

WIMBLEDON
BOOKFEST

THE TREE



Junior Young Writers' Competition 2022
Collection of Poems and Short Stories

WIMBLEDON BOOKFEST

Wimbledon BookFest 2022

Young Writers' Competition

Collection of Short Stories & Poems
Junior School Edition



Wimbledon BookFest, 35 Wimbledon Hill Road, London, SW19 7NB

Registered charity: Wimbledon Arts 1120297

www.wimbledonbookfest.org

ISBN 9781739967727

Young Writers' Competition 2022 Junior Judging Panel

Chair of Judges

Jean Menzies

Author & Academic, University of Roehampton

Judges

Julian Butler

Writer & Musician

Sita Brahmachari

Author

Ozge Gozturk

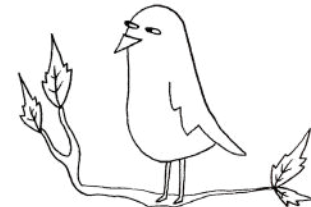
MA Student, University of Roehampton

Notes

School names have been abbreviated in the entries; a list with schools' full names can be found at the back of this book. Special Educational Needs categories and schools have been abbreviated to 'SEN'.

All the poems and stories are published as students submitted them. Only minor and essential grammatical and punctuation edits have been made.

Design and Layout: Phoebe Manley
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Highly Commended

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Highly Commended

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Coco Coombes	Avenue Primary Academy
Elijah Storey	Beecholme Primary School
Fionn Burgess	Pelham Primary School
Haadi Mukri	Fircroft Primary School
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Holly Haldane	Ursuline Prep School
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Alice Pegram	Wimbledon Park Primary School
Alyssa Langan-Joseph	St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School
Amina Moghal Prieto	The Study Prep School
Amy Fiddimore	Joseph Hood Primary School
Deren Blacker	Ursuline Prep School
Edison Fahy	West Wimbledon Primary School
Eunice Hui	The Study Prep School
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Jessica Singh	Wimbledon High School
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Lydia Dorovski	Ursuline Prep School
Lyra Taylor	Southfields Primary School
Miri Canonica	Beecholme Primary School
Nadia Iglesias Zawadzka	St John Fisher Primary School
Natalia Soldrzynska	Benedict Primary School
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Pia Ece Yaltirik	Wimbledon Chase Primary School
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Highly Commended SEN

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Introduction

It's a climbing frame. It's a spot to read. It's a home to squirrels and birds.

It's protection from the sun. It's a source of oxygen. It's a portal to another world.

It's a family's history. It's a safe space to rest. It's everything you might want it to be.

It's a tree.

The trees in this collection of poems and stories are all of these things and more. The young writers who contributed to this exciting volume tell us in their own words what the tree means to them: whether that be the changing of the seasons or a witness to the passage of history. Throughout these pages trees come to life – or, should I say, we are reminded of how alive they already are. These young writers allow us to consider what a tree might mean to us and our world as a whole. Because the tree is a timeless symbol of storytelling that has meant a multitude of things to different people over the years, and this is something that is exemplified here.

This collection carries on the tradition of using trees in our storytelling while celebrating the bold and exciting new voices of some of our youngest writers. Prepare to be taken to forests and parks, travel to the future and the past, and enjoy the early work of some of poets and authors you'll surely see donning the shelves of your local bookshops in years to come.



Jean Menzies, Chair of Judges

Junior
WINNERS!

Big Tree, Fig Tree

Elysia Degas

Merton Park Primary School (Year 2 – Age 6)

Big tree, fig tree,
wooden tree, leafy tree
Leaves are on my branches.
Gates are stopping my roots from going into boots.

I hope I don't die, I'm only 10 years old. This means that I have ten rings inside my trunk. If I die or get chopped down, I will just be a wooden stool for people to stand on and play.

Big tree, fig tree,
wooden tree, leafy tree
Leaves are on my branches.

I hope I'm not one of those trees with a hole inside my body, from a woodpecker trying to catch little insects living inside my beautiful trunk.

Big tree, fig tree,
wooden tree, leafy tree
Leaves are on my branches.

I think that summer is the best, I like it when children climb on me and make a den with the long sticks from the ground. I don't want winter to come because then my leaves will fall off my beautiful branches.

Big tree, fig tree,
wooden tree, leafy tree
Leaves are on my branches.



