

## Bright Ideas



From the  
Susquehanna Mysteries Alliance

## A Special Place to Read the Latest Mystery Book Create Your Own Reading Garden



Pick a cozy, isolated spot that would work best for undisturbed, quiet time. It could be in your front yard, back yard, patio, porch or a spot near the shed—anywhere you'd like.

**Getting Started:** Clean up the space (get rid of weeds, clutter, etc.). The first item you want to consider is where you will sit and what type of seating product you want. It could be an Adirondack chair, wicker chair, swing, lounge or bench. Since you will want to be relaxed, this will be your one financial splurge for your reading garden—get a good one. You want it to last (especially if it's out in the elements) and you need it to be comfortable for hours of reading. Don't forget the pillows! Area stores are now carrying quality, weather-resistant, outdoor pillows in a variety of colors and patterns.

Once you have your seating arranged, you'll want to surround yourself with intoxicating fragrance, visually appealing colors and soothing sounds.

**Adding Color:** Surround yourself with all the colors you love! You can make a flower bed, arrange large planters and pots—have blooms everywhere! If you can, use hanging pots with trailing vines, or a small arbor with climbers; all these things will create more of a “room” feel and hide you from the outside world. For ever-changing, fleeting added color, plant flowers that attract butterflies.

**Fragrance:** Choose plants that have a calming scent, such as gardenias or even herbs like lavender. Candles or incense can add to your escape, if your flower choices are not strongly scented.

**Lighting:** If you like to read at night or just need a getaway space to be alone; you'll need some mood lighting. If you're lucky enough to have electricity

nearby, tiny white outdoor lights are simply beautiful. Many shops offer solar outdoor lighting in different styles. Hang lanterns on shepherd's hooks, place a hurricane candle lamp on a small table, hang Mason jars with tea lights inside from wire, display tiny tea lights in nooks and crannies for a relaxing glow.

**Soothing Sounds:** For a space that seems miles away from the hustle and bustle, you can consider wind chimes or a water fountain/feature. Place a bird feeder and/or bird bath nearby to encourage chirpy birds to visit.

**Other decor:** Remember to create a “room-like” feel by using varying degrees of height. Place planters filled with flowers on the ground, on a small brick wall, tables, hanging from eaves, etc. Garden statues add ambience and come in all shapes and sizes.

Buy a stack of books and get comfortable in your private, reading garden.

