

# The Giving Tree

by Shel Silverstein

A timeless classic with simple text and a powerful message for children and adults of all ages.



## Read

### Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *This book is about giving. Have you ever heard the expression "it is better to give than receive?"* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder if that boy is going to catch that apple?

### During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

### Rare Words in *The Giving Tree*

- gather: to bring things together to form a group
- crowns: headdress symbolizing royalty
- king: a man or boy who rules over an independent state
- forest: large area of land covered in trees
- trunk: the main stem of a tree
- shook: trembled uncontrollably
- sail: a trip in a boat or ship
- stump: the base of a tree trunk after the tree has been cut down

### After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- How many of you have ever tried to climb a tree? Were you successful?
- Have you ever seen an apple tree? Where do apple trees grow?
- Who can remember what the tree did to help the boy get money?
- How do you think the tree felt after letting the boy pick its apples? Cut off its branches? Cut down its trunk?
- Why did the tree do all of those things for the boy?

## Do

### Give the Gift of Reading

Find an organization in your community that provides books to children in need and give them the gift of reading. Hold a book drive at your school or ask each child to bring a gently used book in good condition. You can also record books on cassettes to donate. If possible, make the donation as a class in person so your children can experience first-hand how much better it really is to give than to receive!

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