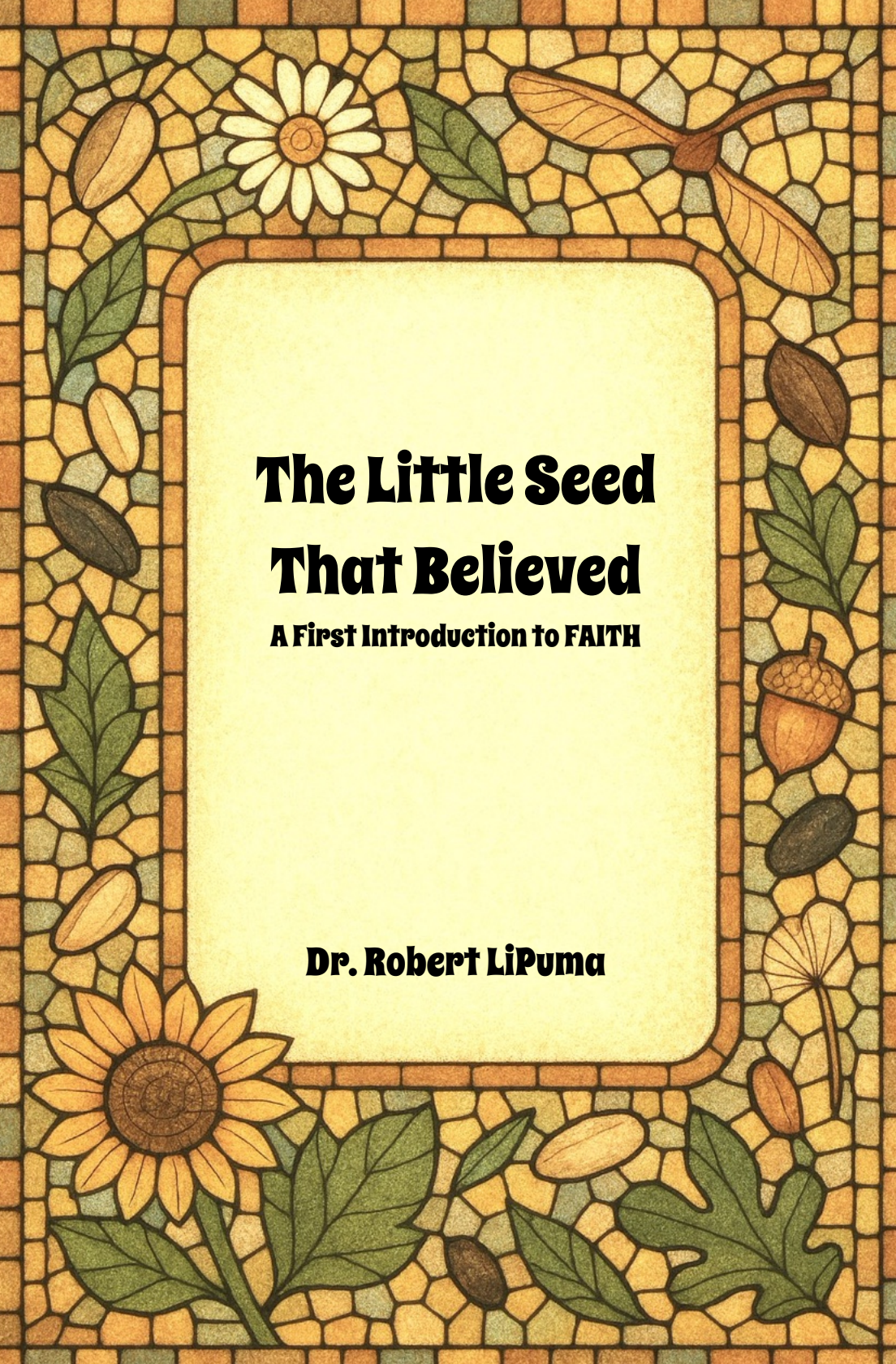
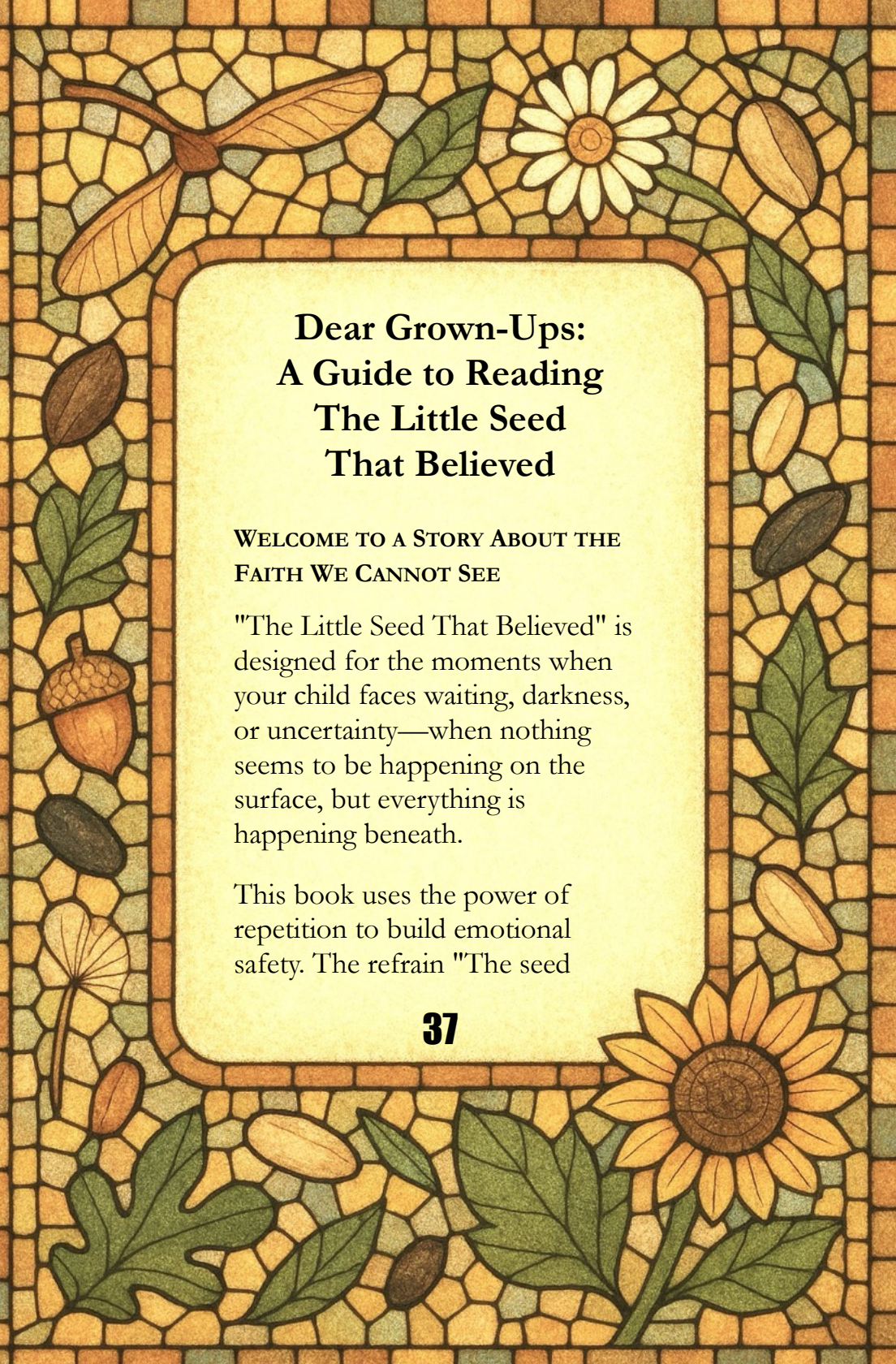




