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**This Guide Includes:**
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* the vocabulary list could be used as a student handout or made into a transparency
1. Language Arts Sunshine State Standards Connections Chart

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*Writing can be scored with an FCAT Six point Rubric

Consider introducing a sharing and editing component to the writing process and cover benchmarks relating to standard 3.4.3 or 4.3.4 as well!

2. Related PLT Activities

The activities listed below could be used to enhance “The Big Tree” lesson. All PLT activities are connected to the Sunshine State Standards and can be found on the Florida PLT website at http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/correlations/index.html.

#2 Get in Touch with Trees
#5 Poet-Tree
#13 We All Need Trees
#21 Adopt a Tree
#22 Trees as Habitats
#27 Every Tree for Itself
#30 Three Cheers for Trees
#31 Plant a Tree
#41 How Plants Grow
#61 The Closer You Look
#62 To be a Tree
#63 Tree Factory
#67 How Big is your Tree?
#68 Name that Tree
#76 Tree Cookies
#77 Trees in Trouble
#79 Tree Lifecycle
#89 Trees for Many Reasons

#12 Tree Treasures in 2005 and earlier additions of the PLT Activity Guide for PreK-8 Grade.
3. Preview
Guide students through a class discussion before reading the story. After looking at the cover of the book, develop a word web on the board or overhead with their ideas and thoughts about trees. What do they know about trees? What do they like or dislike about trees?

Ex.

4. Reading Discussion Questions
1. Why aren’t this tree’s leaves needed in the winter? When the ground is frozen, the leaves can’t bring water into the tree.
2. Where is northern New York State? How is the climate there different from here?
3. Why do leaves change color? They begin to die and the green color fades.
4. Pause after the second page and take time to discuss some predictions.
5. What do they think the story will be about of what happened to the tree before it got so big?
6. Ask what sorts of things happen in a tree’s life? What do they see happen to trees? Trees are trimmed, uprooted by hurricanes, develop cones or flowers.
7. Add some of the responses to the word web and then continue reading the story.
8. How big is a circle that is four feet thick? (diameter) Ask students to guess how big a circle is that is 4 feet across, and then to measure their circles. Have them stand together to create a circle that is 4 feet across.
9. What does this seed need before it can grow? Where does it need to land? Landing on soil, chilled by winter, warm sun, dampness
10. Name all the animals that lived in the ancient forest pictured on this page: deer, bald eagle, woodpecker, wolf, chipmunk. What other animals probably lived there? Squirrel, elk, bobcat, weasel, mink, owl.
11. What is a winged seed? What does the wing do? The wing is a part of the seed that helps it catch the wind and fly away, and whirl.
10. Why did the tree grow slowly at first? *It was shaded by big trees nearby. It couldn’t get enough sunlight.*

11. What happened that it allowed it to grow faster? A *big tree fell over in a storm; then it got more sunlight.*

12. Why did it grow faster than the seedlings in the shade? *It made more food energy because it was photosynthesizing in the sunlight.*

13. Where did the tree get its food? *It made it.*

14. What three things does the tree need to make food? *Sunlight, water, carbon dioxide from the air.*

15. What does the tree do with the energy it gets from this food? *It helps the tree grow, it is stored, and it becomes wood, more leaves, new roots, and bark.*

16. Why did the loggers clear the hillside? *To make a farm.*

17. Why was the tree not cut? *The owner wanted to put his house near the tree and keep the tree in his yard.*

18. What do you think the owner did with all the logs cut from the forest? *The logs were probably cut into boards to make homes and cities. Many trees were cut all over the eastern U.S. to build towns and cities. In Florida, most of the old large trees were cut in the early 1900’s – almost 100 years after they were cut in New York – why? Settlers went to New York first and came to Florida much later.*

19. How did the logger know how old the trees were? *Counted the rings in the stump. NOTE: This tree had to have been cut with a saw, not an ax.*

20. What happens to old leaves? *They lay on the ground and eventually rot away, helping to enrich the soil with their nutrients.*

21. What keeps the tree from falling over? *Big roots near the trunk anchor it in the soil. NOTE roots grow right around rocks.*

