

BE A TREE!: Draw Your Hidden Roots



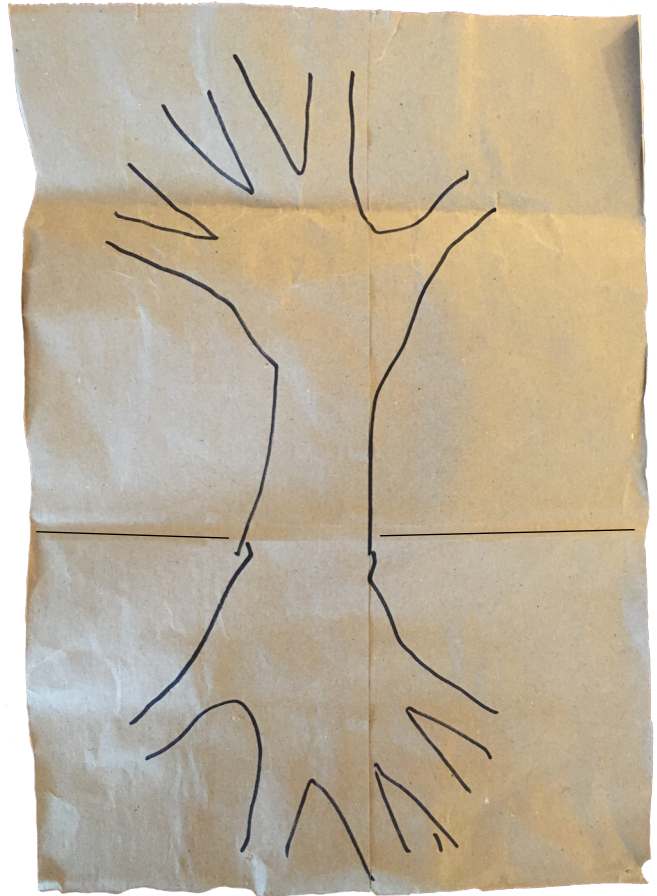
On the cover of the picture book **Be a Tree!** and in this illustration, Felicity Sala shows us the visible parts of the tree —the trunk and branches and the invisible parts of the tree—the roots and fungi. Like trees, we humans have parts of us that other people see and parts that they do not always see. Let's explore those parts of ourselves in this art project.

LOOK FOR

- Brown paper shopping bag (or a large piece of paper or cardboard)
- Safe scissors
- Any art supplies you have (even a pencil or pen is enough).

SKETCH OUT A TREE

- 1) Cut out the large front or back panel of the paper shopping bag (leaving 3 sides and the bottom of the bag behind).
- 2) There should be a natural crease in the paper. Spin the paper so that that smaller creased section is on the bottom of your paper.
- 3) Lay your arm above the crease and spread your fingers wide.



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SKETCH OUT A TREE (cont.)

4) Reach for a marker, crayon, or pencil and trace the outside of your arm and hand. Trace the v-shapes between your spread fingers. Don't trace your fingertips. *Does this look like the outline of a trunk and branches?*

5) Turn the paper around and place your wrist over the base of the "trunk." Spread your fingers wide.

6) Trace the outside of your wrist and hand. Trace the v-shapes between your spread fingers. Don't trace your fingertips. *Does this look like the roots of a tree?*

WRITE & DRAW YOUR HIDDEN ROOTS

Let's pretend this tree you have drawn rooted in the soil is you.

Let's pretend the tree's trunk and branches are the part of you that people see at school. Like the tree, this is the part of you that is in the sunshine, seen by all.

1) Pull out all of your art supplies and look at the trunk and branches. What words or pictures could you add onto the trunk and branches that tell us something about you? You could add things you are good at like "artist" or "soccer player" or things people think about you like "funny" or "quiet." Ask friends to describe you if you need help. Think about where you write or draw on your tree. For example, can the words become branches or twigs or leaves? Can words run up the trunk like bark?

Let's pretend the soil between and beneath the tree's roots could be the people, places, or things that nourish you or make you strong.

2) Now turn to the roots and soil beneath the ground. What words or pictures would you like to add there? Add into the soil the things that help you grow strong. Yes, that could be food, but think about what makes you strong as a person, which words, people, or objects give you the strength to go out into the world every day and stand tall in the sunshine.

Leave your words and pictures hidden or unhidden.

