

# The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



## The Tree In Me

Written and illustrated by  
Corinna Luyken

Preschool edition

### Overview of Book

A group of children relish in the discoveries that are a tree in all the glory that a tree is on its own, and in the whole, beautiful outdoor environment. This helps them see how they and the tree are connected in the amazing world.

Genre: Picture Book

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *The Tree In Me* to introduce in your classroom:

shade	roots
bark	blossom
stump	crown

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

### Connecting with the HighScope Curriculum

COR Advantage 1.5

Social And Emotional  
Development  
Item D (*Emotions*)  
Item F (*Building relationships  
with other children*)

Science and Technology  
Item BB (*Observing and  
classifying*)  
Item DD (*Natural and  
physical world*)

Social Studies  
Item FF (*Knowledge of self  
and others*)

### Reading Tips

Read this slowly and deliberately, with hushed excitement. Stop to ask the group, "What are the children doing here?" Talk about how the children in the story play, relax, think and wonder under the trees. Ask, "What do you all think that would be like?" Refer to pages in the story and ask, "What did the tree give the children?" Take time to encourage children's ideas and thoughts.

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

### Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Sway like trees during classroom **transitions**.

Use real, pretend or pictures of fruits to sort by “tree or not tree fruit” at **Small Group Time**. As a follow up, have a tasting of the fruits mentioned in the book.

Bring blank paper and chunky crayons along at **Outside Time** to make tree bark rubbings and to discover other textures outside.

### Around the Room

Highlight the book’s content and build on the children’s excitement in a variety of locations.

Place other related books in the **Book Area**. Examples include [As An Oak Tree Grows](#) by G. Brian Karas and [A Tree Is Nice](#) by Janice May Udry.

Place photos of seedlings and grown trees in the **House Area** for children to compare baby and grown trees.

Have a collection in the **Toy Area** of various pinecones, acorns, leaves and needles from a range of local trees for children to examine for similarities.

### Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one “right” answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *The Tree In Me*:

If you joined the children in the story, what would you do first?

What is your favorite thing to do outside?

If you could climb a tree and spend all day there, what would you bring?

*For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact*  
**The Family Connection:**

website—  
[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

Facebook—  
[@famconnsjc](https://www.facebook.com/famconnsjc)

phone—  
574-237-9740

### @ Home

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *The Tree In Me* with their child. Here’s a sample message you can send:

While reading this story with your child, linger on the pages and ask your child questions like, “Do you have the sun in you? Do you have wind and sky in you?” Talk openly about the connection people trees, sky, wind and sunlight have to one another and the beauty that is all around us, though sometimes we must look to find it. Adopt a tree in your yard or by the street that you and your child can touch, sit under for a story and notice how it changes all through the year. Ask, “Which tree should be our tree?” Together, watch who comes to the tree- what types of birds share the tree’s shade and leaves? Purposefully read this book under the tree you and your child “adopt”. Have it be a place to listen, look and feel the outdoors together- you, your child and the tree.