

A Grand Old Tree

by Mary Newell DePalma

Simple illustrations come to life with vibrant colors and with a charming story that follows the life of an old tree, as it leaves a mark on the world.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *How do you know if a tree is young or old?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder if those animals are nice to each other and share the tree?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *A Grand Old Tree*

- roots: the underground base of a plant, absorbs water and food for the plant
- earth: the solid, dry land surface
- creatures: living animals
- nested: a cozy, protected place
- scurried: to move at a hurried pace with small steps
- bore: to make something new
- sow: to scatter or plant a seed
- landscape: an expanse of scenery, seen by the eye
- basked: to lie in or to expose self to warmth, especially from the sun
- swayed: to swing back and forth
- millions: a large numbers of things
- cracked: marked with a crack or cracks
- snapped: to break with a sharp noise
- centipedes: a small, fast-moving insect with many legs
- lichen: a complex organism consisting of fungi and algae

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Describe what the Grand Old Tree looked like.
- What kind of creatures lived in the tree?
- What types of things did the tree produce?
- What did the squirrels do with all the seeds?
- Where did the bird take the seed?
- How did the tree change throughout the years?
- What started to happen to the tree when it got older?
- What animals lived in the tree after it fell over?
- What happened to the tree's children? What creatures lived in the new trees?



Do

Seasons of Change

After reading the story, talk about what happens to trees during the four seasons (if you live in an area where trees do not change, show pictures of trees throughout the year). Hand out the *A Tree through the Seasons* sheet. Name each square and describe what happens in Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring. Allow the children enough time to color and decorate each tree to represent the season.

My Name: _____

A Tree through the Seasons