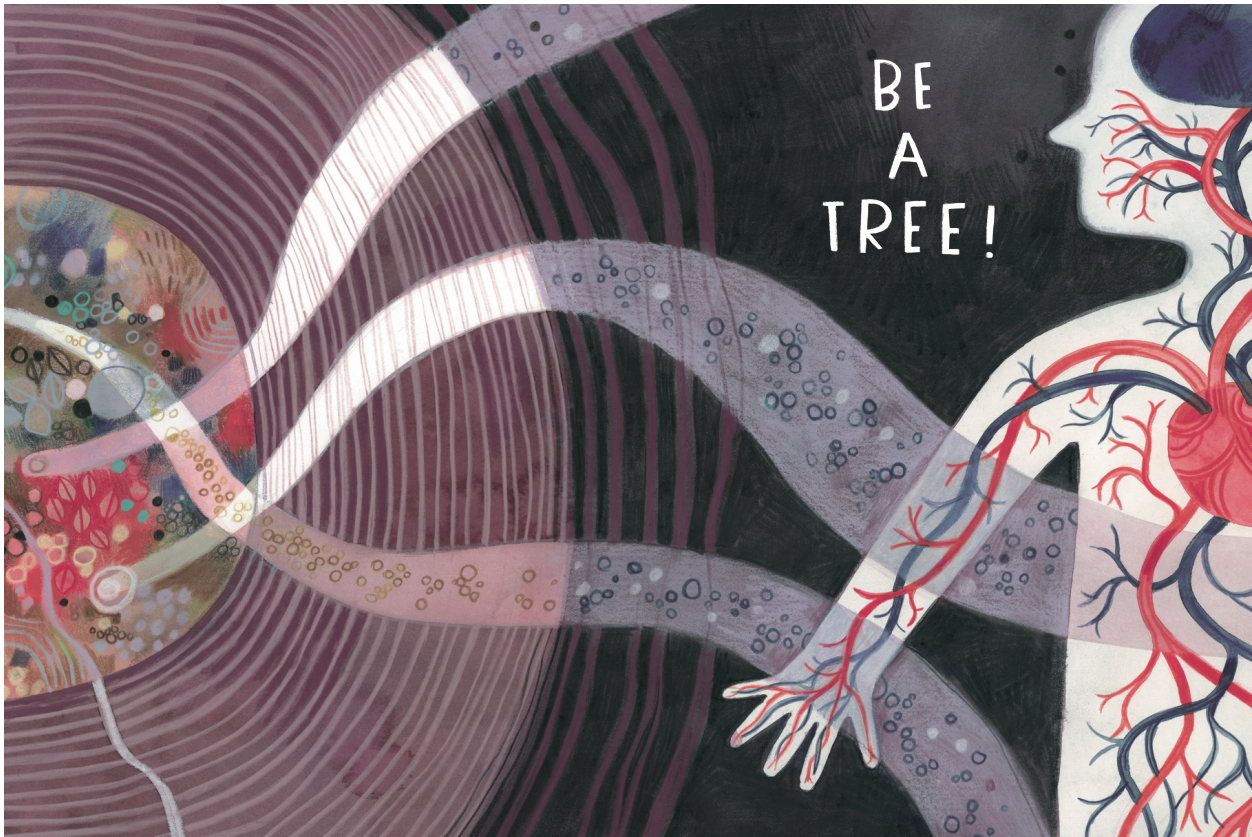
3) This is your piece of art about you. You may not want to show everything you have written or drawn. That is okay, trees roots are hidden below ground and its branches are partially hidden by crowns of leaves. How could you make your inner self less visible the way a tree does?

You could, for example, cut out leaf shapes from the paper bag and glue them on the branches. Consider gluing just a part of them, so you could peek beneath the leaves.

You can choose to hide your roots by folding the bottom of the paper up and making solid ground beneath the tree. If you do this, take out your art supplies again and show us what is happening on the ground around your tree.

Keep this piece of artwork to remind you to keep finding people and things that "feed you" or make you healthy and happy, growing taller and more beautiful under the blue sky.

BE A TREE! : STEM Connections & Lesson Plans



ROOT YOUR READ ALOUD: Talking Points

The picture book **Be a Tree!** makes comparisons between trees and the human body and human behavior. Award-winning STEM educator and school librarian Suzanne Costner provides us with talking points on human anatomy with ideas for educators to make STEM curriculum connections. Each section leads with a **quote** from the book followed by *talking points* and **resources**.

"Stretch your branches to the sun." —BE A TREE!

The upper divisions of a tree's trunk and a human's arms and legs are referred to as limbs.

A tree's limbs stretch toward the sun searching for light to power the tree's growth. What do humans use their limbs to reach for?

A tree's limbs might hold leaves or bird nests or other objects. What do humans hold with their limbs?

Resource: [What Kind of Tree Are You?](#) (Source: Enchanted Walkabouts)

This blog post opens with a discussion comparing the human body to a tree. The language might help you make further connections between human anatomy and trees.

BE A TREE! : STEM Connections & Lesson Plans

"Let your roots curl, coil in the soil to ground you." —BE A TREE!

Tree roots reach into the soil and collect water and nutrients, as well as anchoring the tree in place and helping the tree to balance. Legs and feet help humans to balance. What else affects that balance?

Resource: [Balance Practice for Kids](#) (The Inspired Treehouse)

This blog post explains the importance of balance, how balance works in the human body, and offers three short video clips of activities to explore balance.