Lizzy, Sam and the Travelling Tree

Amélie Maddalon Doody

Poplar Primary School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Lizzy was eight and lived with her dad in a little wooden cottage at the edge of a large town. Sam, Lizzy's dad didn't have a job which meant that they were very poor. To make ends meet Lizzy and Sam had to grow their own food, mend their clothes, get water from a stream and heat the cold cottage themselves. One very cold morning Lizzy got out of bed and noticed that a draught had put the fire out she saw that the basket of firewood was empty and told her dad who was still wrapped up warm in bed! The dad Sam got his axe and he and Lizzy walked to the old oak tree at the back of the garden. Sam chopped away at the lowest branch until it was on the ground! Lizzy and Sam had a warm, cosy night in front of the fire.

The next day Lizzy was watering the vegetables and she noticed something weird. First, she thought her vegetables had moved towards the back of the garden and then, she realised that the tree had moved closer to the house. Lizzy went to bed that night wondering if the tree was alive. When Lizzy woke up in the morning her bedroom was much darker than normal. Lizzy looked out of her window and saw that the tree had travelled all the way up to the house and was blocking the light into her room! Lizzy tore the window open and saw the tree had a face, a sad looking face. "Are you alive?", Lizzy asked.

"Yes, of course I am", replied the tree.

"Why are you at my window?", said Lizzy.

"I want to know why you chopped my arm off, and why?" Lizzy suddenly knew that the branch that had kept them warm had been the tree's arm. She explained to the tree that

her father had chopped its arm off to put in the fireplace to heat the house.

“I’m so sorry and I will tell my dad to never do it again”, promised Lizzy.

The tree told Lizzy that it understood and that they could take more branches when they needed to but they must come from the top of the tree.

When Lizzy woke up the next day, she saw that the tree had returned to its normal place. Sam and Lizzy were never cold again.



The Willow Tree

Clara-Rose Morgan

Wimbledon Park Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

The wonderful Willow sways and creaks as it awakens after a long deep winter sleep,

As animals come out from their hibernation,

The Spring sap rises and the blossom blooms, bringing life to the tree,

The birds come and lay their eggs, safely hidden away in the protective leaves.

The Willow, the Willow, how you give us life!

The wonderful Willow sways and creaks as Summer arrives and the leaves become green and juicy,

The air hums with the sound of butterflies and bees,

And as the warm wind blows it picks up the Willow branches and they swirl like ballet dancers in the breeze.

The Willow, the Willow, how you give us life!

The wonderful Willow sways and creaks as autumn turns all the leaves into specs of sparkling, rainbows

The shadows grow longer as the sun goes to sleep and the light glimmers through the beautiful, leaves

The rainbow leaves begin to fall and float around in the air like feathers.

The Willow, the Willow, how you give us life!

The wonderful Willow sways and creaks in the Winter wonderland,

The cold frost arrives coating the tree in sparkling ice crystals,

The animals go into their deep dark sleep as the Willow waits for Spring.

The Willow, the Willow, how you give us life!



The Feelings Tree

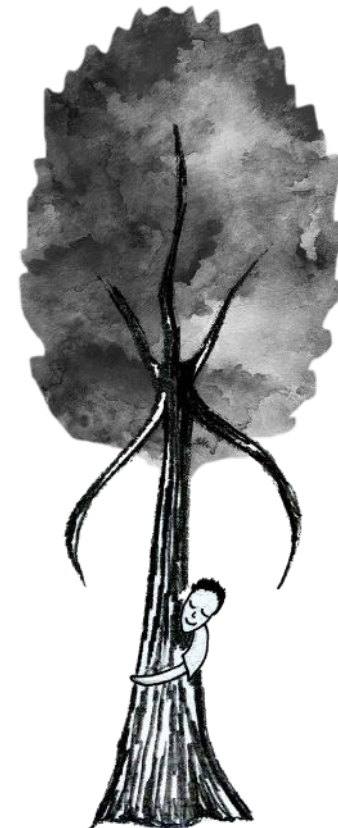
Charis Peck

Dundonald Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

Whenever you are in a bad mood, you're welcome to come and visit the feelings tree. The feelings tree is an enormous tree located in the centre of a small wood. People come from far and wide to feel the calming effects of the tree, where they are safe to be whatever and whoever they want to be. But there was one boy called Stan, who didn't believe in the tree's powers. He thought it was impossible that a tree could help people and thought it must be some kind of trick. Stan lived with his old Uncle Bob in a cheerless cottage in the middle of nowhere, because his mother and father died when he was young. He had no friends and his uncle was mean and grumpy. One day he came to the feelings tree, desperate for a friend. Stan was miserable to the bone! He had heard tales about the feelings tree and wondered if it was real and whether it would heal him.

