

6. Read more about switchgrass as a source of biofuels at Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Web page, "Biofuels from Switchgrass: Greener Energy Pastures," at <http://bioenergy.ornl.gov/papers/misc/switgrs.html>.

7. Learn more about biofuels. Read *Biofuels* by Karen D. Povey (Kidhaven Press, 2006). Try also *Biomass: Fueling Change* by Niki Walker (Crabtree Publishing Company, 2007). Imagine and write a description of a self-sustaining town run entirely on biofuels.

IN THE GARDEN

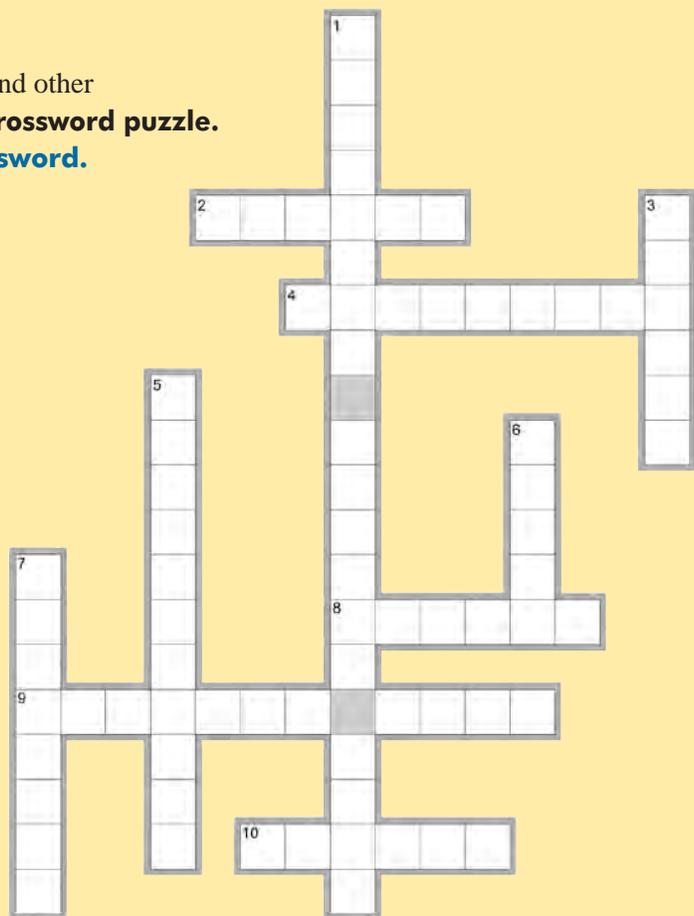
1. See how much you know about skunk cabbage and other stinky plants on pages 82–85 by **completing our crossword puzzle**. Check your answers at Almanac4kids.com/crossword.

Across

2. A bird that loves skunk cabbage
4. A country where corpse flowers grow
8. A special tall, curved leaf of the eastern skunk cabbage flower
9. What corpse flowers smell like (two words with a space in between)
10. The color of the spathe in a western skunk cabbage

Down

1. The world's largest single flower (three words with spaces in between)
3. An egg-shape spike inside a spathe
5. The kind of roots that skunk cabbage has
6. An area where skunk cabbage might grow
7. A month when skunk cabbage flowers

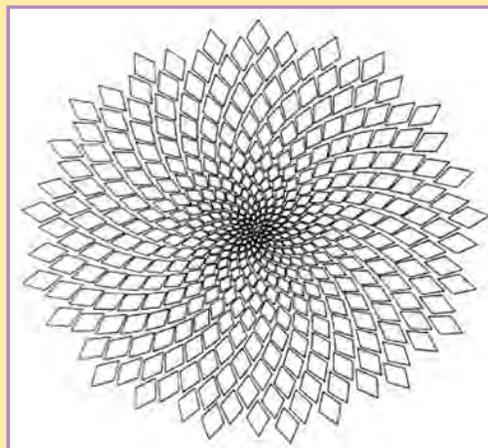


-EclipseCrossword.com



2. You can grow a Venus flytrap, a plant that attracts insects and then eats them! For best results, plant your flytrap in a partially sealed terrarium or glass jar to provide high humidity. Use a soil mixture that contains sphagnum moss and sand. Don't add fertilizer.

3. The Fibonacci series is the sequence of numbers created when each number is added to the one before it, starting with 0 + 1. The series goes like this: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89 . . . and so on. This series is commonly found in nature. **Look closely at a sunflower and notice how the seeds spiral out from the center.** Beginning at the center, find one spiral and follow it out to the edge. Count the number of seeds while marking the spiral with a black, permanent marker. Record the number. Do the same for other spirals. Are the seed numbers part of the Fibonacci series?