"Your spine is a trunk, giving you shape, holding your crown, channeling your food." —BE A TREE!

The central portion of a tree and the center of the human body are called the trunk. In what ways do they work in the same way? How are they different?

Resource: [Me as a Tree](#) (Source: University of Wisconsin)

In this lesson, students learn how trees and humans are similar. Students use comparisons between humans and trees to understand a tree's functions, life stages, role in the forest community, and that they compete for basic needs.

"Your skin is bark: dead on the outside, protecting what's within."
—BE A TREE!

Run one hand over the skin on the other hand. Does it feel like bark? What other connections between skin and bark could the author be making?

Resources: [Tree Bark](#) (Source: Tree for Life) and [Your Skin](#) (Source: KidsHealth)

Use these two websites or books in the library to compare the functions of bark and skin.

"Beneath your bark are layers..." —BE A TREE!

What are the layers beneath the bark of a tree? Which layers carry nutrients? Which provide support?

What are the layers beneath human skin? Which layers carry nutrients? Which provide support?

Resources: [Trees](#) (Source: Kidzone) and [Your Skin](#) (Source: KidsHealth)

BE A TREE! : STEM Connections & Lesson Plans

"In your heart's center is your pith..." —BE A TREE!

Place your hand over your heart. If you were a tree, this would be your pith. If your heart is designed to send blood throughout your body, what role does the pith play in a tree's initial growth and development?

Resource: [Plant Plumbing Is More Human than Once Thought](#) (Source: University of Utah)
This background article covers the concept "that plants and animals have reached the same solution for moving fluid most efficiently despite their radically different vascular systems."

Resource: [Human Heart and Circulatory System](#) (Source: KidsHealth)

"And now, look around you— you are not alone." —BE A TREE!

Just like humans, trees often exist in communities. Like us, trees both communicate with their neighbors and help their neighbors. What way could one tree help another?

Resource: [Do Trees Talk to Each Other?](#) (Source: *Smithsonian Magazine*)
This article is about the work of Peter Wohlleben, author of **The Hidden Life of Trees**. Note there is a young reader's edition of his book that classes could use as a companion text.

Resource: [The Wood Wide Web](#) (Source: BBC)
This video demonstrates how trees "secretly talk to each other."

Other Helpful Resources

[How the Body Works](#) (Source: KidsHealth)
This resource includes quizzes, articles, videos, and activities.

[The Body and Medicines](#) (Source: The Children's University of Manchester)
This site requires Adobe Flash Player.

[Human Body](#) (Source: DK findout!)
This resource includes facts, photographs, diagrams, and videos.

[Human Body](#) (Source: Scholastic StudyJams!)
This resource includes videos, slideshows, and quizzes.

BE A TREE! : STEM Connections & Lesson Plans

TREE STEM(S): Recommended Lesson Plans

With its deeply engaging language and art, **Be a Tree!** invites us to dig into STEM curriculum. Award-winning STEM educator and school librarian Suzanne Costner shares her favorite pre-existing tree lesson plans and resources.

Elementary School

[Family Activity: Tree Lifecycle](#) (Grades K-2)

In this activity, children will discover that trees have a lifecycle that is similar to that of other living things. (Source: Project Learning Tree)

[Thank You, Trees!](#) (Grades K-2)

One way to start a discussion with your students about the importance of trees is to center the conversation on the importance of trees in their own lives. Use these [conversation starters](#) to help guide students through the Backyard Mission. (Source: PBS Kids)

[To Be a Tree](#) (Grades 2-3)

Students review the three main parts of a tree that are used in identification, and then play a game and act out how a tree meets its basic needs. (Source: University of Wisconsin)

[Learning About Biology](#) (Grades 3-5)

In this activity, children will discover that plants “breathe,” i.e. release oxygen as a byproduct of photosynthesis. (Source: Discover the Forest)

[Let's Start Growing](#) (Grades 3-5)

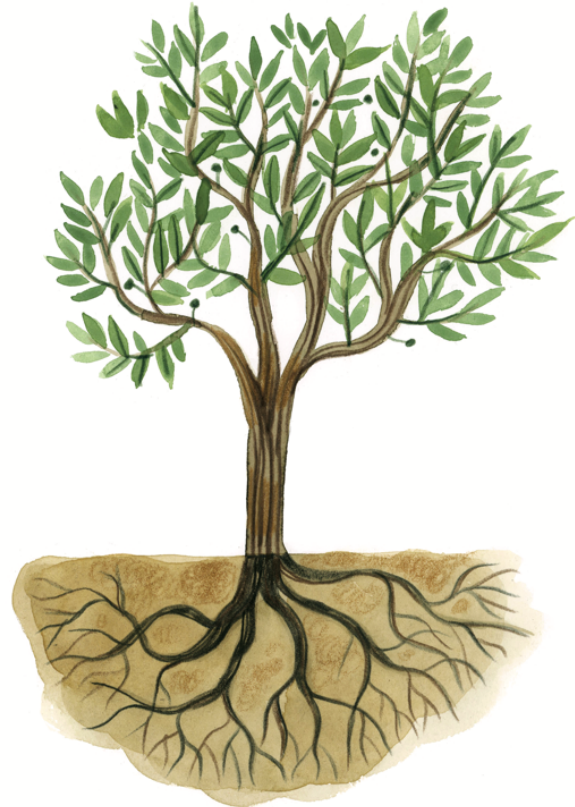
In this lesson, students will understand the growing requirements of a tree. The activity invites students to grow a tree from seed. (Source: Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences)