"Feelings Tree, I don't believe you work, but I feel so sad and lonely, and all I want is to be happy." When the Feelings Tree heard him, even though Stan wasn't a believer, the feelings tree bent down and wrapped her welcoming branches around him. He immediately felt warm and happy and that everything around him slowed down. It was a world of peace. And when the feelings tree finally let go, he felt joyous. But the one thing that everyone could see that was different was that he had a big smile on his face. And when he got home, he felt so happy and relaxed he gave his uncle a big hug. Uncle Bob was shocked! He thought his nephew hated him and thought he was a poor replacement for his parents. That is why Uncle Bob had been avoiding Stan. "Oh Stan, I thought you hated me!" said Uncle Bob. "I thought YOU hated ME!" exclaimed Stan. "I went to the

Feelings Tree, and I felt like I was being hugged by my mother and father again. It made me realise that I don't always have to be miserable because of things that happened in the past. I can change. Can we start over?" "I'd love to." Said Uncle Bob. "We only have each other, so we should take care of each other." From that day on, whenever they felt bad, or angry or sad, they would visit the Feelings Tree and feel soothed by the welcoming presence of Mother Nature. And because of his new attitude, Stan made loads of new friends and lived happily ever after.



Forbidden Flower

Amelia Lubert

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 6 – Age 10)

Night descends upon the forest.
A care-free girl, still out on her walk.
Perching beside a tree, she rests, drinking in the peaceful evening....

Her head full of spring-time frolics,
Grass in her hair,
She thinks dreamily of her day.

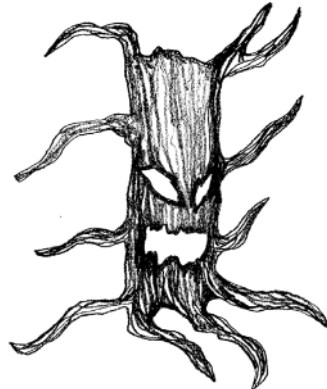
The last rays of sun warm her skin,
The flowers she picked are wrapped tightly in her hand,
Her prize, her memento.

As the sun disappears, the once-bright wilderness seems now uninviting.
She is no longer welcome.
Something is watching her, and she can feel it.

She rises to her feet and steps her way through the undergrowth,
Her toes facing towards home as she weaves through the towering trees.
Her pace quickens.

Hairs standing on end, she can finally see light.
She is steps away from freedom.
Suddenly, her feet are swept from underneath her.

Letting out a blood curdling screech,
Her throat tightens,



Silence.
Tendrils wrapping around her body,
Like tentacles teasing her tender soul,
Draining the very life out of her.

As branches drag her away from safety,
She claws frantically at the forest floor,
Leaving deep scars in the soil where once she played.

Plucked from the ground, she is tossed into the crisp night air.
Striking against any trees that stand between her and death,
The girl loses consciousness...

She's not the first victim and she won't be the last.
The Forest will make sure she never sees the light of day again.
Her time is coming to an end...

Throwing her to the ground, the torture suddenly pauses.
It is as if her fate is being decided.
But there is no escaping.

Branches puncture her bruised skin.
Thorns, like minions, piercing through her spine.
Paralysed, the ferocious fingers elevate her again, only to

Slam her into the cold mud ground; she is gone.
A pool of crimson blood surrounds her lifeless body.
The blossom she had picked earlier floating in the sea of red.

Let this be a lesson to all - do not disturb The Forest,
Not even for an innocent bundle of blossom.
You can obey this rule or suffer the fatal consequences.

NATURE WILL FIGHT BACK.

The Grasshopper and the Leaf

Gia Merchant

Bishop Gilpin Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Gerald, a young grasshopper, began his sunset stroll. Although he did this daily, this was different – this was the first day of Spring! Bouncing with excitement, Gerald hoped to find the leaf of his dreams. Wandering past many trees, he rejected many types of leaves; they didn't meet his high expectations. "Too dry, too small, way too brown!" Just as he was about to call it a day, he detected exactly what he was searching for – the juiciest, largest, most green leaves he'd ever seen! However, he knew there wasn't an easy way to forage them – they were in the highest part of the tallest tree! The tree warned him to stay clear, to come again tomorrow, but Gerald wasn't going to let a little climb, or a warning, get in his way!

