

# 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](http://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

# 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

# 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

# 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



# BE A TREE! STORY TIME

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