[Tree Detectives](#) (Grades 3-5)

Participants practice observation skills and apply them to identifying trees in their neighborhood. (Source: National Wildlife Federation)

[Tree Growth](#) (Grades 3-5)

In this lesson, students identify tree layers. The students will understand that a tree expands in height and diameter. The students will list conditions that affect tree growth. The students will apply their knowledge of tree growth to their own lives. (Source: Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences)



BE A TREE! : STEM Connections & Lesson Plans

[Me as a Tree](#) (Grades 5-6)

In this lesson, students learn how trees and humans are similar. Students use comparisons between humans and trees to understand a tree's functions, life stages, role in the forest community, and competition for basic needs. (Source: University of Wisconsin)

Middle School

[Made in the Shade](#) (Grades 5+)

This is a great activity to educate your students about the cooling effect of shade. The lesson plan measures the temperature difference between shaded and non-shaded areas.

(Source: Education.com)

[Tree Cookies](#) (Grades 5-8)

In this lesson, students will trace environmental and historical changes using a cross section of a tree, or "tree cookie." (Source: Project Learning Tree)

[Urban Trees](#) (Grades 6-8)

In this lesson, students will learn about how trees are an essential part of our lives with a focus on the role they play in urban areas, including energy considerations.

(Source: The Nature Conservancy)

High School

[Exploring Tree Rings](#) (Grades 9-12)

In this lesson, students discover they can learn about the history of a tree by examining its rings. (Source: KidsGradenig.org)

[Focus on Forests](#) (Grades 9-12)

This collection of student activities provides an opportunity for hands-on study of forest resources while addressing concepts in biology, civics, ecology, economics, forest management, and other subject areas. (Source: Project Learning Tree)

Other Helpful Resources

[Carly's Kids Corner](#) (Source: Arbor Day Foundation)

This resource includes digital games and resources and printable activity sheets.

[Tree Toolkit: Lessons and Educator Resources for Teaching About Trees](#)

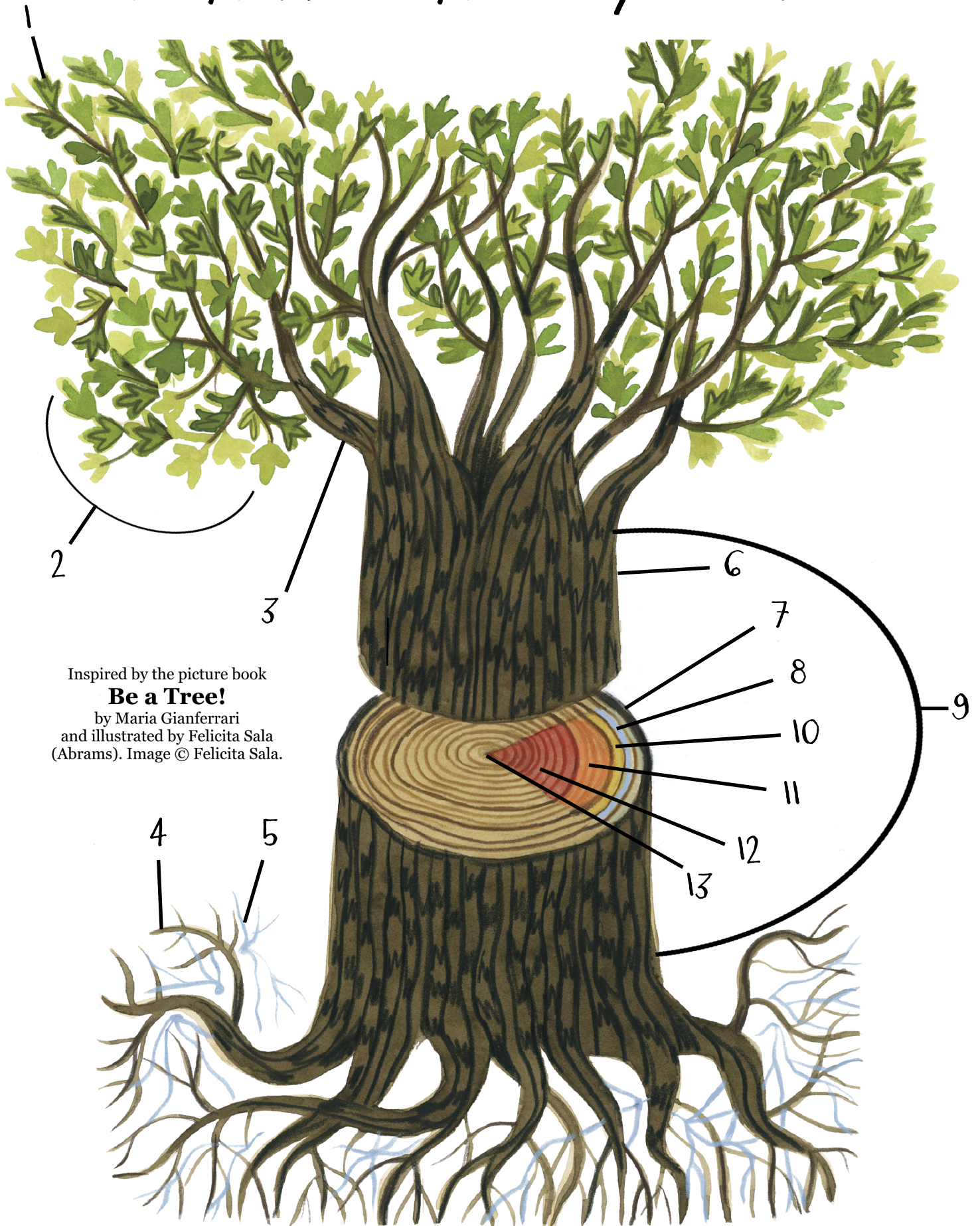
(Source: The National Environmental Education Foundation)