The Little Seed That Believed

A First Introduction to FAITH

Dr. Robert LiPuma

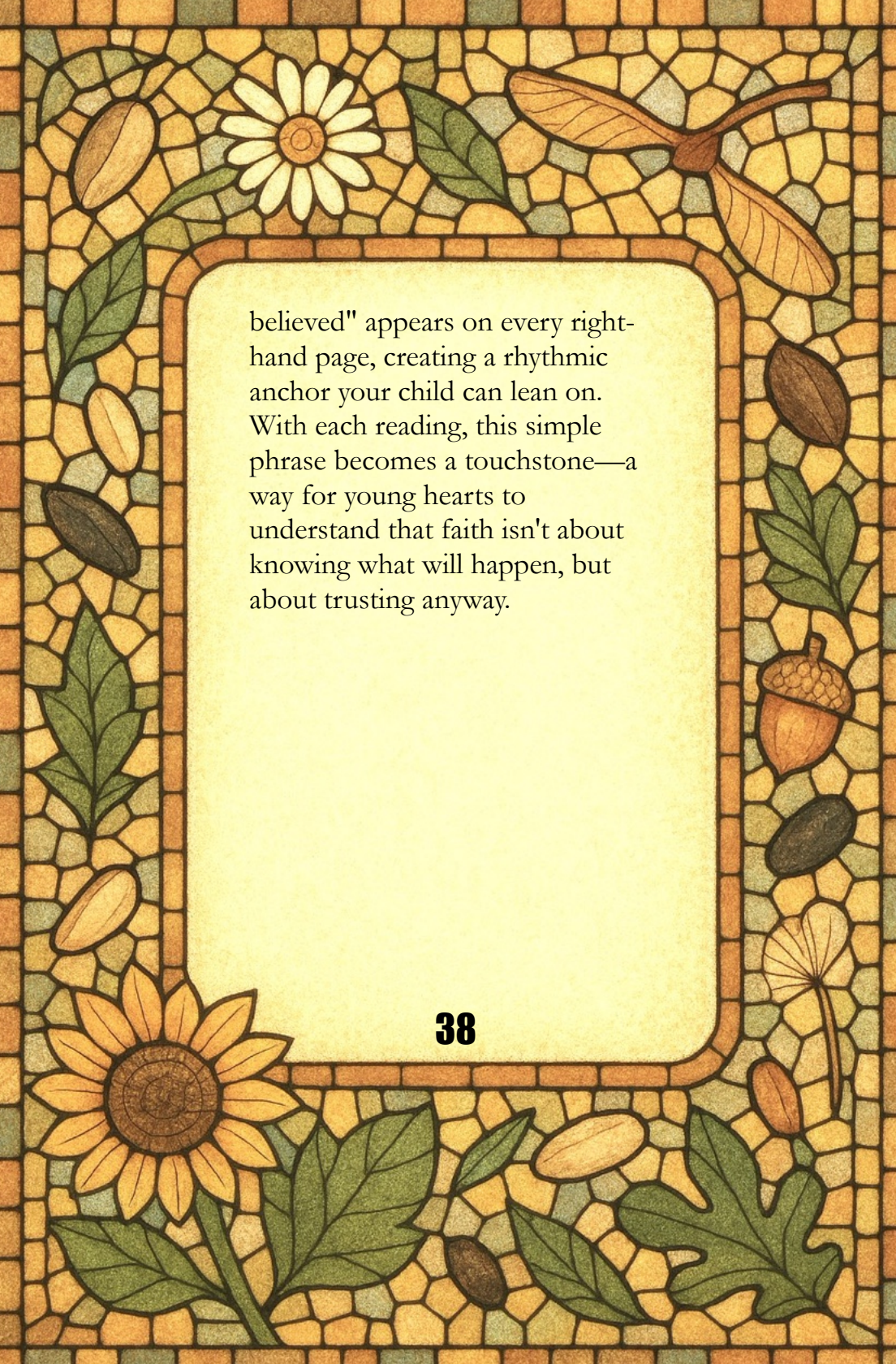


Dear Grown-Ups: A Guide to Reading The Little Seed That Believed

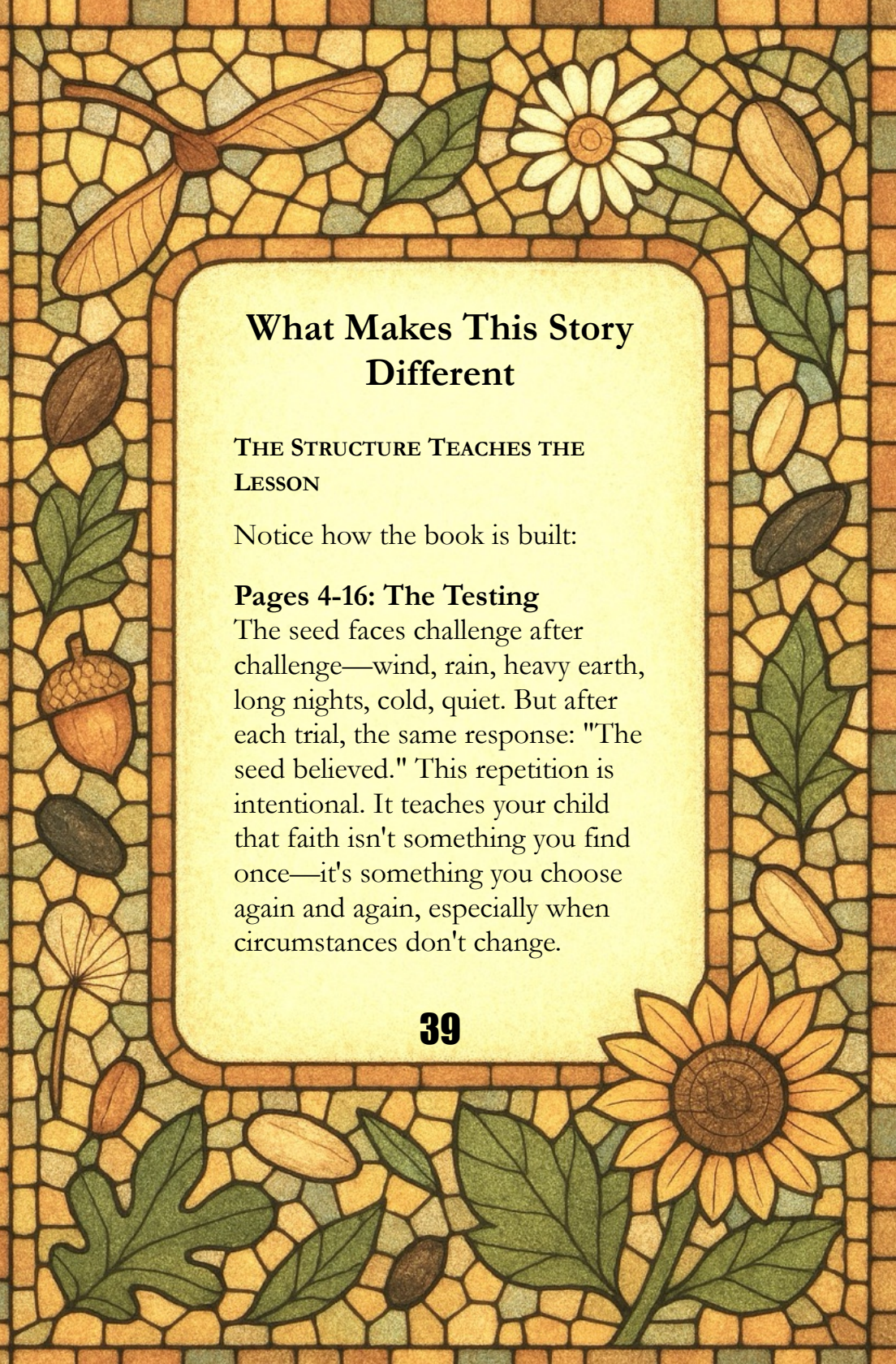
**WELCOME TO A STORY ABOUT THE
FAITH WE CANNOT SEE**

"The Little Seed That Believed" is designed for the moments when your child faces waiting, darkness, or uncertainty—when nothing seems to be happening on the surface, but everything is happening beneath.

This book uses the power of repetition to build emotional safety. The refrain "The seed



believed" appears on every right-hand page, creating a rhythmic anchor your child can lean on. With each reading, this simple phrase becomes a touchstone—a way for young hearts to understand that faith isn't about knowing what will happen, but about trusting anyway.



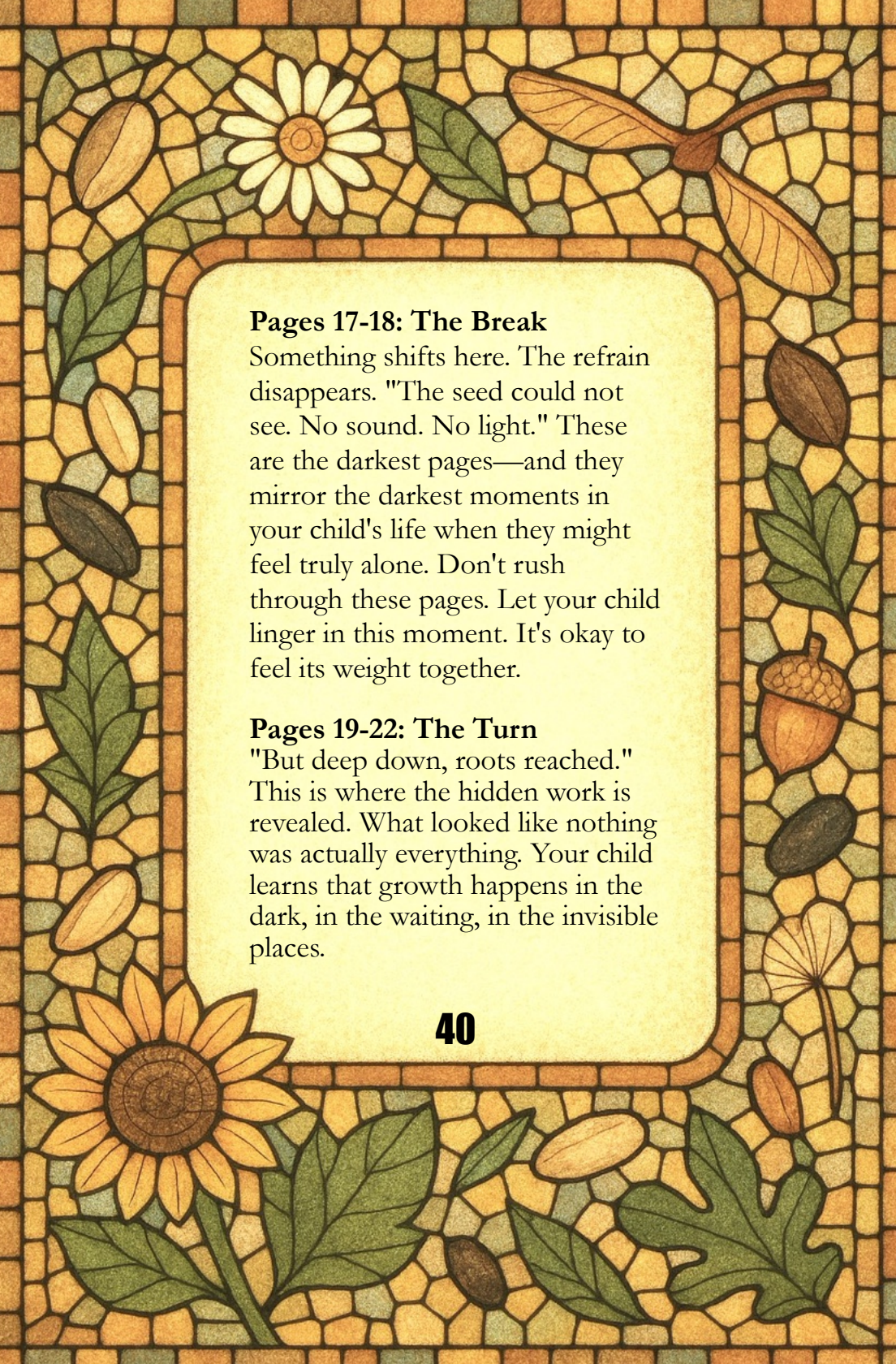
What Makes This Story Different

THE STRUCTURE TEACHES THE LESSON

Notice how the book is built:

Pages 4-16: The Testing

The seed faces challenge after challenge—wind, rain, heavy earth, long nights, cold, quiet. But after each trial, the same response: "The seed believed." This repetition is intentional. It teaches your child that faith isn't something you find once—it's something you choose again and again, especially when circumstances don't change.