He commenced the climb. He had a horrible feeling there would be hardships along this adventure; however, he wasn't going to let this timid, little feeling get in his way! He'd have to be resilient.

Trying to remain optimistic, he soon realised he was halfway there! How he longed to taste the sweet sensations of these leaves! Gerald squinted into the swiftly darkening sky as he continued his ascent. He watched the skies sweep into a gloomy, dismal storm and Gerald momentarily questioned his perseverance. The tree had warned him to quit; however, he wasn't going to let a little storm get in his way!

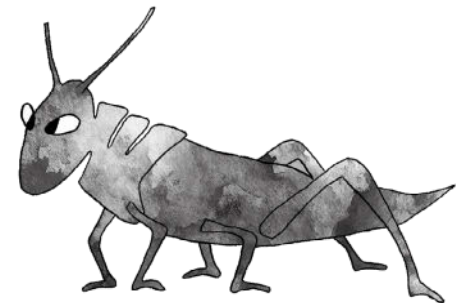
The storm increased its intensity. He grasped a branch. Gerald looked down – there was no turning back. He drew a deep breath and walked steadily along, trying not to slip in the wet puddles. CRASH! A tree collapsed close by. Lightning was heading his way. The tree warned him this

was going to end badly; however, Gerald wasn't going to let a little lightning get in his way!

Gerald's eyes widened. His mouth couldn't shut. All he could think about was his delicious dessert. It was succulent. It was magnificent. It was green! He carried all six legs onto the target leaf and...

ZAP! A bolt of lightning came hurtling towards him. Gerald inhaled a large breath and...SNAP! The large branch, with him on it, was falling. The wise, old tree had tried to warn him. Tried to save him of this terrible fate, but he hadn't listened.

Then, an idea struck him. He held the leaf towards the wind and readied for a hard drop, thinking this would be his end, thinking this make-shift parachute wouldn't work. He waited. And waited. Nothing happened. Rather, slowly, he drifted towards the ground. Once the storm cleared, over the next few days, Gerald gathered all the luscious leaves of the large branch that had fallen. He had enough to last a lifetime. He was satisfied. "If I hadn't climbed the tree, the branch mightn't've fallen and I mightn't've got all me lovely food. I truly am livin' life to its fullest!" Gerald had seized his moment and was reaping his rewards!



★ SEN ★
★ Winner ★
★

My Poem

Abdilatif Adhag

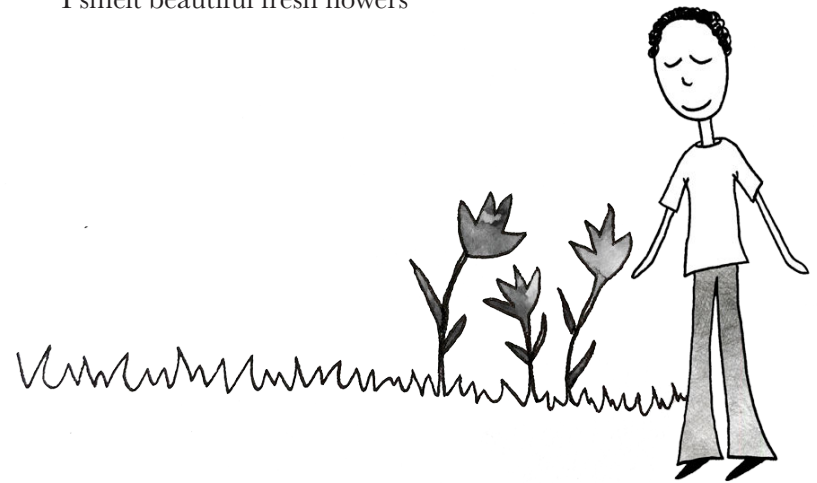
Cricket Green School (Year 5 – Age 10)