These extensive resources demonstrate how trees are vital to the health of not only all forest ecosystems, but the health of the entire planet.

[Project Learning Tree](#)

This resource offers curriculum you can purchase, but also offers some strong free activities.

BE A TREE!: Anatomy of a Tree



Inspired by the picture book
Be a Tree!
by Maria Gianferrari
and illustrated by Felicita Sala
(Abrams). Image © Felicita Sala.

BE A TREE!: Anatomy of a Tree

Can you name the parts of a tree marked by numbers on the previous page? Check your STEM memory in the back of the picture book **Be a Tree!**.

Flip the paper over and write about the part of the tree you find the most interesting!

1		8	
2		9	
3		10	
4		11	
5		12	
6		13	
7		We're rooting for you!	

BE A TREE!: Grow Your STEM-pathy



"So, be a tree. For together, we are a forest." —BE A TREE!

Did you feel a connection to trees as you explored the picture book **Be a Tree!**? Both the science and the beauty of this book might have grown your STEM-pathy. What is STEM-pathy?

Following your curiosity to discover the scientific details about trees and fungi and their impact (STEM) + feeling connected to another living being (empathy) = STEM-pathy.

STEM-pathy can help you learn and act for the benefit of the natural world and, thus, for all of us. Do you have STEM-pathy for trees? Author Maria Gianferrari offers us these ideas to help us act on your STEM-pathy. Use any of these or imagine some of your own.

FIVE WAYS TO HELP SAVE TREES

- 1) Recycle all paper products, and use fewer by:
 - Choosing cloth towels, napkins, and handkerchiefs instead of paper ones
 - Selecting recycled paper products wherever possible
 - Bringing a lunchbox instead of paper or plastic bags
 - Using cloth shopping bags rather than paper or plastic bags
- 2) Plant native trees and help preserve mature trees in your community.
- 3) Stage a community cleanup



Inspired by the picture book **Be a Tree!** by Maria Gianferrari and illustrated by Felicita Sala (Abrams). Images © Felicita Sala. #beatreepb