Pages 17-18: The Break

Something shifts here. The refrain disappears. "The seed could not see. No sound. No light." These are the darkest pages—and they mirror the darkest moments in your child's life when they might feel truly alone. Don't rush through these pages. Let your child linger in this moment. It's okay to feel its weight together.

Pages 19-22: The Turn

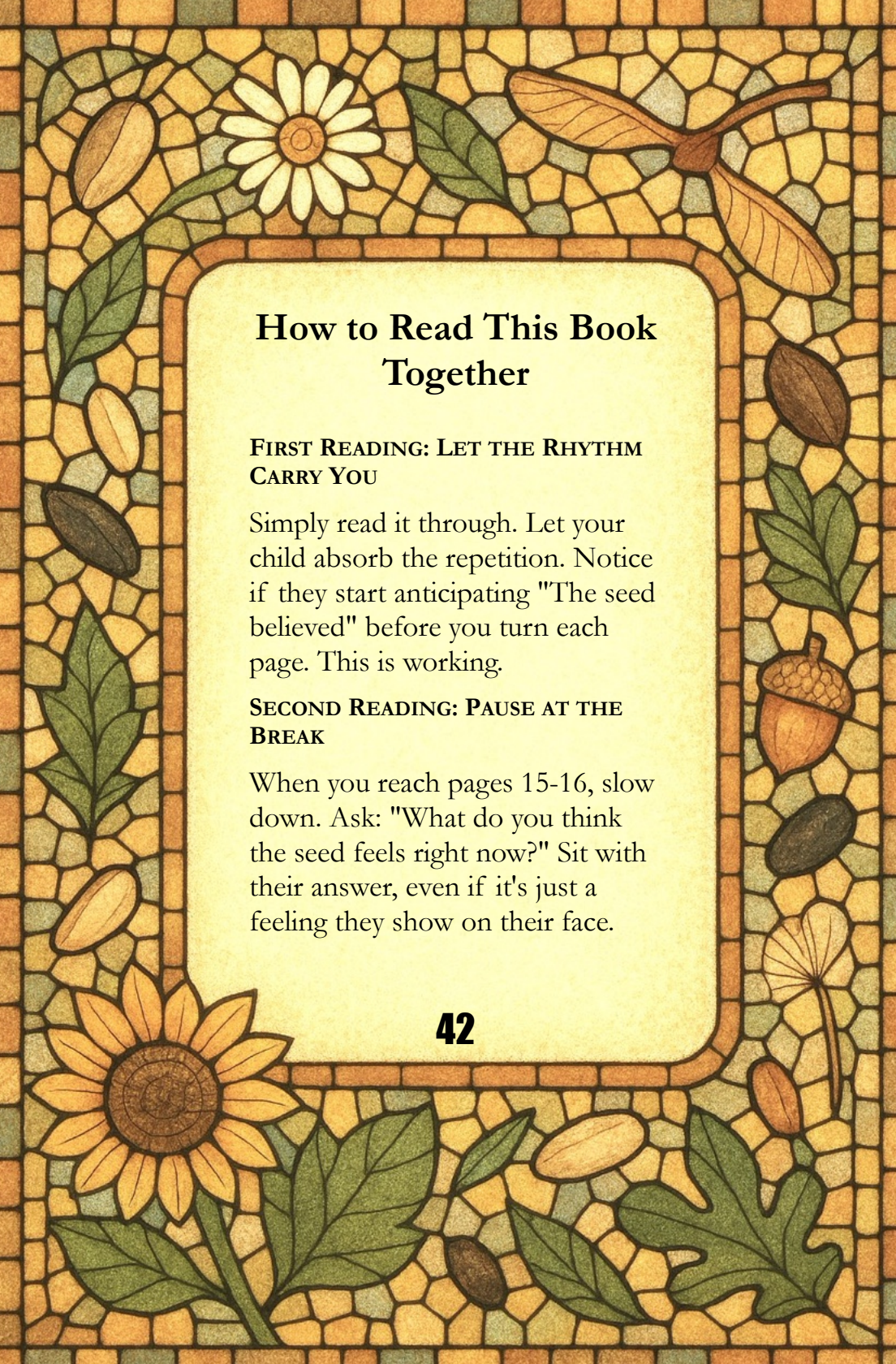
"But deep down, roots reached." This is where the hidden work is revealed. What looked like nothing was actually everything. Your child learns that growth happens in the dark, in the waiting, in the invisible places.

Pages 23-28: The Becoming

The seed transforms into a tree—branches, birds, home for others. This shows your child that their own quiet growth will one day become shelter and strength for their community.

Pages 34-36: The Invitation

"And so did we." The story ends by inviting you and your child into the seed's journey. You've been believing too—in them, in their growth, in what you cannot yet see.



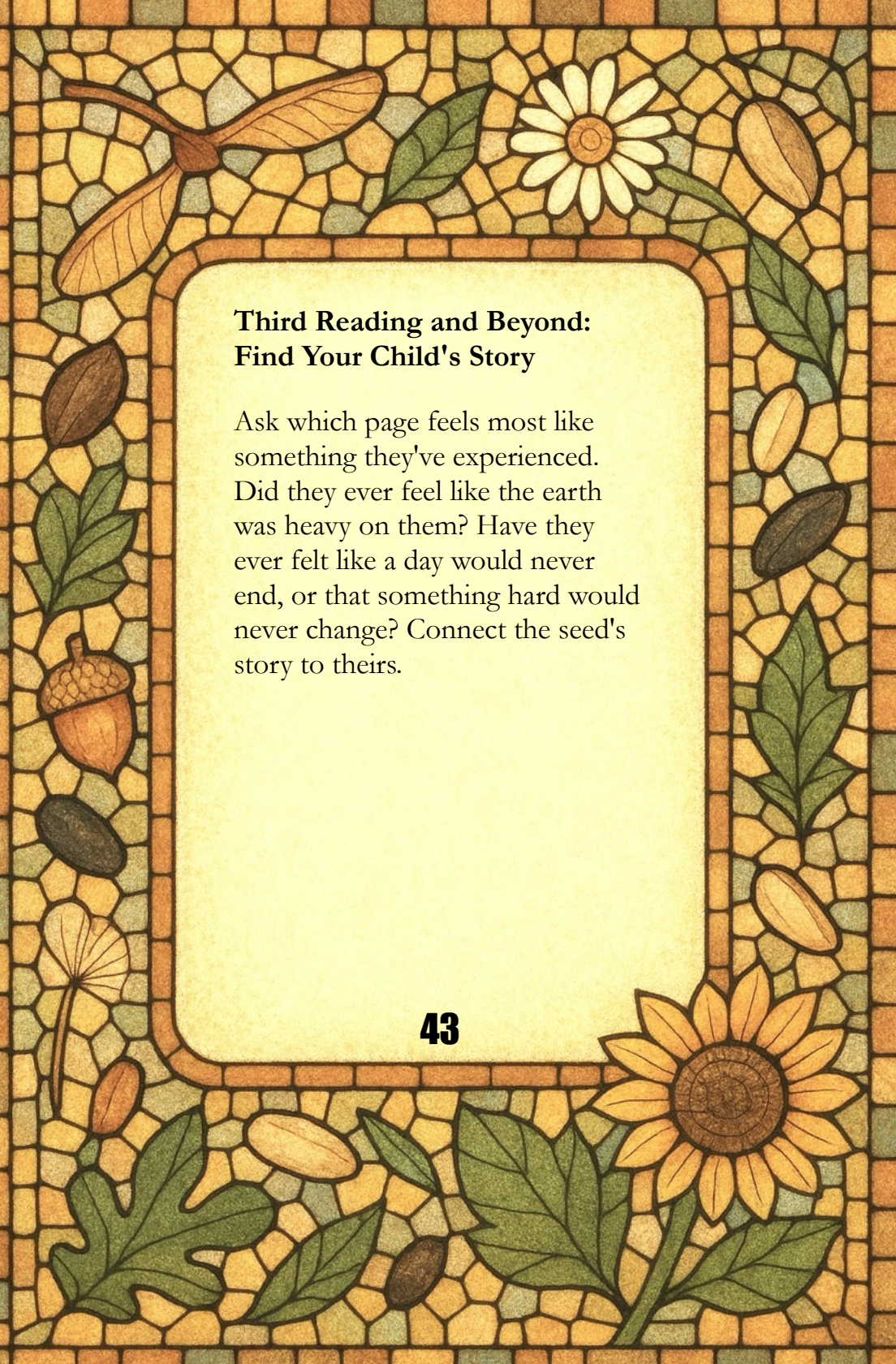
How to Read This Book Together

FIRST READING: LET THE RHYTHM CARRY YOU

Simply read it through. Let your child absorb the repetition. Notice if they start anticipating "The seed believed" before you turn each page. This is working.