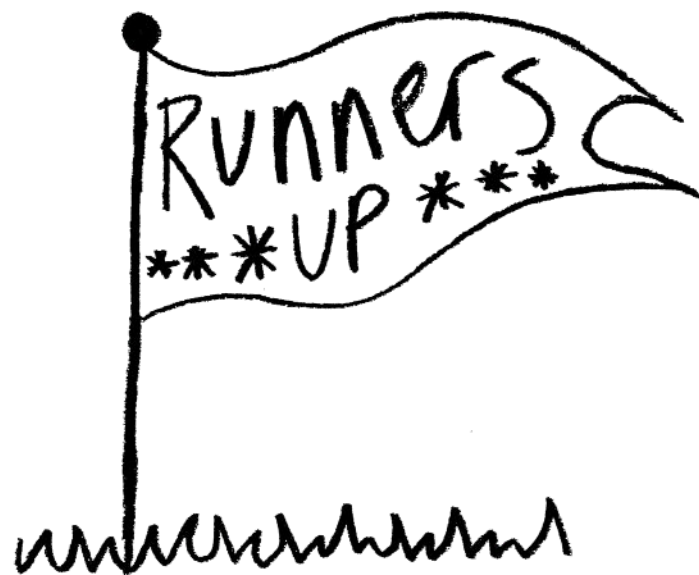
I saw a small, dark, shiny, long woodlouse
I saw a large, bright bird

I heard faint wind shivering the trees
I heard people playing football, they sounded loud

I felt a bumpy, hard tree
I felt hard, spiky grass

I smelt beautiful fresh flowers





The Old Oak Tree

Noah Carandang

St Mary's Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

I passed by and saw a tree
The tree was very, very old indeed.
So I began to ponder upon
How the tree lived when it was young.

I first imagined the tree playing tricks
Dropping leaves on people's heads with a flick of its wrist.
Whimsically waving branches to knock hats off heads
Or pulling up its roots tripping people where they tread.

I then imagined the tree being kind
Giving some shade to all those who passed by.
Its acorns there for squirrels to feed
And its long, strong arms sheltering them in need.

Oh, and all the things the tree has heard and seen!
Breathtaking tales of where people have been
And being able to watch boys grow into men
To carry on generations again and again.

So here's the oak tree now, old and weeping
Every time I walk by it looks like it's
sleeping
But I know there's a lot of life left
inside it
Including all the memories it will be
taking with it.



Emmer and the Tree

Isabella Ritson

Wimbledon High School (Year 3 – Age 8)

Emmer was a strange little girl.

The most peculiar thing about her is that she always thought there was a tree in her front garden, but nobody else could see the tree except for her. She did not have any emotions in the same way you and I have. Emmer was neither happy nor sad. She was just quiet. The tree impacted her learning, and her parents didn't like it. They wanted her to be smarter. Emmer's parents decided to move house, and that meant moving away from the tree. So, it was arranged.

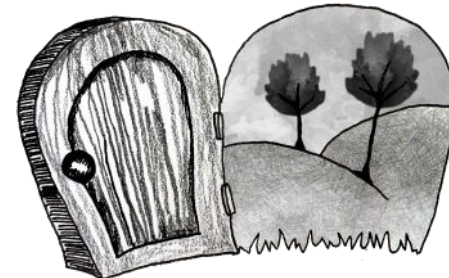
One week before moving house, a mystery happened. On that morning, Emmer went to the toilet when her mum was staring through the window. When the toilet door opened, Emmer disappeared. At the same second, her mum shouted, "A tree!" A blossom cloudy cherry tree, full of pink petals and green leaves, recently appeared in the front garden. "This must be the tree Emmer was talking about. I will ask Emmer". Mum looked all over the house, but she could not find Emmer.....

Ding! Dong! The doorbell rang and the postman stood outside. He asked "Where do you want your parcel please? Shall I leave it inside the door of the tree?" "What door of the tree?" Emmer's mum puzzled. 'The little blue door.' the postman replied. 'I will leave the parcel just inside this little blue door.' He pointed at that cherry tree.

The postman opened the tiny door. Emmer was sitting inside! She was looking out over an amazing landscape of

pink trees, purple skies and blue rolling hills. The postman screamed, and Emmer's mum rushed out. They both stood right in front of the cherry tree and stared through its doorway. But, while the postman was astonished by the amazing magical world hidden inside, Emmer's mum found her daughter jumping with joy, no longer the quiet girl she knew. Emmer had discovered a world created in her vision.

Emmer's Mum realised how imaginative and wonderful her little girl's mind really was. Neither of them had never been so happy.



