

A Tree is Nice

by Janice May Udry

Caldecott Winner (1956). A delightful story, beautifully illustrated, that celebrates the splendor and value of trees.



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, *Have you ever climbed a tree?* 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 the girl will be able to get that cat out of 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 Tree is Nice*

- valleys: a low lying area of land, often by a river or stream
- woods: a large area filled with trees and bushes
- whisper: to speak or say something very softly
- breeze: light to moderate wind
- pile: a very large amount of something stacked on top of another
- rakes: a long-handled toothed gardening tool
- bonfire: a large outdoor fire
- trunk: the main stem of a tree
- nests: home made by birds built out of twigs, grass and other natural materials
- hoe: a garden weeding tool with a long pole
- buggy: a lightweight baby carriage

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Why were the trees nice?
- Where did the trees live?
- What happened to the tree during the fall season?
- What did the children do with the fallen leaves?
- How did the children use the different trees?
- What fruit grew on the tree?
- Can you describe some of the other uses for trees?
- Why did the cows like the tree?
- How did the tree protect the house?
- How did the boy plant the tree?
- Would you like to plant a tree?



Do

Water Color Trees

You will need: white paper, pencils, water colors, paint brushes, paper towels and cups

After reading the story, talk about the illustrations and how some pages are black-and-white and how others have color. Hand out a white piece of paper and pencil to each child. Allow the children enough time to draw a picture of them with a tree. For example, a picture of the kids climbing a tree, resting under a tree, planting a tree or playing in the leaves. Next, hand out all the water color paint supplies to each child and have the children paint their picture. If desired, make copies of all the pencil drawings before you let the children paint. Mount both the pencil drawing and the painted picture on one piece of construction paper.