22. How does a tree get water? *Tiny root hairs that are far from the trunk absorb water and minerals. The water and minerals are carried through the roots and up to the leaves.*

23. How do all parts of the tree get nutrients? *Sap moves sugar and nutrients throughout the tree. It moves because leaves evaporate moisture, just like sucking on the end of a straw. The leaves suck on the sap and more water comes into the root hairs.*
24. Does a tree pump more water out of the ground on a sunny day or a cloudy day? Why?  
*Sunny day, because photosynthesis is needed to create the moisture that evaporates and “sucks” sap through the tree.*

25. How do you make maple syrup? *You tap a maple tree to collect sap, then boil the sap until the clear “water” becomes a thick sweet syrup or a chewy candy.* NOTE: wintery weather is needed to drive sugars into the roots so that the sap will be sweet in the spring. Cold nights and sunny days make a good sap run. Florida’s weather doesn’t allow us to produce maple syrup.

26. How do the farmers know when to stop collecting sap? *When the buds swell*

27. When do maple trees bloom in Florida? *Red maples bloom in January and February in wet swampy places.* Why do maples bloom in May in New York? *Farther north the weather is colder; the maple trees bloom when it is warm.*

28. Which was older, the maple tree or the house? *The tree.* Which became broken and needed repair first? *The house.*

29. What could make a tree old and injured? *Lightning strike, losing branches in a storm, insects, disease, rot – breaks in the bark that could let disease inside the tree.*

30. What protects the tree from bugs and disease? *The bark*

31. Why did a branch fall? *The heavy wet snow made the branch too heavy.*

32. How will the tree recover? *It will grow new wood and bark over the broken limb, creating a scar.*

33. Why does the author keep mentioning what is going on at the time: the Revolutionary War, George Washington, the Civil War, cars, electricity, etc.? *to help readers understand that the tree is growing for a very long time.*

34. What is the main message of this story? What did the author want readers to learn? *How trees grow, and that trees grow for a long time*

NOTE: the bird on the last page is a nuthatch – the same bird featured in the story “In the Forest of S.T. Shrew” in The Who Lives Near Here? Lesson.
5. Vocabulary Words

**Ancient**– very old, referring to a long, long time ago

**Anther**– part of the stamen on a flower that produces grains of pollen

**Bark**– tough covering of a trunk that protects the tree

**Bud**– encapsulated new plant growth (leaves, stem, or flower)

**Cellulose**– main component of plant cell walls

**Chickadees**– a small bird common throughout North America

**Chlorophyll**– molecule that converts sunlight, \((\text{CO}_2 + \text{water}) \rightarrow (\text{O}_2 + \text{sugar})\)

**Circulate**– move around or throughout, flow

**Evaporate**– converting from liquid to vapor without boiling

**Massive**– very big, bulky and or heavy

**Minerals**– nutrients needed for healthy growth

**Network**– a system or group of interconnected things or people

**Photosynthesis**– a process that green plants use to make sugar (food energy) using sunlight, carbon dioxide and water

**Pollen** – powdery reproductive cells from male flower

**Produce** – to make or create

**Root**– part of the plant that is below the soil absorbing nutrients and water

**Sap**– water with minerals and food energy that moves through a tree

**Spile**– spout stuck in trees to collect sap

**Sprout**– first step in germination

**Whirled**– spin around or travel while turning

**Wilderness**– legally defined area kept untouched by machinery
Vocabulary Words
The Big Tree

Ancient
Anther
Bark
Bud
Cellulose
Chickadees
Chlorophyll
Circulate
Evaporate
Massive
Minerals
Network
Photosynthesis
Pollen
Produce
Root
Sap
Spile
Sprout
Whirled
Wilderness
The Big Tree
Worksheet 1- Vocabulary

Directions: Use the vocabulary words from the story to complete the following sentences.

1) On weekends, people go to the ______________ to camp under the _______________ trees that reach high into the sky.

2) ______________ and other wildlife have lived in the ______________ forest for hundreds of years.

3) On sunny days, water and sap ______________ from leaves.