A Bit of Hope

Aadya Sindwani

Auriol Junior School (Year 6 – Age 10)

Glowing with self-found confidence,
Illuminating the sparse fields and radiating happiness,
It spreads out its vast foliage,
Stretching in the first rays of the sun,
A tree welcomes summer.

Absorbing the bright colours lingering in unknown places,
Gently rustling its soft green clothing,
Overlooking innocent flowers peeking out from the safety of
their buds,
And basking in the shady quite filled with slivers of dappled
sunlight,
A tree welcomes summer.

But a harsh, grating noise interrupts its thoughts,
As the vehicles storm in and claim their premises,
Nature shudders under their reign,
The animals scamper away, tails between their legs,
The tree's fear mounts.

A flash of silver,
A rough wooden handle,
Scraping the smooth bark,
Is all it takes,
For a life to be lost.

As the greenery falls,
The plants trampled under uncaring feet,
Trees collapsing like broken bodies,
And there is no faith anymore,
A shoot springs up.

The men are blind to this,
Blundering back to their threatening machines,
Not spotting the tiny glimmer of something,
A small but strong,
Bit of hope.



Change

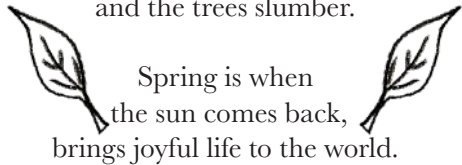
Aiden Farrugia

St Mary's Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)



A
tree
means
change.

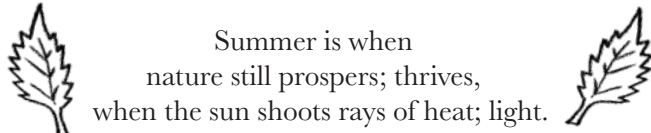
Winter is when
life seems hopeless,
all food becomes scarce,
it seems impossible to survive,
how hope seems to abandon nature,
how storms pluck trees from their foundations,
gales become hurricanes
and the trees slumber.



Spring is when
the sun comes back,
brings joyful life to the world.

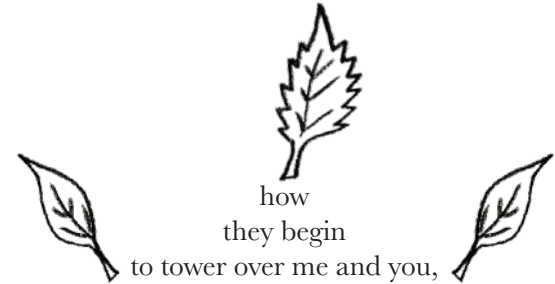
Watch how it brings explosive vibrance
to the vast variety of trees that surround us.
Watch how it makes the trees blossom, and flourish.
Watch how they start growing their luscious, luxurious
leaves.

They bring smiles to everyone's faces.
They bring colour back to the world.

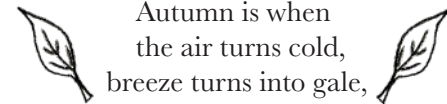


Summer is when
nature still prospers; thrives,
when the sun shoots rays of heat; light.

When life and happiness are at their ephemeral peak,
and the nomadic creatures want this green to last for
eternity,

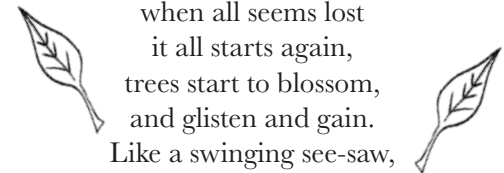


how
they begin
to tower over me and you,
as their branches which once were bare,
now wear emerald.



Autumn is when
the air turns cold,
breeze turns into gale,
after months of success and progress,

watch how the trees start to diminish and finish.
How the leaves desperately cling to their branches,
as the wild wind tugs and pulls at their crispy corpses,
branches become bare, all the improvements just disappear
taken swiftly away by
mischievous winds.



when all seems lost
it all starts again,
trees start to blossom,
and glisten and gain.
Like a swinging see-saw,
rocking from toil to glee,
and back again,
it all starts again.

From Acorn to Oak

Elanor Goldsmith

Merton Park Primary School (Year 6 – Age 10)

The sun shone as it dipped closer to the horizon and the sky turned a shade of deep red.

On a branch of the old oak tree, the little seed shook in the wind.

