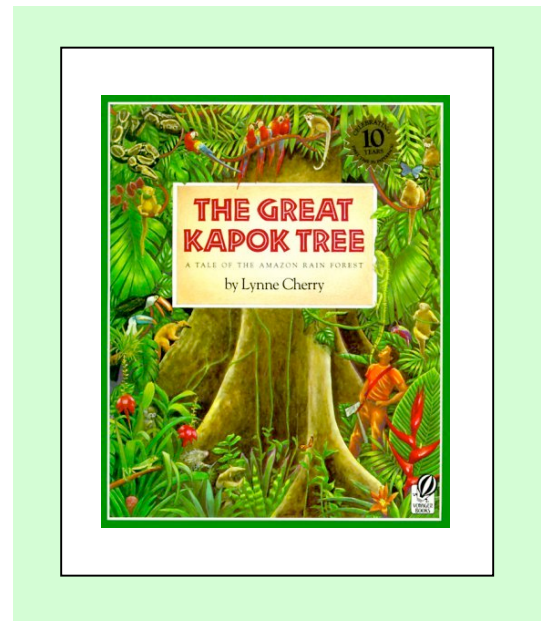


The Great Kapok Tree

Written by Lynne Cherry
Illustrated by Lynne Cherry

Published: 1990 ISBN: 978-0-15-200520-7 Length: 30 pages

Genre: Narrative
Subjects: Reading, Writing and Science
Educational Themes: Conservation, Ecosystems, Persuasion



SUMMARY

A young man is hired to cut down a Kapok Tree that is part of a large ecosystem of animals and people. As he naps on the job, several animals and a young boy visit him and whisper in his ear the significance the tree has in their lives. After hearing testimony after testimony the young man and the reader realize that cutting down one tree can make a significant impact on the environment. Upon waking the man decides not to cut down the tree.

What's Inside

6-Traits

Writer's Craft

Habits of Mind

Hawaiian Value

General Learner Outcomes

6-TRAIT

IDEA: The story tells a tale of the interconnectedness of its characters.

ORGANIZATION: The conclusion of Cherry's story is a prime example of a strong and satisfying ending.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: Students studying dialogue can look to this book as a model of persuasive arguments.

WRITER'S CRAFT

PERSPECTIVE: The author tells the story from the perspective of the animals and indirectly from the perspective of the tree.

CAUSE AND EFFECT: The characters point out the effect cutting down the Kapok tree would have on the entire ecosystem.

HABITS OF MIND

REMAINING OPEN TO CONTINUOUS LEARNING: Fortunately for the animals and the tree, the young man was open to hearing new perspectives about the importance of the Kapok tree.

LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING WITH EMPATHY: In order for the animals to persuade the young man and the reader to not cut down the tree, they must employ this habit of mind.

Book Reviewer: A. Menendez

Date Reviewed: July 13, 2009

HAWAIIAN VALUE

MĀLAMA (Attend): It is imperative to care for our environment. This story urges the reader to look more closely at how one action can have many repercussions.

HO‘OMAU (Preservation): The reader gains insight to the importance of conservation and preservation in this cause and effect story.

LŌKAHI (Unity): The characters in the story, predators and prey alike, join forces to advocate for the tree that sustains them.

GENERAL LEARNER OUTCOMES

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR: The characters work together to persuade the young man to spare their home.

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AND NOTICE...

- Interdependence of the plants animals, and people of the forest.
- The animals' arguments were convincing.
- People can make a large impact on an ecosystem and often be unaware of this.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Compare and contrast: How is this forest like our own rain forests? How is it different?
- At what point in the story do you think the man decided not to cut down the tree?
- Can you connect this story to current events that are affecting the forests of Hawai‘i?

Other Related Books

The Lorax by Dr. Seuss

Beyond ‘Ohia Valley by Lisa Matsumoto

POSSIBLE CONNECTIONS AND ACTIVITIES...

- Flow Map: Students can organize the story sequentially using a flow map to retell the story.
- Persuasive Writing: Students can write persuasive pieces directed to the young man, adding in their own perspective and drawing from the arguments of the animals.
- Informative Writing: Students can write an All About piece using information they have learned from the story.