York to live near her son and his wife. She wanted to live near her granddaughters, Donna and Teresa.

Donna and Teresa loved Nana. They loved to help Nana cook. They loved to help her cook spaghetti and meatballs!

One day Nana looked sad. "Why are you unhappy?" asked the girls.

"Well," said Nana, "I love being here with you. I love cooking spaghetti and meatballs with you. I just miss my herb garden in Italy. It is so beautiful in my herb garden at this time of year."
“What is an herb garden?” the girls asked.

“Herbs are plants,” said Nana. “I grow them in my herb garden. The herbs look beautiful and they smell good. People use herbs to add flavor to food. In Italy, I snipped herbs from my garden to use when I cooked.”

flavor: taste

snipped: cut off

Parsley, basil, rosemary, and oregano are all herbs. Nana grew parsley, basil, rosemary, and oregano in her herb garden. She added oregano and basil to spaghetti sauce. She added rosemary to chicken. She added parsley to many foods.
Donna and Teresa recognized the name of some of these herbs. "We know where we can get some herbs for you!" they shouted. "Mom buys them at the supermarket."

"Thank you," said Nana. "But those herbs are dried. They are not fresh herbs. I like to put fresh herbs in the food I cook. That is why I miss my garden!"

The girls decided to plant an herb garden for Nana. They went with their parents to buy a window box, a bag of soil, and herb seedlings. Dad put the window box outside the kitchen window. Mom filled the box with soil. They helped the girls plant the seedlings. Then the girls watered the window box.

window box: a box for plants that hangs in a window

seedlings: tiny new plants (baby plants)

Nana was surprised and happy! Before long, the new herbs came up. They grew tall and strong. Whenever Nana cooked, she snipped fresh herbs. She taught the girls how to use the herbs when she cooked.

Nana's window box garden made the whole family happy! Would you like to make a surprise for someone special?
Talk About It
1. Nana’s window box herb garden made her happy because she could cook with fresh herbs. What other effect did the herb garden probably have on her?
2. What effect did the herb garden probably have on the rest of the family?

Write About It
3. Herbs are plants that people use in cooking. On a separate sheet of paper, describe two plants you have seen used in cooking. They may or may not be herbs. You can draw them, too!

Extend Language
The verb ending *-ed* tells us that the action happened in the past. *Nana lived in Italy before she moved to New York.* Can you find other *-ed* verbs in this story?