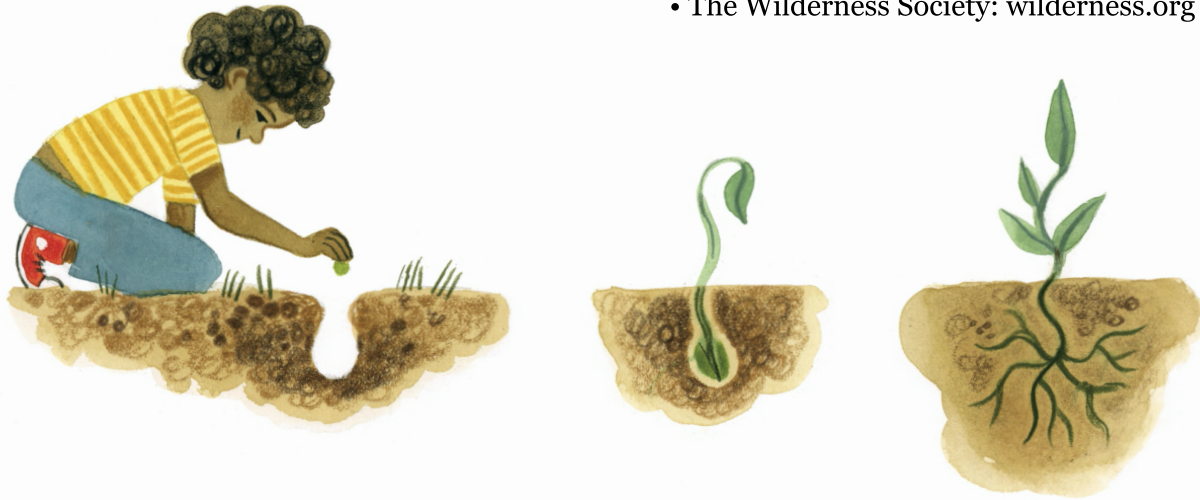
BE A TREE!: Grow Your STEM-pathy

FIVE WAYS TO HELP SAVE TREES (cont.)

4) Celebrate Arbor Day: arborday.org/celebrate

5) Host a fundraiser like a bake sale and donate the proceeds to an environmental organization. Here are some suggestions:

- Friends of the Earth International: foei.org
- The Nature Conservancy: nature.org
- Sierra Club: sierraclub.org
- The National Wildlife Federation: nwf.org
- The Wilderness Society: wilderness.org



BE THE FOREST: HOW TO HELP IN YOUR COMMUNITY

If you agree that "together, we are a forest," then your STEM-pathy (or simply empathy) can extend to your full community. Here are some ways you can build a forest of kind acts that supports your fellow humans.

- Visit with "grandfriends," residents at your local nursing home
- Set up a buddy system with the special needs program at your school
- Make care kits for homeless shelter residents including diapers, combs, toothbrushes, shampoo, razors, books, and other supplies
- Volunteer at your local animal shelter, or read to shelter dogs and cats
- Stage a supply drive for food, treats, toys, towels, and blankets for your local animal shelter
- Send cards to soldiers serving overseas
- Plant native flowers in your garden and neighborhood to attract birds, bees, and butterflies

What other ways can you be like a tree in your community?

BE A TREE!: Outdoor Story Time



The picture book **Be a Tree!** cries out to be read under a tree. Jennifer Beach, a public librarian and Certified Professional Environmental Educator, offers some ideas to take this Story Time outdoors.

SPREAD THE NEWS

You will find an editable poster and a social media image to help you share your event in person or on the wood wide web.

GROUND YOUR READERS

Before you read aloud, ground your readers in the outdoor space with a mindfulness exercise. For example:

Let's sit on the ground cross-legged and pretend we are trees planted on this spot. Touch the ground on either side of you. Feel yourself connected to the earth. Imagine you have roots stretching down into the earth ready to drink water from the soil. Breathe deeply to draw the water from the soil into your roots up your trunk and into your branches. Raise your head and arms and feel the water making its way to your leaves. Feel the sun shining on you and the wind in your branches. Breathe deeply. Be a tree.

There is also a full spread-by-spread movement and mindfulness activity available at CuriousCityDPW.com.

SING TO THE TREETOPS

If you want to send your voices into the treetops, turn the page for singalong sheets that twinkle.

CREATE A WOOD WIDE WEB

After the reading, discuss the "wood wide web" or the interconnectedness of trees. Grab a ball of yarn and sit your readers on the ground in a circle. You, as the "mother tree," can take the end of the yarn and roll the ball to the "young trees." Compliment the tree as you roll the ball toward them. For example, "you have lovely green leaves." That tree will then hold onto the yarn and roll the ball to another tree, sending a compliment with it. Continue until all trees have received and rolled the yarn at least two times. You will have created a web of yarn strands and support between trees!

CROWN THE TREE

Make leaf rubbings with your readers using leaves collected from the ground or leaf rubbing plates. Explore with them how the leaves are similar and how they are different.

Invite them to cut out the leaf rubbings to make paper leaves. Attach them to a crown template to make a tree's crown of leaves. Have them reach their proud crown towards the sky!

For bark rubbings, have readers hold a piece of paper flat against the bark of a tree and rub the side of a crayon over the paper. Make collage tree art with bark and leaf rubbings.

BE A TREE!

Sing to the tune of *Twinkle,
Twinkle Little Star*



Growing, growing, little tree
in a forest, you with me
Heartwood, sapwood, cambium
inner, outer bark- all one
Roots reach down and crowns grow high
leaves on branches reach the sky

Be a tree! Be tall and strong!
Share your shade and sing along:
Crown above and roots below
photosynthesis to grow
growing, growing, little tree
in the forest, you with me

Inspired by the picture book **Be a Tree!** by Maria Gianferrari and
illustrated by Felicita Sala (Abrams). Images © Felicita Sala. #beatreepb

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BE A TREE! STORY TIME

With the picture book BE A TREE! by Maria Gianferrari and illustrated by Felicity Sala (Abrams)

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness



The picture book **Be a Tree!** invites the reader to embody a tree. Yoga often uses the symbolism of trees and being rooted to the earth as the basis for movement and practice.