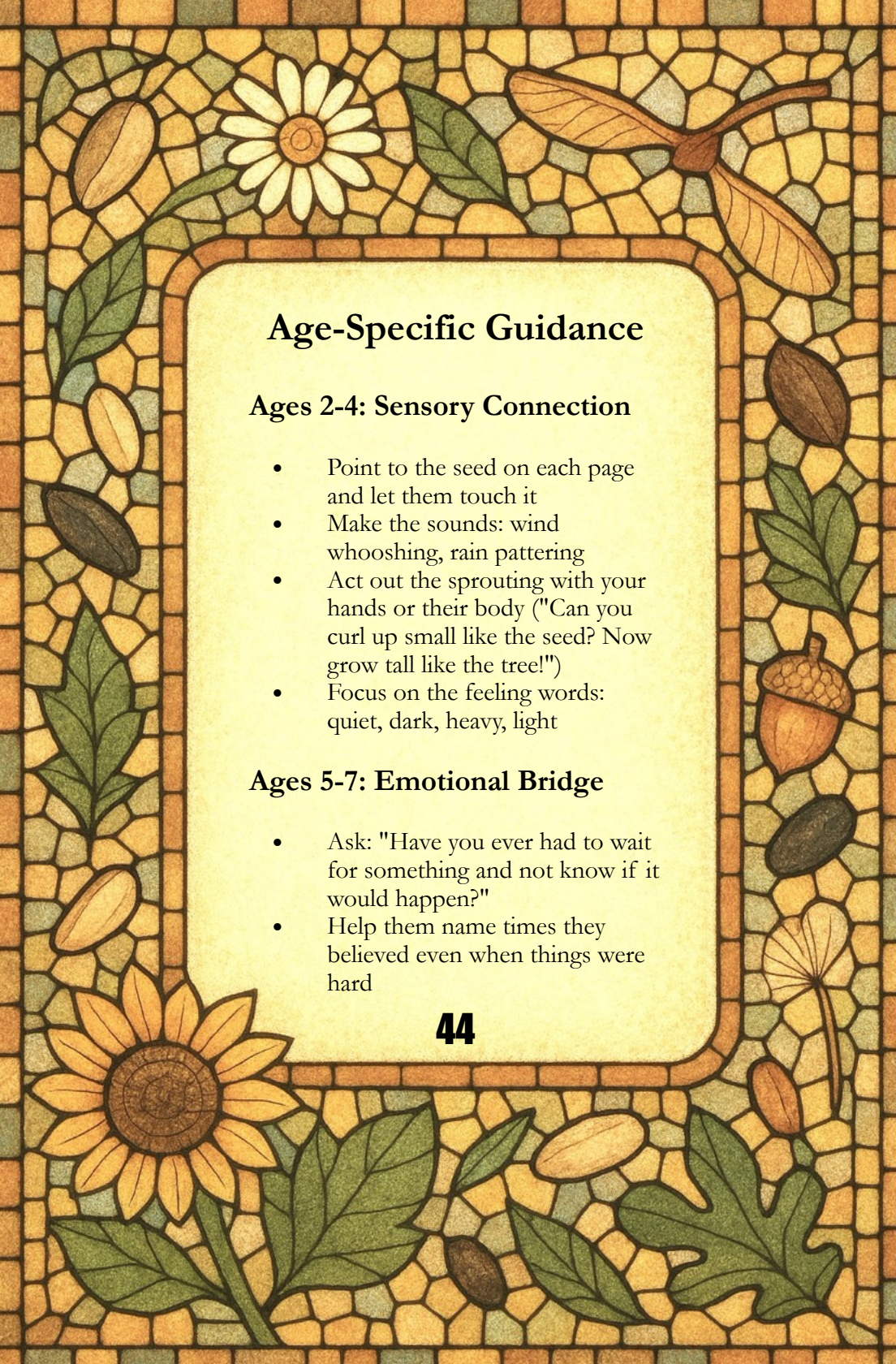
SECOND READING: PAUSE AT THE BREAK

When you reach pages 15-16, slow down. Ask: "What do you think the seed feels right now?" Sit with their answer, even if it's just a feeling they show on their face.



Third Reading and Beyond: Find Your Child's Story

Ask which page feels most like something they've experienced. Did they ever feel like the earth was heavy on them? Have they ever felt like a day would never end, or that something hard would never change? Connect the seed's story to theirs.



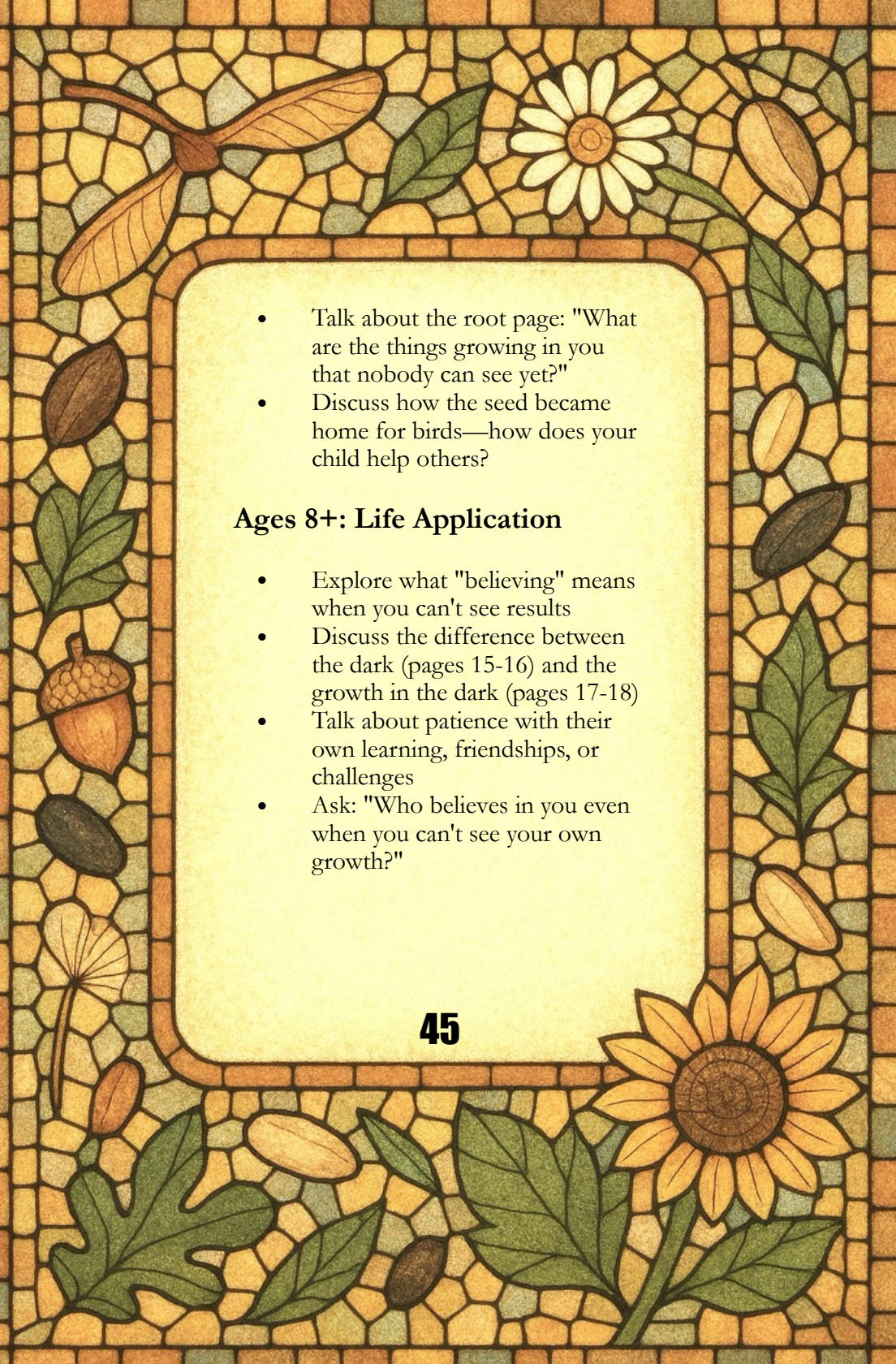
Age-Specific Guidance

Ages 2-4: Sensory Connection

- Point to the seed on each page and let them touch it
- Make the sounds: wind whooshing, rain pattering
- Act out the sprouting with your hands or their body ("Can you curl up small like the seed? Now grow tall like the tree!")
- Focus on the feeling words: quiet, dark, heavy, light