It rocked and swayed and finally broke free from the bough that had been its first home.

Carried by the wind, the tiny acorn went whirling and swirling, twisting and turning, to places unknown to mankind.

Finally it landed, after travelling past rushing rivers, mountains that pierced the clouds, and lush forests filled with the sounds of nature.

The sky had turned black as the seed flew, and so now, settled under the gaze of the mountains by the roaring waterfall, the acorn went to sleep under the bright moon, the shining stars and the whole expanse of space.

When it awoke, the seed started to grow and its roots spread towards the waterfall, the base of the mountain and deep underground.

As the awakening of spring approached, the acorn opened, revealing a tongue of green that reached towards the warm, encouraging light of the sun, tasting the faint smell of spring that was drawing ever nearer.

Every time the sun rose, the little seedling became stronger. Its leaves grew, stretching out as far as they could, savouring every last drop of nourishing sunlight.

The days grew longer, the nights shorter.

Everything around the seedling was awakening and coming to life; the bushes were soon covered with buds, and flowers started to protrude from the ground. Blossom fell from the trees, creating a carpet of pink and white.

Slowly, spring turned to summer, and the seedling became a sapling, its delicate green stem hardened and grew into smooth young bark. Its branches now reached over the river that led away from the gushing waterfall that frothed and foamed as it hit the surface of the tranquil pool below.

As summer progressed, the temperature crept upwards, until all the animals had retreated to the shadows of the dense forest.

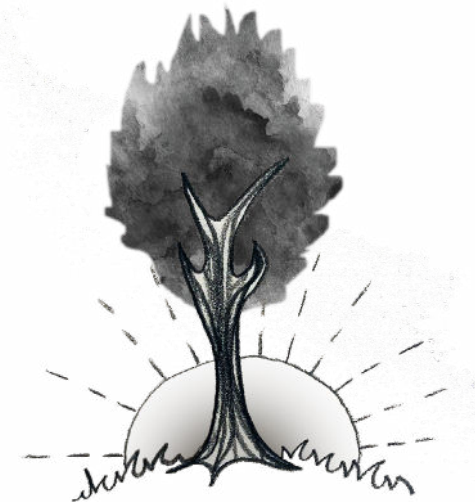
The tree grew steadily. Soon it had reached the height of the surrounding trees. Cautiously the animals started to venture from the safety of the forest and explore the flourishing tree that had grown during summer. A rabbit burrowed between the twisting roots to make her warren. Way above her, an owl began to collect twigs to build his nest, snapping his beak at anything that came near.

Soon the tree was full of life and heavy with seeds.

Autumn came, bringing with it some of the most amazing colours imaginable - it was as if a giant had painted the trees with his favourite colours: crimson, auburn and fiery orange.

The forest was buzzing with life as animals rushed to collect enough food for winter before settling down to hibernate.

A gust of wind blew and a little seed on the oak tree shook. It rocked and swayed and finally broke free and was carried off by the wind to have an adventure of its own.



Today's Comfort, Tomorrow's Hope

Sedina Ayidah

Sacred Heart Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Nadia's mind was strewn with 'asylum', 'refugee camp' and other unfamiliar but somehow unsettling words creating a whirlwind of apprehension in her head. The ram of bombs sent flurries of nerves through her veins making her quiver in bed at night. Nadia watched her closest friends fleeing the country through what they called the 'Medyka crossing' not knowing if they'd ever see her again. Nadia could only watch her dreams flit into the unknown.

Nadia wanted somebody to understand her tears. Not someone to taunt them. Neither to make fun of her streamers. Nadia was sick and tired of removing ribbons from the school bins. Ribbons that had been savagely ripped from her hair. She loured, wiping her tears for the last time as she sullenly opened the door. Flouncing to her room, Nadia took heavy breaths with cheeks filled with lava. Before she knew it, she was out at the park with her ukulele and wide, wet, horror-filled eyes.

