



# Activity One

## Do It Yourself Garden

Mary, Colin and Dickon turn the secret garden into their own ideal retreat on the English moor. Imagine you have limitless money and resources. You're allowed to make your own garden paradise. What would you do? What types of flowers or other plants would you want in your garden? Why?

In the first part of this activity, you should decide what your garden will look like. Use a large sheet of blank paper and design the layout of your garden. Make sure you include hedges and fences to separate any different rooms that exist in your garden.

Decide where you want each plant type or structure (such as benches or fountains) and draw it on your layout. Make sure all of these elements of your garden are labeled clearly.

When you've finished designing your garden, take a moment to consider why you include each plant, structure, or other element. Now, write a few paragraphs describing your thoughts on each part. Why was it important to you to include?

Be creative and have fun with your design.

Make sure you include:

- At least two types of flowers.
- At least one structural element (fountain, bench, etc.).
- A vegetable.
- The types of animals that could be found there.
- Where in the world you would locate your garden.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



## Activity Two

### Feeling/Thought Journal



A lot of *The Secret Garden* deals with the effect of thoughts or perspective on mood and health. For example, when Colin constantly thinks he is going to die, his mood is greatly affected. He gets angry at people and is sad and feels lonely.

When Colin begins to think about things that make him happy or excite him, he forgets about all of these negative thoughts and his mood improves. He begins to act friendly toward people. He listens when Mary tells him that he shouldn't treat people the way he had in the past.

In this activity, you will track your own thoughts and try to connect them to the way you feel. Think of it as sort of like a dream journal, but instead of tracking your dreams, you'll be tracking your thoughts and moods.

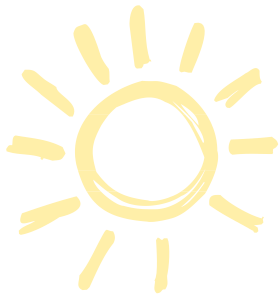
Are you excited for an upcoming birthday or other big event? Are you feeling afraid because you have a big test coming up? How do these thoughts impact how you feel and how you interact with others?

Track these feelings and thoughts for one week. Once you've finished tracking, examine the results. Write a few paragraphs summing up how your thoughts affected your mood. How did your moods change during the week?

You should also include a conclusion that states whether you believe there really is a strong connection between how you think about events and how you feel as a result.

Your piece should be at least 500 words in length.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



# Activity Three

## Setting Study



The moorland or moor plays a significant role in *The Secret Garden*. It is the connection to the outdoors, the land, and the wildlife that eventually changes both Mary and Colin. While the land is described a few times throughout the book, we really don't learn that much about the moor.

In this bonus activity, you will have to do exactly that. This will be a research report on the moorland. You will need to use the Internet, library, or any other resource to describe the land in detail.

Describe the habitat, ecosystem, animals, vegetation, and any other feature that can be found there. What makes a moor? How is the land defined? What is the climate like? What is the weather like? What are some of the most common plants? Are there different types of moors? In what part of the world can moors be found? Why?

Answer all of these questions in two typed, double-spaced pages.

Now that you've discussed moors in general, select one specific moor and write some more about it. For example, Dartmoor was written about by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in his Sherlock Holmes novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Dartmoor is located in southern England and is protected as a national park.

Use this as a hint as to what type of information you can include about your chosen moor. Search online for some photos of your moor and arrange them on a poster board along with some typed out facts. Arrange the photos and facts together on your poster board to make a display.

Your report on your chosen moor should be one additional typed, double-spaced page in length.



# Activity Four

## A Magical Place



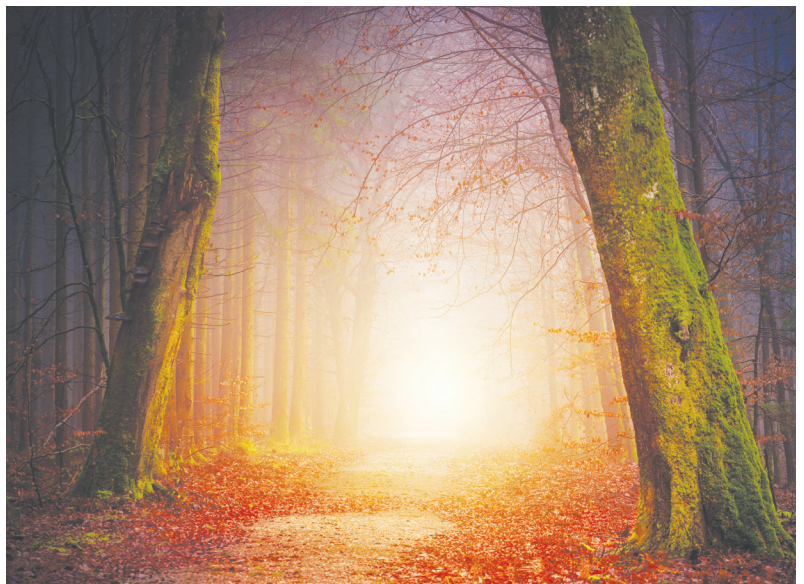
Magic is mentioned many times by many characters in *The Secret Garden*. It plays a much bigger role later on. Colin believes magic is helping him to walk and get better. When Colin first stands, he believes that whatever magic brought the garden back to life is helping him as well.