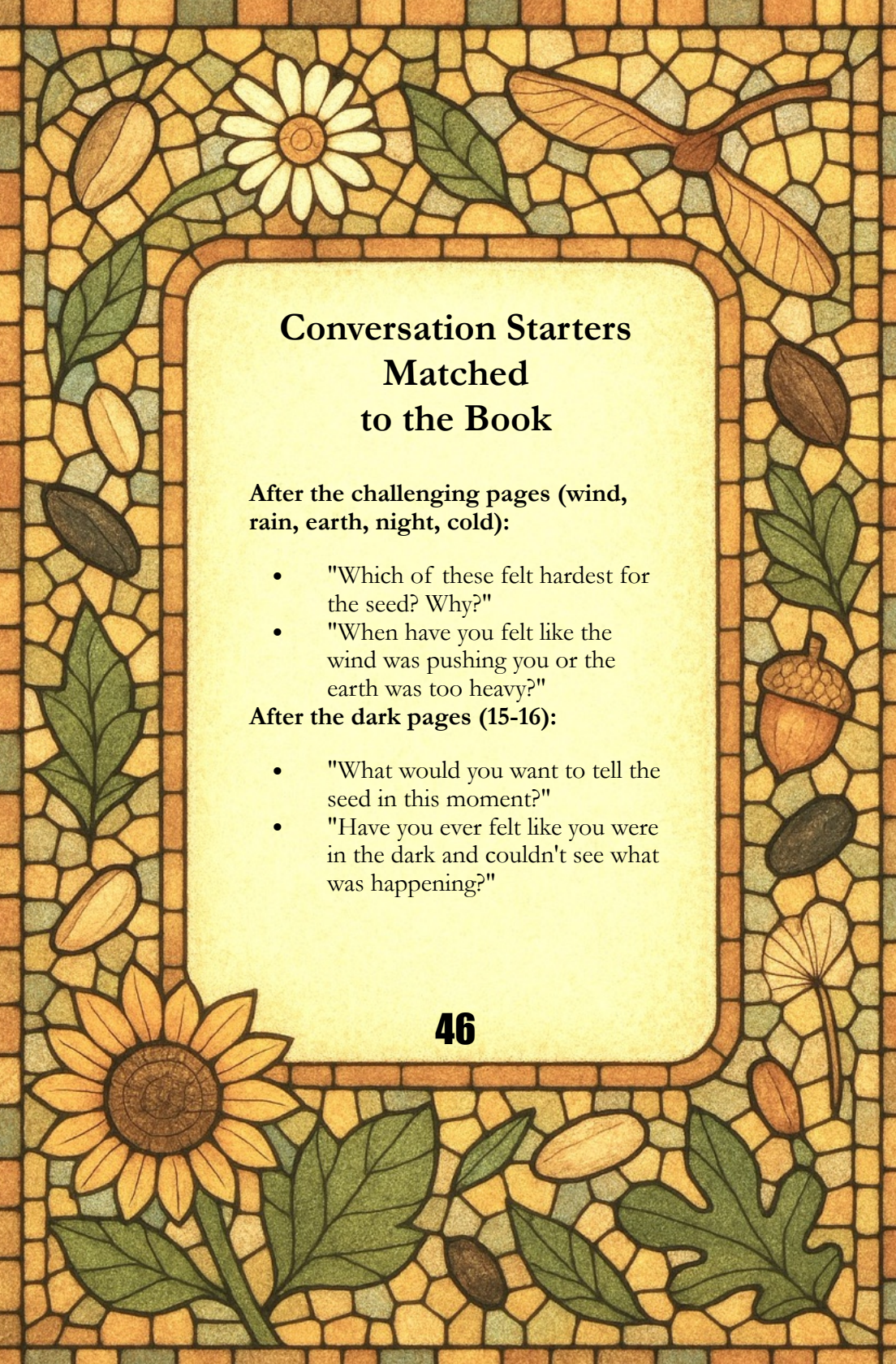
Ages 5-7: Emotional Bridge

- Ask: "Have you ever had to wait for something and not know if it would happen?"
- Help them name times they believed even when things were hard

- 
- Talk about the root page: "What are the things growing in you that nobody can see yet?"
 - Discuss how the seed became home for birds—how does your child help others?

Ages 8+: Life Application

- Explore what "believing" means when you can't see results
- Discuss the difference between the dark (pages 15-16) and the growth in the dark (pages 17-18)
- Talk about patience with their own learning, friendships, or challenges
- Ask: "Who believes in you even when you can't see your own growth?"



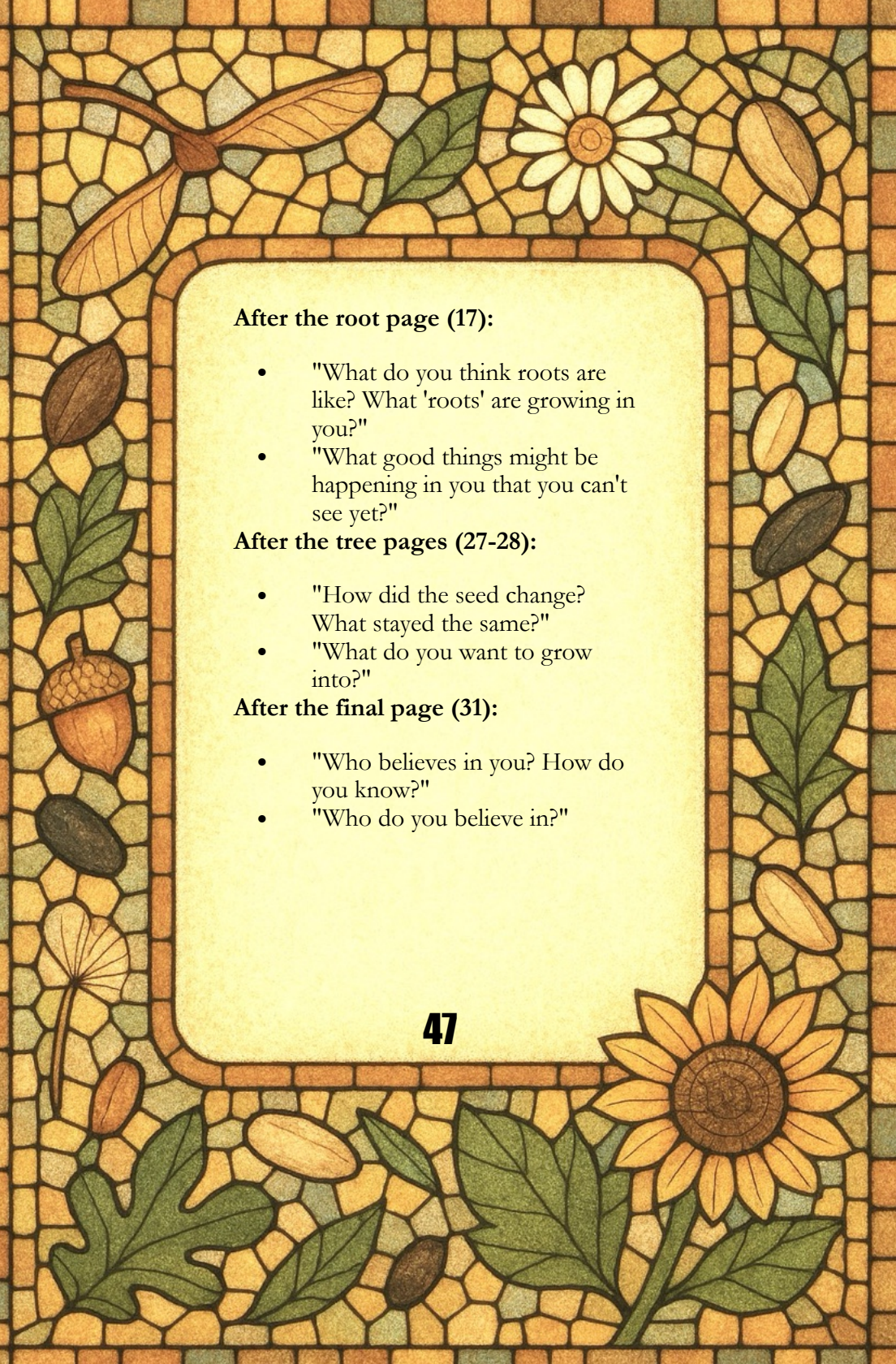
Conversation Starters Matched to the Book

**After the challenging pages (wind,
rain, earth, night, cold):**

- "Which of these felt hardest for the seed? Why?"
- "When have you felt like the wind was pushing you or the earth was too heavy?"

After the dark pages (15-16):

- "What would you want to tell the seed in this moment?"
- "Have you ever felt like you were in the dark and couldn't see what was happening?"



After the root page (17):

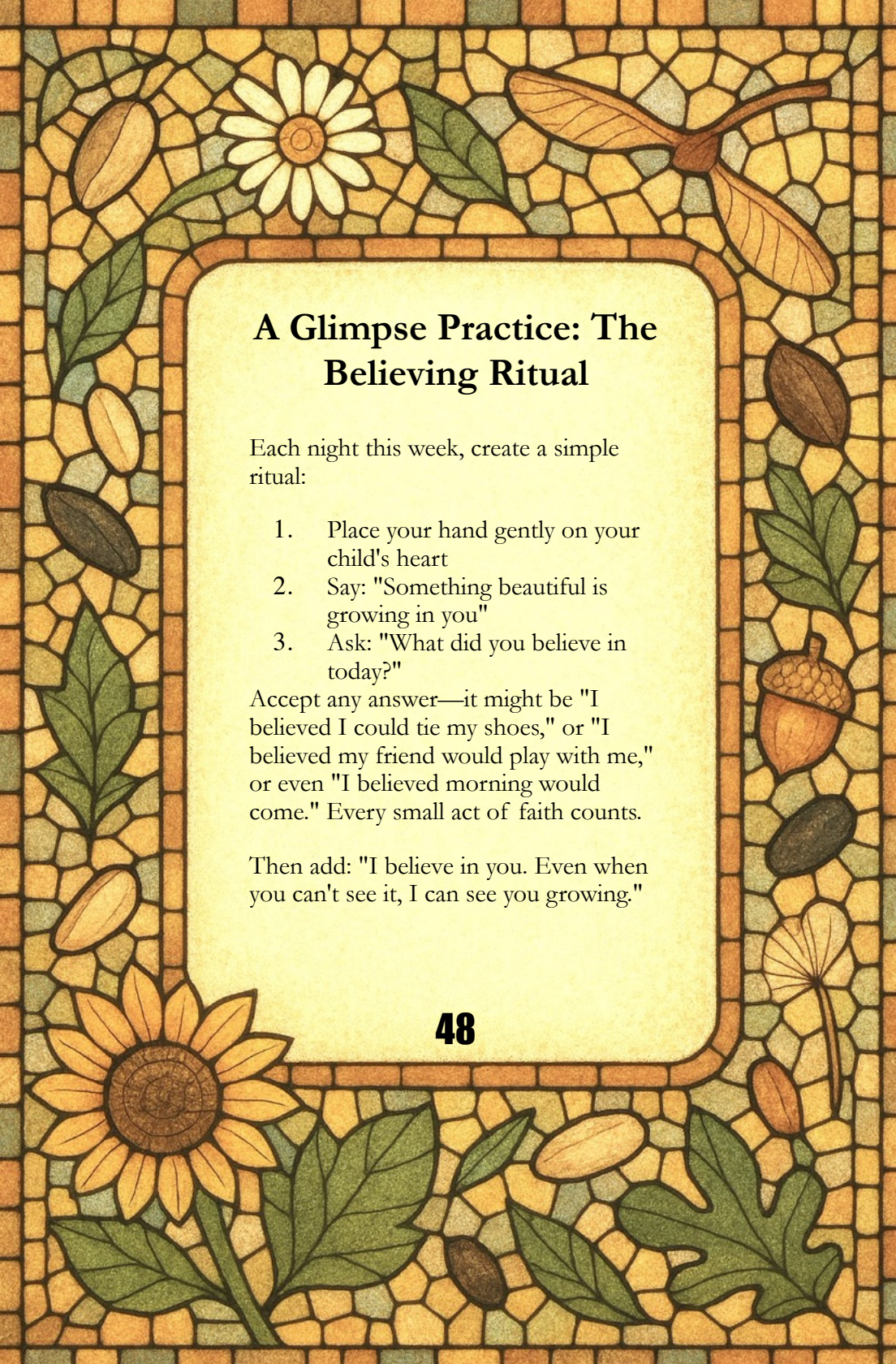
- "What do you think roots are like? What 'roots' are growing in you?"
- "What good things might be happening in you that you can't see yet?"

