

The
Early Years Count
Literacy
Connection



**This Is The Tree
We Planted**

Written by Kate McMullan
Illustrated by Alison Friend

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

A group of very little children plant a tree. As the tree grows, it creates a life of its own. As the children grow, they never forget their tree and watch it with awe and wonder.

Genre: Picture

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *This Is The Tree We Planted* to introduce in your classroom:

dale thrashing
frail silken

Word list at end of the story

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 F
(Building relationships with
other children)

Mathematics Item T
(Geometry)

Language, Literacy and
Communication Item N
(Phonological awareness)

Science & Technology
Item BB
(Observing and classifying)

Reading Tips

Ask the children, "Has anyone ever planted a tree?" Listen to responses. Tell them there are many children in this story who help plant the tree. Let the children know that this story has a lot of repeats! Have them help you read as they listen for the pattern, and learn the lines. Pause whenever a rhyme is coming up to see how the children can fill it in to help make sense in the story. Talk about the animals the tree in the story attracts. Ask questions like, "Why does the Robin choose to make her nest in this tree?"

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.

Use Legos at **Small Group Time**. Encourage children to explain with preposition and direction terms how they are using or building with them. Tie it back to the story. Say, "I have my red brick *by* this blue brick that is *inside* this yellow brick shape I made."

Use the word list from the book to encourage creation of rhymes at **Greeting Time**. Start a big list to use as often as possible.

Around the Room

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

Add other related Imagination Library books to the **Book Area**. Look for "As An Oak Tree Grows" by G. Brian Karas and "Owl Moon" by Jane Yolen.

Post photos of the animals mentioned in the story. Label them and encourage children to refer to them as they look at the book.

At **Outside Time**, notice any and all trees and make observations. How big/old is the tree? Who lives in or near? Why?

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 *This Is The Tree We Planted*:

Why do you think so many different animals live in the tree?

Why did the Jays zoom over to scare the Hawk?

What do you think it would be like to live in a tree?

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

website—
www.famconn.org

Facebook—
@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 *This Is The Tree We Planted* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

As you read *This Is The Tree We Planted*, notice with your child how the story builds on each page, repeating the lines as the story progresses. Take special notice of the rhymes. Look out windows in your home and see what trees are in view. Pick one to "adopt", to observe over time. Return to the story and the animals that use the tree as shelter, a rest stop and food. Start a list of critters you see using "your" tree. The children in the story are really little when they help plant the tree. Ask your child to help explain the changes in both. The tree also changes colors. Why is that?