Yoga instructor and middle grade novelist Lori Snyder offers movement and mindfulness prompts to accompany each page. Bring movement to your read aloud or carry the book into physical education classes.

Each section leads with a [quote](#) from the book followed by *talking points*.

"Be a tree! Stand tall..." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Wherever you are right now, freeze like you're a tree planted in the ground. Stretch your arms as high as you can. Don't move your feet! You're a tree! Then let your arms relax.

"Let your roots curl, coil in the soil to ground you." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Curl your toes a few times, like roots growing into the ground. Feel your feet connect with the floor.

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness

"Your spine is a trunk, giving you shape..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1

Without moving your feet, twist side to side. Feel how your spine lets you move!

Then bend forward. Can you touch your knees? Your toes?

Stand up and bend backward. Can you feel your spine bend?

GRADES 2-3

Without moving your feet, twist side to side. Feel how your spine lets you move!

Then bend forward. Can you touch your knees? Your toes?

Stand up and bend backward. Can you feel your spine bend?

Grow yourself and your spine as tall as you can. Then have a friend balance a paperback book on your head. Can you hold it there?

GRADES 4-5

Without moving your feet, twist side to side. Feel how your spine lets you move!

Then bend forward. Can you touch your knees? Your toes?

Stand up and bend backward. Can you feel your spine bend?

Close your eyes. Imagine you can feel your spine/trunk holding up your crown/head. Grow taller. Then grow shorter. Take a few different shapes, seeing if you can feel your spine moving each time.

"Your skin is bark...protecting what's within." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Put one hand on your belly. Breathe in. Can you feel the skin of your belly expand? Do this a few times.

GRADES 4-5

Grow really still. Close your eyes if you like. Then, breathe in deeply. Can you feel the skin of your ribcage or belly expand when you breathe? Now exhale. Can you feel the skin of your ribcage or belly move back in?

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness

"Beneath your bark are layers..." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Crouch down and pretend you can scoop up nutrients from the ground. Breathe in. Then, with a big WHOOOSH of breath, stand up like you are lifting those nutrients up!

Imagine you are getting stronger. Stand like a strong, tall tree.

Put your hands on your hips and take one big breath in and out.

"In your heart's center is your pith..." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Put your hand on your heart. Can you feel it beating? Count ten of your own heartbeats.

Now, move around the room or jump up and down ten times. Then try this again. What happens to your heartbeat?

Imagine you could see your heart pumping nutrients through your body. Feel yourself get stronger.

"High above, your crown may be round..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Breathe in and lift your arms overhead. Let them make a shape, any shape you want.

This position/action is continued on the next page.

GRADES 4-5

Plant your feet wide like the reaching roots of a tree. Then breathe in and lift your arms overhead. Make a shape with your arms and hold it for three counts.

Make a different shape and hold it again for three counts. Do this one more time. Notice how the different shapes feel on your shoulders and arms. Which do you like best?

This position/action is continued on the next page.

"Wave your leaves in the wind, breathe in air..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Now wave your arms in the air like they are tree branches in the wind. Wiggle your fingers like leaves drinking in sun.

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness

GRADES 4-5

Take your favorite of the last three shapes you made and then open your hands like you are drinking in sun. Imagine your whole self getting warm. How does it feel?

"See yourself, branches and leaves above..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Let's stand in tree pose! Put your hands on your hips, and then lift one foot up and balance on your other foot. You're a tree! Now try the other side.

GRADES 4-5

Let's stand in tree pose! Plant one foot firmly on the ground and lift the other foot up, so you're balancing on one foot. Bend the knee of the lifted leg and put the bottom of your foot against your standing leg, either above or below the knee (but not on the kneecap!) Lift your arms high like branches.

Can you balance? Maybe you sway like a tree in the wind. Now try the other side.

"And now, look around you—you are not alone..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Look around at the other people (trees) in the room with you. Use your body to say hello without speaking--can you wave? Smile? How else can you say hello?

GRADES 4-5

Look around at the other people (trees) in the room with you. Use your body to say hello without speaking--can you wave? Smile? How else can you say hello?

Now, sitting or standing, with your eyes open or closed, imagine that there is a web connecting you to everyone else you know. Now imagine that each of those people is also connected to everyone they know...and so on and so on. Imagine yourself as one point in this vast network of connection.

Now, move around the room slowly, and notice in your mind's eye how the web moves with you, how it's always there to help support you no matter where you go. And then, see if you can notice that every single point in this web is important, and every single point is needed.

Notice that YOU are an important part of this web, and that all you have to do to hold up your spot is just be who you are.

Notice how that is true for everyone.

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness

"Our roots twine with fungi, joining all trees..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Turn to look at one of the other trees in your forest with you (one of the other people in the room).

This position/action is continued on the next page.

GRADES 4-5

Turn to look at either one of the other trees (people) in the forest with you, or make a circle with everyone else in the room or on the screen.

