

The Tree



The Tree

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Adapted from a story
by Lynne Cherry

Images by Kate Pedley, MBANJI Bawe Ernest + Susan Rose.

English
United Kingdom

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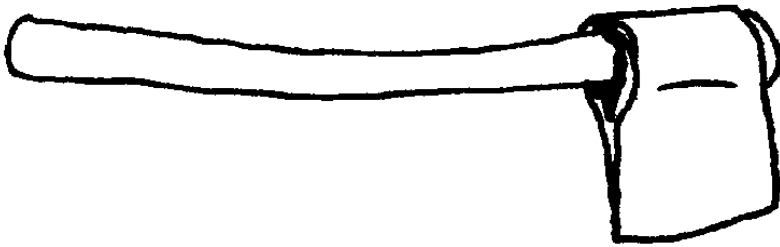
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This book is part of the SIL Cameroon Branch Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education 5th year reading curriculum.

The Tree

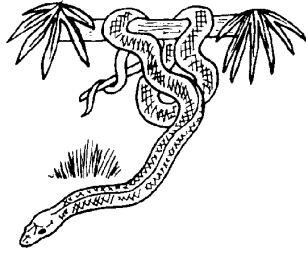


A man walked into the tropical rainforest. The forest had been alive with the sounds of squawking birds and howling monkeys, but now all was quiet as the animals watched the man and wondered why he had come.



The man took the axe he carried and struck the trunk of the tree. Thud! Thud! Thud! The sounds of the blows rang through the forest. Thud! Thud! Thud! The man wiped off the sweat that ran down his face and neck. Thud! Thud! Thud!

Soon the man grew tired. He sat down to rest at the foot of the tree. Before he knew it, the heat and the hum of the forest had sent him to sleep.



A snake lived in the tree. He slowly slithered down its trunk to where the man was sleeping. He looked at the gash the axe had made in the tree. Then the snake slid very close to the man and hissed in his ear: “This tree is my home, where generations of my ancestors have lived. Do not chop it down.”



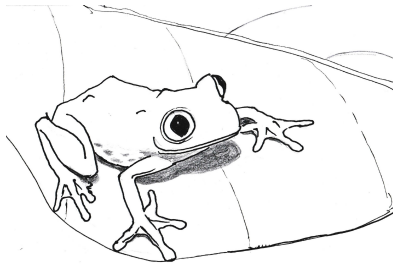
A bee buzzed in the sleeping man’s ear: “My hive is in this tree, and I fly from tree to tree and flower to flower collecting pollen. In this way I pollinate the trees and flowers throughout the rainforest. You see, all the living things depend on one another.”



A monkey scampered down from the canopy of the tree. She chattered to the sleeping man: “Do you know what we animals and humans need in order to live? Oxygen! And, do you know what trees produce? Oxygen! If you cut down the forests you will destroy the trees which gives us all life.”



A parrot flew down from the canopy. “My nest is in this tree,” squawked the parrot, “My five chicks, need their nest for 28 days while we feed them.”

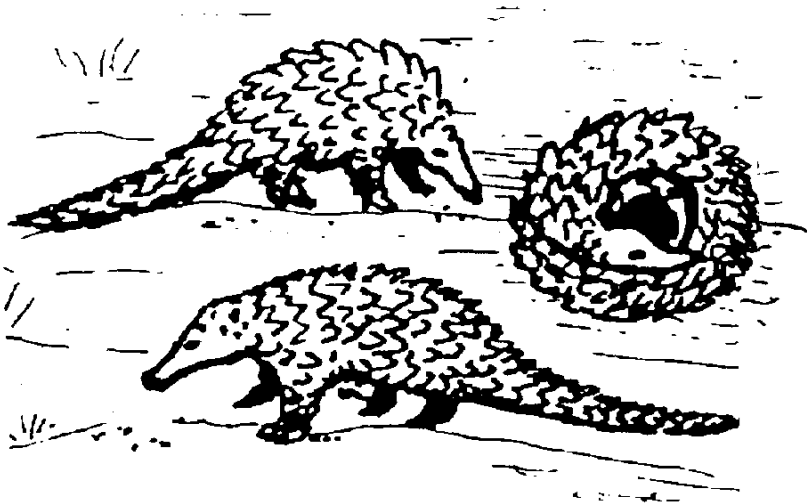


A tree frog crawled along the edge of a leaf. In a squeaky voice he piped in the man’s ear: “A ruined rain forest means ruined lives ... many ruined lives. You will leave many of us homeless if you chop down this great tree.”

