

One Tree

By Christopher Cheng & Illustrated by Bruce Whatley

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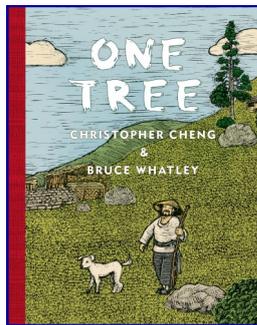
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**Picture Book of
the Month**

One tall tree on the mountain once marked Grandfather's farm. Now there is a busy city and Grandfather lives with us in our apartment.

Once he told stories but now he stays silent. Until one day, in the city market, I find something precious... something that brings Grandfather's memories alive again.



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Our relationship to the natural and built environment
- Change and continuity
- Friendship/significant relationships:
- Creativity/imagination

Discussion Questions: One Tree explores the ideas of environment, change and family; how they are all interconnected and how they all rely on each other.

- What does the boy/grandfather have to do to help the plants grow?
- Have you ever moved to a new place / school like grandfather did? How did you feel about the experience?
- How is the natural environment important in this story? How is it important to you? And to the community?
- How is the family important in the story?
- How do the boy and the grandfather interact? How does it change throughout the story? Why?
- How do your students interact with their grandparents? What sorts of activities do grandparents of today get involved in?
- Why are gardens important in the urban areas, especially high-density living environments?

Reading One Tree:

- Page 4-5: Why do you think grandfather says 'Better than an emperor's palace.' Which of the buildings is grandfather's house? Why do you think so?
- Page 12-13: Explore the differences between the city and village markets. How are they different to our markets, including our farmer's markets? Is the boy happy or sad that the buildings all look the same? How do you think the grandfather feels?
- Page 18-19: Why does grandfather talk to the plant? What might he say? Describe grandfather from the pictures.
- Page 22-23: Why would the birds be in the trees? What season do you think this is? What do you notice about the colours that the illustrator is using? Grandfather and the boy can't stop talking at dinner. What would they be talking about?
- Page 28-29: Why would Mrs Choy want a tree? Describe the other apartment in the illustration. Where would Mrs Choy obtain her tree? Predict what will happen to Mrs Choy's balcony.
- Page 32: What has happened to apartments in the nearby buildings? How has the city changed? How do you think the people feel? Discuss sustainability and how it is shown in this illustration.

Activities:

- Construct a timeline of the events involved in growing the seedling that the boy discovers.
- Provide each child with a seed / bulb and plant these using recycled plastic pots (with drain holes) or from divided milk containers. Students can create a diary of the changes in the seedlings/bulbs, and if time permits, the life cycle.
- Create a class garden of potted plants, or a terrarium, or plant an outdoor garden.