This position/action is continued on the next page.

"A wood wide web of information." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Inhale and hold out your arms toward the other tree like you're giving them food. Then exhale and drop your arms.

Turn to another tree in your forest. This time, inhale and hold your arms out like you're giving them water. Then exhale and drop your arms.

GRADES 4-5

In the circle, or while facing one other tree (person) either online or in person, inhale and lift your arms overhead. Imagine you are gathering information from the world around you. Exhale and bring your arms down.

Then inhale and open your arms wide to your sides. Imagine you are passing this information to the other trees around you.

Then, exhale and draw your arms into your body. Imagine you are receiving information from the other trees around you. Repeat 3-5 times.

"We purify the air. We anchor the soil..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Take a big, deep breath in. Imagine you are a tree that can purify that air inside your own body, and then breathe out pure, clean air. Do this two more times.

Now, imagine you have roots growing out of one of your feet, anchoring you into the ground so you can't fall. Lift up your other foot and see if your roots help you balance. Then try the same thing on your other foot.

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness

GRADES 4-5

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Now, imagine you have roots growing out of one of your feet, anchoring you into the ground so you can't fall. Lift up your other foot and see if your roots help you balance. Then try the same thing on your other foot.

There's a mindfulness practice where you breathe in any bad feelings around you, turn them into good feelings inside of you (like love or kindness) and then breathe out those good feelings. The next time you or someone you know feels angry or sad or frightened, you can try this. Or, try this for yourself or someone you know who doesn't feel happy right now. Just like trees purify the air inside of themselves, you can practice purifying feelings inside of you.

"Our dome of joined crowns, swings..." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Lie down on the floor and reach your legs into the air. Pretend your legs are the crown of your tree. Let your legs swing and straighten in the wind (but be careful not to hit anyone)!

This position/action is continued on the next page.

"Our bodies and branches and roots are homes..." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Flip over onto your stomach and come up onto your hands and knees. Pretend you're a squirrel that lives in a tree, eating an acorn. Can you sit up on your knees like a squirrel? Or swing your tail?

Now sit down on the ground and bring the soles of your feet together so your knees are out to the sides. Pretend you're a butterfly flitting between trees, and flap your knees like wings!

Be a snake in the tree! Come onto your stomach and bring your hands next to your ribcage. Press into your hands and lift your spine up like a snake!

"Immigrant trees away from native habitats..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Imagine how it would feel if there were no other trees around you. Curl up in a little ball. Then, imagine there are trees all around you who want to help you! Jump up with joy and stand tall and strong. Put your hands on your hips and plant your feet like the tallest tree of all!

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness

GRADES 4-5

Think of a time you felt alone, like an immigrant tree in a strange place. Stand or walk around the room like you feel all alone. Now, imagine you have come to a place filled with other trees who want to help you. See if you can feel their kindness being directed at you. See if you can feel how worthy and cared for you are.

Change your posture to reflect feeling strong and powerful. Then jump with joy that there are so many of you who all care for each other.

Put your hands on your hips and plant your feet like the tallest tree of all!

"Mother trees nurse young trees..." —BE A TREE!

GRADES K-1 & 2-3

Stretch out your arms like branches. Move them like you're giving shade to the new little trees around you that need help. Stand like a strong tree sheltering weaker trees.

GRADES 4-5

Stretch out your arms like branches. Move them like you're giving shade to the new little trees around you that need help. Stand like a strong tree sheltering weaker trees.

Now, think of someone you know who might need a little sheltering right now. Maybe this is a friend or a sibling, or someone you don't know but have heard about. Imagine you can protect them and give them whatever they need: strength, love, courage, or anything else.

How does it feel to send this to another person? Stand in the way it makes you feel.

"A family, a community, a country, a cosmos..." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Lie down on the floor again and make your body into the shape of a star, stretching out your arms and legs. Take up a lot of space, because there is enough for everyone!

So, be a tree.

Jump up to your feet again! Take up as much space as you can without moving! There is plenty for everyone!

Then, stand like a tree!

BE A TREE!: Movement & Mindfulness

"So, be a tree. For together, we are a forest." —BE A TREE!

ALL GRADES

Take a deep breath in, and at the same time, open your arms wide like you are hugging the whole forest.

Then exhale, and at the same time wrap your arms around yourself like a hug.

Do this two more times: inhale and open your arms to hug the whole forest; exhale and wrap your arms around yourself.

Then, sit down cross-legged.

Imagine there are trees who love you all around you. Take a deep breath in and out and see if you can feel how much they love you.

Then imagine you are sending your love out to those trees. Take a deep breath in and out and send your love out to all the other trees around you!

Imagine you are part of the most wonderful forest in the world, and in your imagination promise to protect and love all the other trees.

When you are done, stretch your arms slowly to the sun one more time.

Now, continue your day thinking about what trees give you and what you can give the trees.