4) ______________ makes food energy for trees by a process called ______________ in the green leaves.

5) In the Spring, ________ swell and small flowers ______________ a yellow dust called ______________.

6) ______________ is a tough fiber found in all parts of the tree.

7) The winged seed ______________ to the ground.

8) ______________ protects the tree from insects and rot.

9) A ______________ is hammered into the trunk to collect ______________ that is ______________ throughout the tree.

10) This seed is beginning to ______________.

11) The ______________ of ______________ support the tree and absorb many ______________ from the soil.
Directions: Use the vocabulary words from the story to complete the following sentences.

1) On weekends, people go to the __**wilderness**__ to camp under the __**massive**__ trees that reach high into the sky.

2) __**Chickadees**_ and other wildlife have lived in the __**ancient**__ forest for hundreds of years.

3) On sunny days, water and sap __**evaporate**__ from leaves.

4) _**Chlorophyll**_ makes food energy for trees by a process called _**photosynthesis**_ in the green leaves.

5) In the Spring, _**buds**_ swell and small flowers __**produce**__ a yellow dust called __**pollen**__.

6) _**Cellulose**__ is a tough fiber found in all parts of the tree.

7) The winged seed __**whirled**__ to the ground.

8) _**Bark**__ protects the tree from insects and rot.

9) A __**spile**__ is hammered into the trunk to collect __**sap**__ that is __**circulating**__ throughout the tree.

10) This seed is beginning to __**sprout**__.

11) The __**network**__ of __**roots**__ support the tree and absorb many __**minerals**__ from the soil.
The Big Tree
Worksheet 2 – Fact, Fiction, Opinion

First name _____________
Last name _____________

Part 1: Fact or Fiction? Put a check next to following sentences that are facts.

1) All trees grow to be four feet thick.________
2) Green plants absorb sap through their roots.________
3) You can often tell how old a tree is by counting its rings.________
4) Sugar Maple leaves stay on the tree all year round.________
5) Pollen is produced by flowers.________
6) The Big Tree was over 200 years old________

Part 2: Fact or Opinion? Write F next to the facts and O next to the opinions.
Remember, an opinion is what someone thinks while a fact can be proven true.

1) The tree was dazzling and bright. ________
2) In the early 1800's, when the tree was about thirty years old and the U.S. was spreading westward, loggers came to the ancient forest.________
3) Sugar Maple seeds must be chilled by the winter before they are ready to grow.________
4) Photosynthesis is a wonderfully complex process. __________
5) Water in sap evaporates from each leaf and twig. __________
6) "This is a good site for a house." __________

Part 3: Practice
A. Write 2 facts you learned about trees.

1) ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
2) ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

B. Write 2 opinions you have about trees.

1) ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
2) ___________________________________________________________________
**The Big Tree**

**Worksheet 2 – Fact, Fiction, Opinion**

**Part 1: Fact or Fiction?** Put a check next to following sentences that are facts.

1) All trees grow to be four feet thick. __________
2) Green plants absorb sap through their roots. __________
3) You can often tell how old a tree is by counting its rings. ___X_____
4) Sugar Maple leaves stay on the tree all year round. __________
5) Pollen is produced by flowers. ___X_____
6) The Big Tree was over 200 years old ___X_____

**Part 2: Fact or Opinion?** Write F next to the facts and O next to the opinions. Remember, an opinion is what someone thinks while a fact can be proven true.

1) The tree was dazzling and bright. _____O____
2) In the early 1800's, when the tree was about thirty years old and the U.S. was spreading westward, loggers came to the ancient forest. ___F_______
3) Sugar Maple seeds must be chilled by the winter before they are ready to grow. ___F___
4) Photosynthesis is a wonderfully complex process. ____O_______
5) Water in sap evaporates from each leaf and twig. ____F________
6) "This is a good site for a house." _____O____

**Part 3: Practice**

A. Write 2 facts you learned about trees.

1) __example-It can takes years for a tree to recover from storm damage
___________________________________________________________________
2) ___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

B. Write 2 opinions you have about trees.

1) __example-Trees become more beautiful the older they are___________
___________________________________________________________________
2) ___________________________________________________________________
The Big Tree
Worksheet 3 - Imagery

First name ___________  Last name____________

The story uses vivid imagery and similes to describe the tree and things around it. These descriptions help the reader picture what the author means and make the story more enjoyable. Descriptive adjectives and adverbs are used to create imagery while similes use the words like or as to compare two different things. Now you will practice writing some descriptions yourself!