4. Read some of our favorite stories about sunflowers: *Camille and the Sunflowers* by Laurence Anholt (Frances Lincoln, 1999), *Katie and the Sunflowers* by James Mayhew (Orchard Books, 2000), and *Sunflower Sal* by Janet S. Anderson (Albert Whitman, 1997).

5. If you have had an adult help you to **roast some sunflower seeds**, use them as an ingredient in a healthy cereal that you can enjoy for breakfast. Combine some oat flakes and some raisin bran with a few roasted sunflower seeds, a little wheat germ, and a touch of brown sugar. Add some dried fruit if you like. Mix well and enjoy with milk.

6. You can **use beet juice** (from a can of beets) **to test different kinds of detergents and dish soaps for their cleaning power.** Cut some equal-size pieces of white cotton (from an old T-shirt). Soak them in the beet juice for 30 minutes. Dry them in the sun. The beet juice makes a stain in the fabric that is hard to get out. Next, soak the fabric pieces in solutions made from different brands of soap or detergent. Make sure that you use the same amount of water, the same amount of soap, and the same soaking time on all samples before rinsing. When the samples are again dry, arrange them in order from the least to the most stained. Which product was the best stain remover? This makes a great science fair project.



7. Use an uncooked potato to make a block print. Ask an adult to cut a potato in half for you. Use a pencil to scratch a simple design in one of the flat, cut sides. Using a kitchen knife (ask an adult for help if needed), carve away the surface of the potato around your design. Only the raised part(s) of the potato will print. Dip the raised part of the potato into tempera or fabric paints. Press the potato gently onto paper or white cotton muslin. You may have to heat-set your designs on fabric to make the colors permanent. (Ask an adult for help.) Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the paint you use.

8. Make a great beet, walnut, and orange salad for your family's dinner tonight. Drain away the juice from a can of diced beets. Peel an orange and cut it into small pieces. Put the beets and orange pieces into a bowl along with some chopped walnuts and mix thoroughly. Pile onto a bed of lettuce. Drizzle with a little vinegar and oil. Delicious!

9. Make and illustrate your own alphabet book, using the names and pictures of vegetables. A is for asparagus, B is for broccoli, and so on . . . all the way to Z for zucchini. Can you find a vegetable for every letter?

10. Make a drum from a watermelon. Cut the melon in half. Eat the red part and save the rind. Float the rind round side up in a big bowl of water. Hit the rind with a stick or carrot. To make the sound louder, lift an edge of the rind out of the water with one hand while you drum with the other.



11. A loofah acts like a filter. **To demonstrate how, stir some glitter into a little water and pour the mixture through a loofah.** The glitter will stay in the loofah, and the water will come out glitter-free. Try filtering other water mixtures to see what loofah will and won't remove. You might try pepper, small beads, sand, or other materials.

12. Your state probably has an agricultural cooperative extension service associated with a college or university. **Contact the service and request information** about recommended methods for protecting crops from birds, insects, and rodents. You can find contact information at Almanac.com/coopext.

13. Using aluminum foil, Mylar balloons, and aluminum cans, **make a shiny scarecrow** that looks like it's from outer space. Put it in your yard or garden and see if the crows stay away.

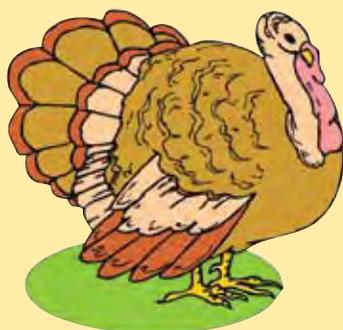
ON THE FARM

1. If you like to sing or play a musical instrument, **get together with your friends and family for a jam session** or sing-along of farm songs. Try such old favorites as "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," "Turkey in the Straw," "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep," or "The Farmer in the Dell." Or write and perform your own farm song about your favorite farm crop or animal.



2. An *ode* is a formal, lyrical poem that praises a person or an object. **Write an "Ode to a Turkey."** Use descriptive terms to convey the turkey's beauty, behavior, or nutritional value.

3. Write and perform a skit titled "A Day on the Farm." Use farm animals (in your custom-made costumes) as your main characters.



4. Make a turkey out of two clean, empty yogurt containers or margarine tubs. Glue or tape the top edges of the containers together to make the turkey's body. (It's fat in the middle when it sits on one of the bottoms.) Draw a turkey face on brown paper and glue it to the top container. Glue or tape brightly colored craft sticks in a fan shape across the back to make the turkey's tail. You can make your turkey as fancy as you like, perhaps gluing on paper feet, beads for eyes, or a balloon for a wattle.