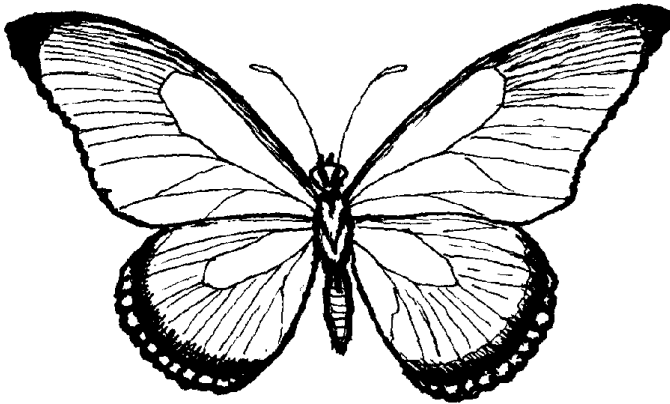


A honey badger walked along a branch in the middle of the tree until he reached the man. He growled in the man's ear: "The tree is home to many birds and animals. If you cut it down, where will I find my dinner?"

A pangolin climbed down the tree with her young clinging to her back. She whispered to the man: “You are chopping down this tree with no thought for the future. And surely you know that what happens tomorrow depends upon what you do today. You are not thinking of our children who tomorrow must live in a world without trees.”



A butterfly fluttered down from the canopy and over to the sleeping man, she spoke in her quiet voice: “How much is beauty worth? Can you live without it? If you destroy the beauty of the rainforest, on what would you feast your eyes?”



The man awoke with a start. Before him and all around him, staring, were creatures who depended upon the tree. But he heard no sound, for the creatures were strangely silent.

The man stood and picked up his axe. He swung back his arm as though to strike the tree. Suddenly he stopped. He turned and looked at the animals. He hesitated. Then he walked out of the rainforest.



Text in English: The Tree - A man walked into the tropical rainforest. The forest had been alive with the sounds of squawking birds and howling monkeys, but now all was quiet as the animals watched the man and wondered why he had come. The man took the axe he carried and struck the trunk of the tree. Thud! Thud! Thud! The sounds of the blows rang through the forest. Thud! Thud! Thud! The man wiped off the sweat that ran down his face and neck. Thud! Thud! Thud! Soon the man grew tired. He sat down to rest at the foot of the tree. Before he knew it, the heat and the hum of the forest had sent him to sleep. A snake lived in the tree. He slowly slithered down its trunk to where the man was sleeping. He looked at the gash the axe had made in the tree. Then the snake slid very close to the man and hissed in his ear: "This tree is my home, where generations of my ancestors have lived. Do not chop it down." A bee buzzed in the sleeping man's ear: "My hive is in this tree, and I fly from tree to tree and flower to flower collecting pollen. In this way I pollinate the trees and flowers throughout the rainforest. You see, all the living things depend on one another." A monkey scampered down from the canopy of the tree. She chattered to the sleeping man: "Do you know what we animals and humans need in order to live? Oxygen! And, do you know what trees produce? Oxygen! If you cut down the forests you will destroy the trees which gives us all life." A parrot flew down from the canopy. "My nest is in this tree," squawked the parrot, "My five chicks, need their nest for 28 days while we feed them." A tree frog crawled along the edge of a leaf. In a squeaky voice he piped in the man's ear: "A ruined rain forest means ruined lives ... many ruined lives. You will leave many of us homeless if you chop down this great tree." A honey badger walked along a branch in the middle of the tree until he reached the man.

He growled in the man's ear: "The tree is home to many birds and animals. If you cut it down, where will I find my dinner?" A pangolin climbed down the tree with her young clinging to her backs. She whispered to the man: "You are chopping down this tree with no thought for the future. And surely you know that what happens tomorrow depends upon what you do today. You are not thinking of our children who tomorrow must live in a world without trees." A butterfly fluttered down from the canopy and over to the sleeping man, she spoke in her quiet voice: "How much is beauty worth? Can you live without it? If you destroy the beauty of the rainforest, on what would you feast your eyes?" The man awoke with a start. Before him and all around him, staring, were creatures who depended upon the tree. But he heard no sound, for the creatures were strangely silent. The man stood and picked up his axe. He swung back his arm as though to strike the tree. Suddenly he stopped. He turned and looked at the animals. He hesitated. Then he walked out of the rainforest.