Examples using imagery:
* Wolves prowled silently in the woods.
* The massive trunk was four feet thick and its branches reached 100 feet in the air.
* Heavy, wet flakes clung to the leaves, bending branches till they could stand no more.

Examples using similes:
* The sound of breaking trees was like a rifle fire in the woods.
* The leaves lay on the ground like an old brown carpet.
* After six years, the tree was only as tall as a rabbit.

Practice
A. Use vivid words and details to describe something in the illustrations of the story.
1)____________________________________________________________________
2)____________________________________________________________________

B. Now use similes to describe two more things found in the illustrations.
1)____________________________________________________________________
2)____________________________________________________________________

The story also uses onomatopoeia to help the reader better imagine what is happening. Onomatopoeia is a word that imitates the sound it is describing.

Example: Snap…thump! A large limb crashed on the yard. Then whump, another fell.

C. Can you think of 5 more examples of onomatopoeia?
1)________________________
2)________________________
3)________________________
4)________________________
5)________________________
The Big Tree
Worksheet 3- Imagery

The story uses vivid imagery and similes to describe the tree and things around it. These descriptions help the reader picture what the author means and make the story more enjoyable. Descriptive adjectives and adverbs are used to create imagery while similes use the words like or as to compare two different things. Now you will practice writing some descriptions yourself!

Examples using imagery:
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Examples using similes:
* The sound of breaking trees was like a rifle fire in the woods.
* The leaves lay on the ground like an old brown carpet.
* After six years, the tree was only as tall as a rabbit.

Practice
A. Use vivid words and details to describe something in the illustrations of the story.
1) example- The smell of boiling sap fills the air with a sweet sugar that can be smelled for miles.________________________________________________________
2)____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

B. Now use similes to describe two more things found in the illustrations.
1) example After the settlers cut down the forest, the land looked rough like my dad's face when he needs to shave. ______________________________________________
2)____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

The story also uses onomatopoeia to help the reader better imagine what is happening. Onomatopoeia is a word that imitates the sound it is describing.

Example: Snap…thump! A large limb crashed on the yard. Then whump, another fell.

C. Can you think of 5 more examples of onomatopoeia?
1)____gurgle____________________
2)____pop____________________
3)_____zoom___________________
4)________________________
5)________________________
The Big Tree
Writing 1 – Compare and Contrast

Plan your writing:
Think about what happened to the Tree during the four seasons: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. Choose two to describe in the boxes below. Label each column with one of your choices. List what you know or learned about each season. Consider what the weather is like, what happens to the tree, and what people are doing around the tree during this time of year. Try to use vivid imagery and similes to describe.

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Writing Prompt:
Using what you wrote in your chart, write to compare and contrast the two different seasons. Use your own sheet of paper.
Plan your writing:
Imagine this circle is the outermost ring of a tree stump. Draw one ring inside for each year of your life. Fill in the rings with events from your life. For example, you may choose to include if you had a younger brother or sister born, a fun family trip, a time your family moved to a new place, or a recital or sports game you performed in.

Writing Prompt:
Use your tree stump plan to write a story about your life. Pick three of the events you listed and write a paragraph about each. Use the event as the topic sentence and write the rest of the paragraph to explain the event and why it is important. Use your own sheet of paper.
Plan your writing:
Pick a tree near your house or school. Imagine the tree as a seed just beginning to grow. What else has happened to the tree during its life? Create a timeline similar to the one on the title page of “The Big Tree.” Use the line on this page to help you. You may write above and below the line and use pictures or words to show events that you imagine have happened near the tree.

Writing Prompt:
Use your timeline to help write your own story about the tree. Use your own sheet of paper.