

We Planted a Tree

by Diane Muldrow

A beautifully illustrated, poetic snapshot of several families, across the globe, planting new trees and discovering that when the trees flourished, so do they.



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 planted a tree? What kind of tree was it?* 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 where those families live?

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 *We Planted a Tree*

- buds: an outgrowth on a stem or branch
- branches: the part of tree growing from a trunk
- burst: to split or break apart suddenly
- dizzy: unsteady and slightly giddy
- earth: the planet that we live on
- shady: to provide shade
- sap: a watery liquid containing salts and sugars that come from a plant
- syrup: a flavored thick sweet liquid
- soil: the top layer of the ground
- healthier: helping to maintain or bring about good health
- butternut squash: bell-shaped squash, yellow-orange in color
- cabbage: edible plant with closely layered leaves, like lettuce
- acorns: the hard fruit of an oak tree

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Where did the families plant their trees?
- Describe the two homes. How were they similar? Different?
- What went into the leaves and gave the tree food?
- What appeared on the tree?
- How did the tree keep the Earth cool? What did the tree provide?
- What else did the tree do for the Earth and for the people?
- What kinds of fruit grew on some of the trees?
- How did the tree help corn, onions and cabbage grow?
- In the winter, what did the tree provide for the squirrels and birds?
- How did the tree help heal the earth?



Do

Plant a Tree

After reading the story, talk about what it would take to plant your own tree. What does a tree need to grow? Where do you find trees to plant? Either at the school, local park, nature center or a class family's home, make arrangements to plant a class tree. Take pictures of the entire process. If desired, print out the pictures and, as a class, create your own *We Planted a Tree* book. If applicable, visit the tree throughout the year, take pictures and compare the growth.