After the tree pages (27-28):

- "How did the seed change? What stayed the same?"
- "What do you want to grow into?"

After the final page (31):

- "Who believes in you? How do you know?"
- "Who do you believe in?"



A Glimpse Practice: The Believing Ritual

Each night this week, create a simple ritual:

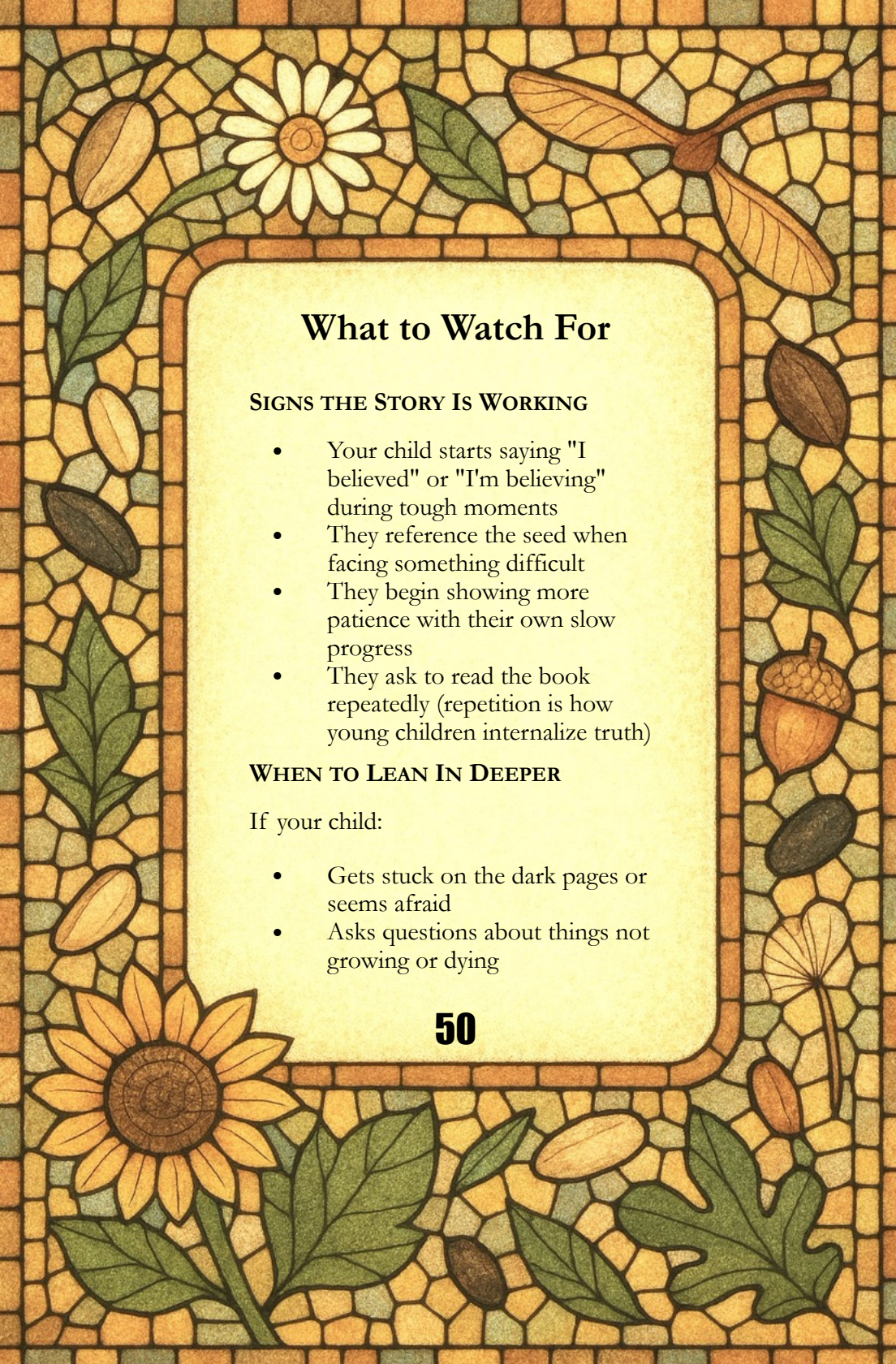
1. Place your hand gently on your child's heart
2. Say: "Something beautiful is growing in you"
3. Ask: "What did you believe in today?"

Accept any answer—it might be "I believed I could tie my shoes," or "I believed my friend would play with me," or even "I believed morning would come." Every small act of faith counts.

Then add: "I believe in you. Even when you can't see it, I can see you growing."



Why this works: You're connecting the story's message to their daily life, making faith concrete and personal. You're also becoming their witness—the one who sees what they cannot yet see in themselves.



What to Watch For

SIGNS THE STORY IS WORKING

- Your child starts saying "I believed" or "I'm believing" during tough moments
- They reference the seed when facing something difficult
- They begin showing more patience with their own slow progress
- They ask to read the book repeatedly (repetition is how young children internalize truth)

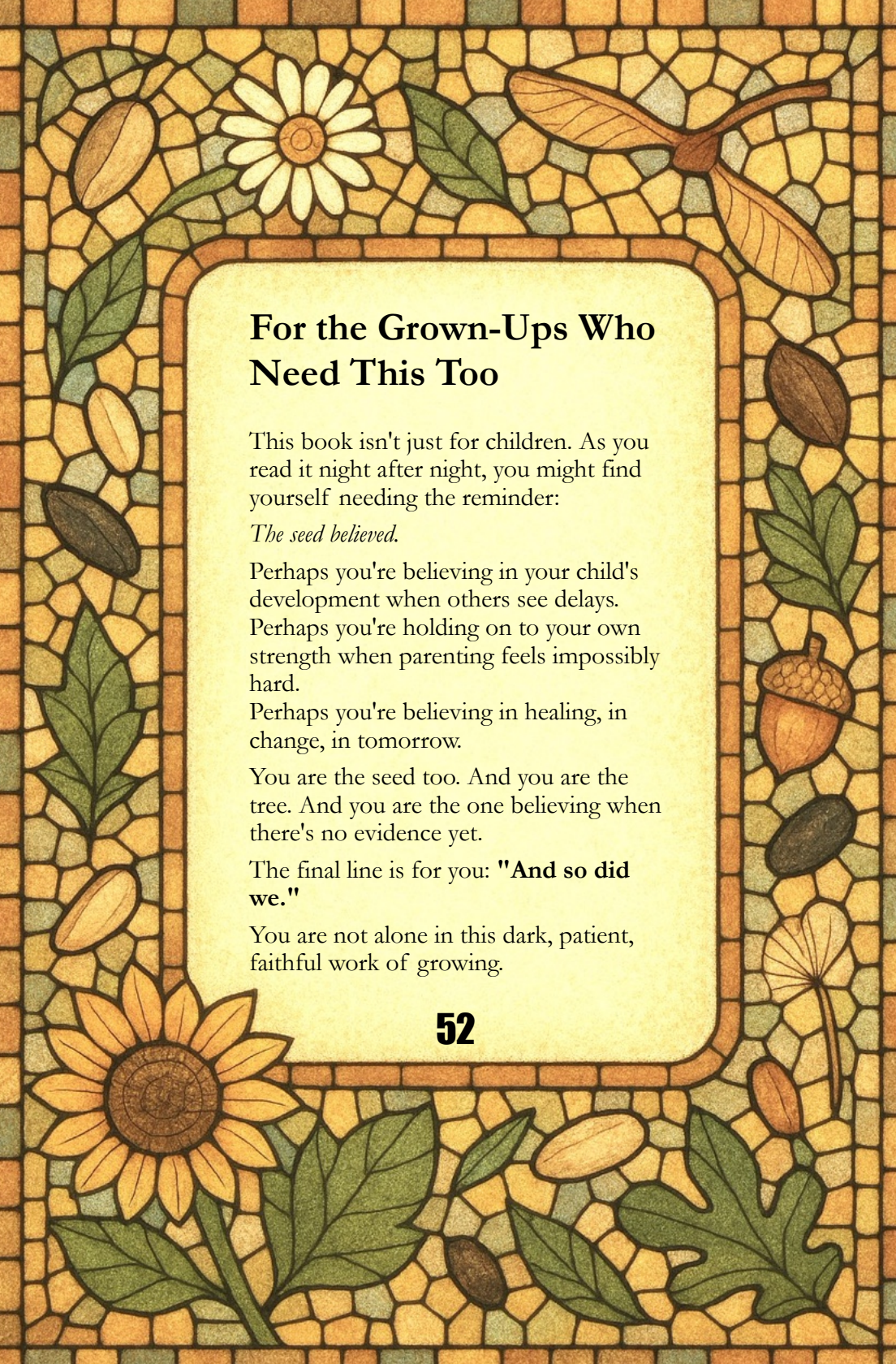
WHEN TO LEAN IN DEEPER

If your child:

- Gets stuck on the dark pages or seems afraid
- Asks questions about things not growing or dying

- 
- Connects the story to a real fear or challenge

Your response: Acknowledge their feeling first. Then gently return to page 17: "Even when the seed couldn't see, something was happening. Even when things feel dark for you, you're still growing. And I'm here with you."



