

**Kids:** Lingokids.

**Kowie:** Wow, what a big garden, a great place for a picnic.

**Speaker 1:** There's a picnic table under that tree. Oh, you want to explore the garden first, Billy? What do you think, friends?

**Kids:** Explore. Explore.

**Speaker 1:** [laughs] All right. Who knows? Maybe we'll find a better spot for a picnic. Welcome to Stories for Kids by Lingokids, where we discover fascinating facts about the world around us and the fun of play learning. Are you ready to dig into nature?

**Kids:** Yes.

**Speaker 1:** Lingokids listeners, when exploring plants and critters in the garden, it's important to ask an adult before you touch or eat anything, and always wash your hands after you've played in the garden.

**Kowie:** I see funny looking plants over there.

**Lisa:** You're right, Kowie. They look fuzzy.

**Kowie:** These plants look like porcupines.

**Speaker 1:** Don't touch. These are cacti. Each cactus has special leaves called spines.

**Kowie:** Why are they so prickly?

**Speaker 1:** The spines help keep water in and protect them from hungry animals that might try to eat them.

**Lisa:** I want that one to eat that. Ouch.

**Speaker 1:** Humans do eat some cacti. They remove the needles first, of course.

**Kowie:** I don't think this is our picnic spot.

[whistling]

**Speaker 1:** Okay, let's move on.

**Lisa:** Wow. So many pretty flowers, pink, yellow and red.

**Speaker 1:** Oh, these are roses. Let's all take a whiff.

[whiffing]

**Lisa:** It smells like perfume.

**Elliot:** [whiffs] This one smells sweet. I'm going to put my nose in this big, red rose. Ah. A bee. A bee.

**Speaker 1:** Don't run, Elliot.

**Elliot:** I don't want to get stung.

**Speaker 1:** Then stay calm.

**Elliot:** Okay, where is it?

**Speaker 1:** It's in the rose, collecting pollen. It's here to eat too.

**Elliot:** I'm pretty sure it wanted to nibble on my nose.

**Speaker 1:** Well, lesson learned. Look before you stick your nose into a rose.

**Elliot:** I see lots of bees flying from flower to flower.

**Speaker 1:** That's good. They help move pollen from one flower to another. For some plants, that's needed to make the fruits and vegetables we love to eat.

**Elliot:** Let the bees eat here. We'll go somewhere else.

**Lisa:** What about there? The sign says herb.

**Speaker 1:** Some people say erb, others say the H, herb. Herbs are plants that add flavor to food and drinks, like rosemary, dill and mint.

**Kowie:** I love minty lemonade.

**Elliot:** And me, ice cream. A bug just landed on this mint leaf. It's red with four black spots. Oh, I like ladybugs. They're nicer than bees.

**Lisa:** Bees are nice, Elliot. They just sting when they get scared.

**Elliot:** I guess you're right, Lisa. Ladybugs are so cute.

**Speaker 1:** They're a gardener's best friend. They eat aphids, insects that suck the juice out of plant leaves.

**Elliot:** Ladybugs seem nice, unless you're an aphid.

[laughter]

**Speaker 1:** Want to picnic here or should we visit that strawberry patch?

**Lisa:** Strawberries.

**Elliot:** Yum. It looks so juicy. Can I taste one?

**Speaker 1:** We can each take just one to try.

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**Lisa:** Something slimy is on my strawberry.

**Elliot:** It looks like a snail without a shell.

**Speaker 1:** Oh, that's a slug.

**Billy:** Are they nice?

**Speaker 1:** They aren't dangerous for humans, but they can make animals sick if they eat them. Let's rinse our strawberries with water.

**Lisa:** Goodbye, slug. Hello, strawberry. Should we picnic here?

**Billy:** It's a little hot in the sun.

**Lisa:** Billy's right. The picnic table is the best after all.

[laughter]

**Speaker 1:** Lingokids listeners, we had a great time today exploring the garden and its critters. We learned about cacti and herbs, bees, bugs and slugs. Lingokids listeners, if you find a cool insect in a garden, ask a grown-up to help take some pictures to send to us. We can share on our social media. If you are ready for interactive play learning time, explore our Lingokids app, it offers fun and educational songs and games to help kids ages two and older, learn and develop important skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. That's the power of play learning. ~~See you in our next episode.~~

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