Dickon tells Colin that it is he who is doing the magic. He says it's the same magic that allows seeds to spring from the ground as plants. In another instance, Dickon tells Mary that his mother believes Lillias Craven—Colin's mother—is there in the garden watching over Colin and Mary. It is she who has worked to bring Mary, Dickon and Colin together.

Consider these and other mentions of magic in *The Secret Garden*. What do these events suggest about the magic that is being presented? How does it connect to some of the themes from the book? What is the connection between the magic and the idea of positive thinking? What about its connection to friendship or human interaction? How do the characters react to the mention of magic? What sort of impact does this belief in magic have on Colin's character specifically?

Answer all of these questions in a report. Open your report with a summary of magic's role in the book. Answer all of these questions in the following paragraphs.

Your report should be at least three typed, double-spaced pages in length.





NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



# Activity Five

## The Sequel



*The Secret Garden* ends with Ben Weatherstaff enjoying a drink. He tells Mrs Medlock that he saw both Archibald Craven and his son Colin together in the garden. Mrs Medlock throws up her hands and shrieks when she sees both of them walking together across the lawn toward the house.

That's where your story begins. In this bonus activity, you will write your own story. Your sequel should pick up at the moment described above. Your story should focus on the relationship between Colin and his father. It should focus on Colin's relationship with Dickon and Mary.

The servants now know about Colin's transformation. How do things at Misselthwaite Manor change? How does Mr Craven change? Does Colin continue his change for the better, becoming less rude and angry? Does Mary? Do the three main characters—Mary, Dickon, and Colin—continue to spend time together in the garden?

Your story should take these characters at least one year into the future. It can be more than that if you wish.

Your sequel should include:

- Answers to the questions asked above.
- At least one new character.
- At least one new setting.
- At least one exciting or dramatic event.
- Description and writing style similar to the book.
- A title of your sequel.

The finished product should be at least three typed, double-spaced pages in length.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



## Activity Six

### A Memorable Scene



Think back on the events depicted in *The Secret Garden*. Choose a scene that was memorable or had some meaning to you. Think of how it would look if it were a scene in a movie or the subject of a painting. With that image in your mind, draw your version of the event at an important point of the scene.

For example, you could draw Mrs Medlock reacting to Mr Craven and Colin crossing the lawn toward Misselthwaite Manor at the end of the book. Or, you may prefer to show Mary's first meeting with Dickon.

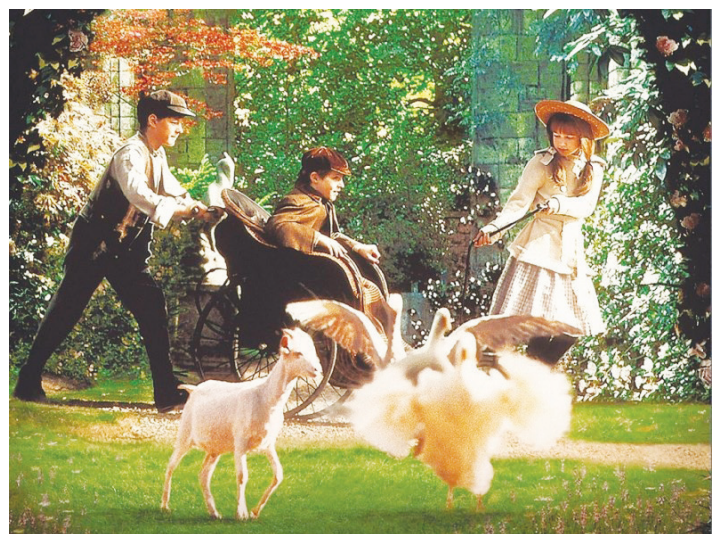
Use a regular piece of letter-size blank paper to craft your drawing. At the bottom of the page, write a more detailed description of the scene you are showing in your drawing.

When you've finished your drawing, write a few paragraphs describing why you chose the scene you did, why it was memorable, or why it had meaning to you. You don't have to be an artist to make your drawing, just do your best and have some fun with it.

Your drawing should:

- Include at least two characters.
- Capture an important or exciting moment.
- Have some floral or plant element.
- Have plenty of color.

Be creative. Your description of why you chose the scene you did should be at least 300 words in length.



*A scene from The Secret Garden (1993)*