For the Grown-Ups Who Need This Too

This book isn't just for children. As you read it night after night, you might find yourself needing the reminder:

The seed believed.

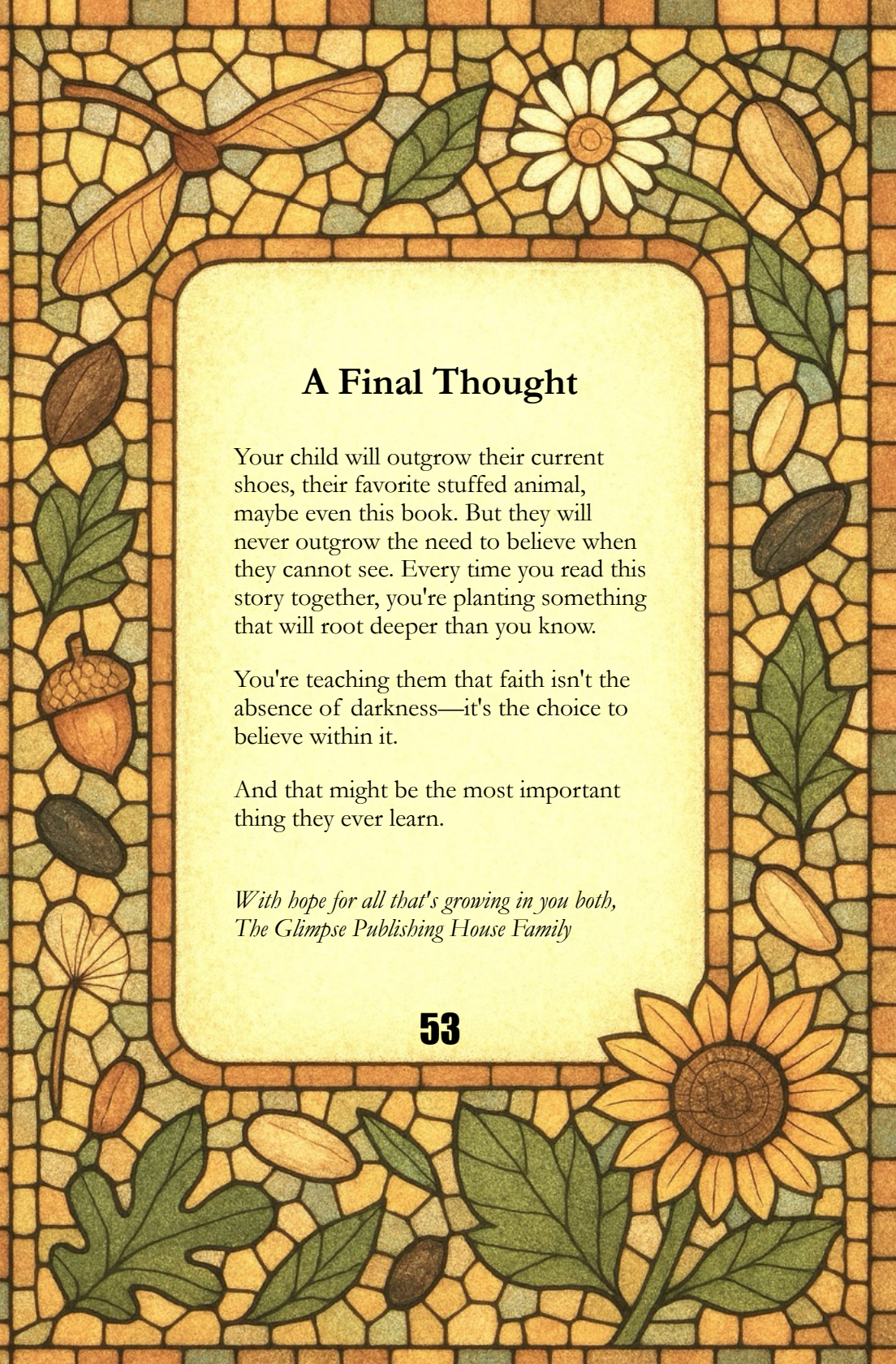
Perhaps you're believing in your child's development when others see delays. Perhaps you're holding on to your own strength when parenting feels impossibly hard.

Perhaps you're believing in healing, in change, in tomorrow.

You are the seed too. And you are the tree. And you are the one believing when there's no evidence yet.

The final line is for you: **"And so did we."**

You are not alone in this dark, patient, faithful work of growing.



A Final Thought

Your child will outgrow their current shoes, their favorite stuffed animal, maybe even this book. But they will never outgrow the need to believe when they cannot see. Every time you read this story together, you're planting something that will root deeper than you know.

You're teaching them that faith isn't the absence of darkness—it's the choice to believe within it.

And that might be the most important thing they ever learn.

*With hope for all that's growing in you both,
The Glimpse Publishing House Family*

Teacher Guide:

The Little Seed That Believed

A CLASSROOM RESOURCE FOR EDUCATORS

Welcome, Teachers

The Little Seed That Believed isn't just a story—it's a doorway into conversations about patience, perseverance, growth mindset, and faith. This guide provides practical tools for bringing this book into your classroom, homeschool, or faith formation setting.

Whether you teach preschool, elementary, or lead a children's ministry, you'll find age-appropriate activities, discussion frameworks, and cross-curricular connections that make the most of this gentle, powerful story.

How to Use This Guide

This teacher section is organized into:

- Learning Objectives by Grade Level - What students can gain from this story
- Pre-Reading Activities - Preparing students to receive the story
- During Reading Strategies - Interactive reading techniques
- Post-Reading Discussions - Questions that deepen understanding

- Cross-Curricular Activities - Science, Art, Writing, SEL connections
- Extended Projects - Week-long or unit-long explorations
- Faith Formation Applications - For religious education settings
- Assessment & Observation Tools - How to measure growth

Learning Objectives by Grade Level

PreK-Kindergarten (Ages 3-5)

Core Objectives:

- Understand that growth takes time and patience
- Recognize that we can't always see change happening
- Practice waiting and trusting
- Connect the story to their own experiences

SEL Competencies:

- Self-awareness: Identifying feelings of impatience or uncertainty
- Self-management: Practicing patience during waiting periods
- Social awareness: Recognizing that others also experience waiting

Grades 1-2 (Ages 6-7)

Core Objectives:

- Define "faith" in age-appropriate terms (believing even when you can't see)

- Identify the challenges the seed faces and how it responds
- Compare the seed's journey to personal experiences
- Understand the metaphor of roots growing in darkness

SEL Competencies:

- Self-awareness: Naming times they've felt stuck or uncertain
- Self-management: Developing patience strategies
- Responsible decision-making: Choosing to keep trying when progress is invisible

Grades 3-4 (Ages 8-10)

Core Objectives:

- Analyze the relationship between struggle and growth
- Explore faith as a choice made repeatedly, not once
- Apply growth mindset principles to their own learning
- Create connections between natural processes and personal development

SEL Competencies:

- Self-awareness: Reflecting on personal growth patterns
- Self-management: Building resilience during challenging periods
- Relationship skills: Supporting others who are struggling
- Responsible decision-making: Persevering despite setbacks

Pre-Reading Activities

Activity 1: The Mystery Bag

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Paper bag, seed or acorn, paper, pencils

Process:

1. Place a seed or acorn in a paper bag
2. Pass the bag around, letting students feel (but not see) what's inside
3. Ask: "What do you think is in the bag? How do you know?"
4. Reveal the seed
5. Ask: "What could this tiny seed become? Have you ever seen it happen?"
6. Introduce the concept: "Today we'll read about a seed that believed it could grow—even in the dark."

Teaching Point: This primes students to think about invisible potential and believing without seeing.

Activity 2: Thinking About Waiting

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: Chart paper, markers

Process:

1. Create a class chart with two columns: "Things That Are Hard to Wait For" and "How Waiting Feels"
2. Invite students to share their experiences

3. Validate all feelings (impatience, frustration, worry, excitement)
4. Transition: "In our story, a seed has to wait in the dark. Let's see what happens."

Teaching Point: Normalizes the difficulty of waiting and creates empathy for the seed's journey.

Activity 3: Growth Timeline

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Photos of students at different ages (ask families in advance), timeline on board

Process:

1. Show photos of the same student at different ages
2. Ask: "Could you see yourself growing every single day? But did you grow?"
3. Create a simple timeline showing infant → toddler → current age
4. Point out: "Growth happens even when we can't see it happening."

Teaching Point: Helps students understand invisible progress before it is encountered in the story.

During Reading Strategies

Strategy 1: Echo Reading (PreK-1)

Read each page, then have students echo the refrain:
"The seed believed"

- This builds rhythm, anticipation, and emotional investment
- When you reach the dark pages (15-16) and the refrain disappears, let the silence sit
- Students will feel the absence—don't rush to fill it

Strategy 2: Predictive Pausing (Grades 1-3)

Before turning each page, ask:

- "What do you think will happen next?"
- "Will the seed keep believing?"
- "What would you do if you were the seed?"

This builds engagement and helps students recognize the pattern—and then the break in pattern.

Strategy 3: Emotion Tracking (Grades 2-4)

Give students a simple feelings chart (happy, worried, hopeful, sad, peaceful). As you read, they hold up the feeling they think the seed is experiencing. After reading, discuss: "When did your feelings change? Why?"

Strategy 4: Close Reading of Pages 17-18

These are the pivotal pages. Slow down here.

Ask:

- "What's different about these pages?"
- "How does it feel when the refrain goes away?"
- "What do you think the seed is thinking right now?"
- "Have you ever felt like this?"

Then read page 17: "But deep down, roots reached."

Ask:

- "What was happening that nobody could see?"
- "What does this teach us about hard times?"

Post-Reading Discussions

Discussion Framework: Think-Pair-Share

Level 1 Questions (Comprehension):

- What happened to the seed?
- What challenges did the seed face?
- What did the seed do in response to each challenge?

Level 2 Questions (Analysis):

- Why do you think the author chose to have the seed face so many hard things?
- What was growing in the dark that the seed couldn't see?
- Why did the story end with "And so did we"? Who is "we"?

Level 3 Questions (Application):

- When have you had to believe in something you couldn't see?
- What are some "roots" that might be growing in you right now?
- How can you help someone else who feels like they're in the dark?

Discussion Prompts by Theme

If focusing on PATIENCE:

- "The seed waited a long time. What helps you wait when something is taking forever?"
- "What good things have you had to wait for? Was it worth it?"

If focusing on GROWTH MINDSET:

- "The seed didn't give up even when nothing seemed to be happening. When have you kept trying even though you couldn't see progress?"
- "What's something you're learning right now that's hard? How is it like the seed's experience?"

If focusing on FAITH:

- "The seed believed even in the dark. What does it mean to believe in something you can't see?"
- "Who believes in you even when you can't see your own growth?"

If focusing on RESILIENCE:

- "The seed faced wind, rain, cold, and darkness. Which challenge would have been hardest for you?"
- "What made the seed strong enough to become a tree?"

Cross-Curricular Activities

SCIENCE: Seed Investigation

Time: 30-40 minutes (plus ongoing observation)

Materials: Lima beans, clear plastic cups, paper towels, water, observation journals

Process:

1. Read The Little Seed That Believed
2. Give each student a seed and ask them to examine it closely
3. Set up a seed germination experiment using the "bag method":
 - Dampen paper towel
 - Place seed inside
 - Tape to window
 - Observe daily
4. Students keep observation journals, drawing what they see each day
5. Point out: "For the first few days, nothing happens. But something is happening inside the seed."

Reflection Questions:

- "How is watching your seed like the story?"
- "What surprised you about how seeds grow?"
- "When did you have to believe even though you couldn't see anything?"

ART: Mosaic Self-Portrait

Time: 45-60 minutes (can span 2 sessions)

Materials: Construction paper in various colors, scissors, glue, base paper

Process:

1. Discuss the mosaic art style in the book
2. Explain: "A mosaic is made of many small pieces that come together to create something beautiful"
3. Students tear or cut small pieces of colored paper

4. They arrange pieces to create a self-portrait or representation of themselves
5. As they work, discuss: "Just like this mosaic, you are made of many pieces—your experiences, your learning, your growth"

Extension: Write around the border: "I am becoming..." and students complete the sentence.

WRITING: Faith Stories

Grades 2-4

Time: 30-40 minutes

Prompt: "Think of a time when you had to believe in something even though you couldn't see it. Maybe you believed you could learn something hard, or believed a friend would forgive you, or believed morning would come after a dark night. Tell that story."

Framework:

- What was happening?
- What did you believe?
- What made it hard to keep believing?
- What happened in the end?

Extension: Create a class book: "We Believed: Stories from Room ____"

WRITING: What's Growing in You?

Grades K-2

Time: 20 minutes

Prompt: Draw a picture of yourself as a seed underground. Draw roots growing from you. On each root, write or draw something you're learning or growing in.

Examples:

- "I'm learning to read"
- "I'm getting braver"
- "I'm becoming a better friend"

Display Idea: Create a bulletin board titled "Our Invisible Growth" with all student roots displayed.

MATH: Growth Patterns

Grades 2-4

Time: 30 minutes

Activity:

1. Show time-lapse videos of seeds growing (easily found online)
2. Track growth in a table:
 - Day 1: 0 cm
 - Day 3: 0 cm
 - Day 5: 0 cm
 - Day 7: 2 cm
 - Day 9: 5 cm
 - Day 11: 9 cm
3. Create a bar graph of growth
4. Discuss: "When was growth happening even though we couldn't measure it?"

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING: Patience Practice

All Ages

Time: Ongoing practice

Activity: *The Believing Jar*

Setup:

- Get a clear jar
- Every time the class faces a challenge or has to wait for something, add a small object (marble, bead, pebble)
- Each object represents a moment of patience or faith
- Reference the book: "Like the seed, we're believing even when we can't see what's growing"

Reflection (weekly): Look at the jar together and discuss:

- "What have we been waiting for?"
- "What have we learned while waiting?"
- "What growth have we seen?"

Extended Projects

Project 1: Class Tree of Belief (1-2 weeks)

Materials: Butcher paper, markers, scissors, construction paper

Process:

1. Create a large tree trunk on butcher paper
2. Each student creates a leaf with their name and something they believe in (themselves, their friends, their learning, etc.)
3. Add roots underground with challenges the class has faced
4. Display with title: "We Are Growing"

Weekly Addition: Add new leaves as students experience moments of growth or faith.

Project 2: Seed to Tree Journey Map (2-3 weeks)

Materials: Long paper strip, art supplies, writing materials

Process:

1. Create a visual timeline of the seed's journey
2. Students work in groups to illustrate different sections:
 - The beginning (seed planted)
 - The challenges (wind, rain, earth, night, cold)
 - The darkness (the break)
 - The transformation (roots, sprout, tree)
3. Below each section, students write reflections connecting to their own lives

Presentation: Groups present their section and explain the connection to human growth.

Project 3: Interview Project - "People Who Believed" (Grades 3-4)

Time: 2-3 weeks

Process:

1. Students interview an adult (parent, teacher, community member) about a time they had to have faith
2. Questions provided:
 - When did you have to believe in something you couldn't see?
 - What made it hard?
 - How did you keep believing?
 - What happened in the end?
3. Students create a presentation (poster, video, written story)

Class Celebration: "Gallery of Faith" where students share their interviews

Faith Formation Applications

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL
/CCD/FAITH FORMATION CLASSES

Biblical Connections:

Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)

- Read the parable alongside the book
- Compare: Both start with a tiny seed, both require faith, both result in shelter for others
- Discuss: "What is God growing in you that you can't see yet?"

Hebrews 11:1

"Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see"

- Connect to the seed's experience: believing without seeing
- Activity: Create bookmarks with this verse and an image of the seed

1 Corinthians 13:13

"And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love"

- Introduce the full series: Faith (this book), Hope (The Little Balloon), Love (The Red Thread)
- Discuss how all three virtues work together

Prayer Practice: The Seed Prayer

For closing circle:

"God, sometimes we are like the little seed—
In the dark,

Unable to see what's coming,
Unsure if we're growing.

Help us believe
Even when we can't see.
Help us trust
Even when we're waiting.
Help us remember
That you are growing good things in us,
Even in the darkness.

Like the seed,
We believe.
Amen."

Virtue Formation: Faith as a Practice

Weekly Practice:

- Monday: Name something you're believing in this week
- Wednesday: Check in - Is it still hard to believe? How are you doing?
- Friday: Reflection - Did you see any growth? What are you still waiting for?

Monthly Celebration: Share stories of faith from the month. Add them to a "Faith Journal" for the class.

Assessment & Observation Tools

Observational Checklist

Use this during and after reading to note student understanding:

- Comprehension:* ☐ Can retell the basic story sequence
☐ Identifies the main challenges the seed faces
☐ Recognizes the turning point (roots growing in darkness)
☐ Understands the transformation (seed to tree)

- Thematic Understanding:* ☐ Can define "believing" or "faith" in their own words
☐ Connects the seed's experience to personal life
☐ Recognizes that growth can be invisible
☐ Understands that challenges can be part of growth

- SEL Development:* ☐ Shows empathy for the seed's experience
☐ Reflects on their own experiences of waiting/uncertainty
☐ Demonstrates patience or patience strategies
☐ Supports peers who are struggling

Reflection Questions for Students

Written or Verbal Assessment:

1. What is this story really about?
2. What do you think "The seed believed" means?
3. When have you been like the seed?

4. What is something growing in you right now that others might not see?
5. How will you help someone else who feels stuck or in the dark?

Portfolio Piece

Have students create a "Then and Now" comparison:

- *Then (before reading):* "When I have to wait for something, I feel..."
- *Now (after reading and activities):* "When I have to wait for something, I can..."

This documents growth in patience, faith, and resilience.

Additional Resources

Recommended Read-Alouds to Pair With This Book:

- *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle
- *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss
- *What Do You Do With an Idea?* by Kobi Yamada
- *The Dot* by Peter H. Reynolds

Videos:

- Time-lapse videos of seeds growing (search "seed germination time lapse")
- "Growth Mindset for Kids" videos

Songs:

- "Little Seed" by Planting Seeds (available on YouTube)
- "From Little Things Big Things Grow" by Paul Kelly

Thank You, Teachers

Thank you for bringing *The Little Seed That Believed* into your classroom. You are planting seeds of faith, patience, and resilience in your students—and like the seed in this story, the growth you're nurturing may not be visible right away.

But it's happening.

And one day, your students will look back and realize: you believed in them, even in the dark.

With gratitude,
Dr. Robert LiPuma
Glimpse Publishing House