Flashback 2014

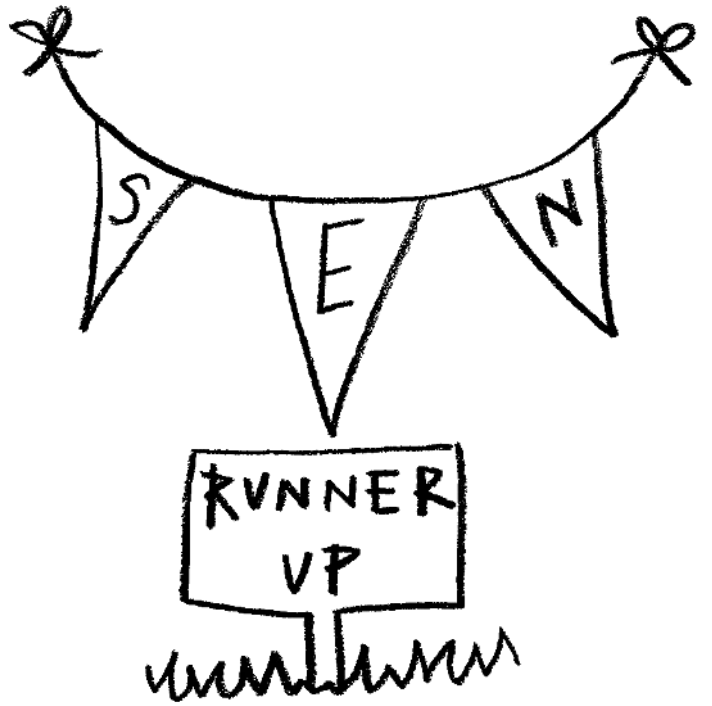
The Ukrainian skies were the colour of fresh apricots, a zephyr tickled Nadia's skin and every child on the playground giggled, ravished by the sun's ardent rays. Nadia felt what she called comfort, the feeling she had when she spent summer evenings with Aunt Mariya. Nadia remembered the time her aunt raised her to tie a ribbon in the old birch tree. The ribbon was purple, frayed with a blue ink stain. Nadia couldn't read what was written on the ribbons at the time but enjoyed hanging what Aunt Mariya called 'quotes of hope' every weekend. That was

every weekend until the trip to church with pictures of Aunt Mariya hung everywhere with the letters 'R.I.P'. Nothing Nadia understood. Well, nothing she understood then.

Nadia's heart was a metronome going at one million beats per minute ricocheting against her chest, her shallow breaths made her seem as if she was about to burst and shatter. It couldn't be- the place where she sought comfort couldn't now be a pile of charred bark! There were noodles in her stomach, tangling and clustering, there were worms in her windpipe slithering and shuffling, hardly leaving a crevice for a smigeon of oxygen. Her blood was a frigid block of ice. Releasing a blood-curdling shriek, her heart raced, taking off without her. Nadia flew home being chased by her butter-blond curls and being carried by her feet like never before, clutching her ukulele through the young, Winter evening.

Nadia flung the front door open, removing her french-violet fleece jacket and heather shearling boots in fury. Entering her room with tear-drenched jeans, Nadiya's rheumy eyes were caught by a flicker of purple. It wasn't the orchids, nor the lavenders, it was a ribbon. A purple ribbon, a frayed ribbon, a ribbon with a blue ink stain that read: Nadia means hope. Hope is when a rainbow follows the rain. The flurries of nerves suddenly lulled. The whirlwind of apprehension calmed. Nadia sensed comfort nearing, or was it hope...would it be hope ?



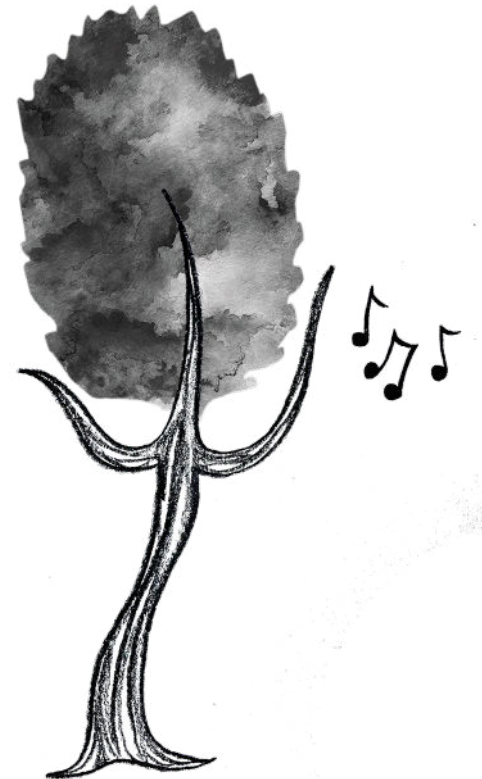


The Tree

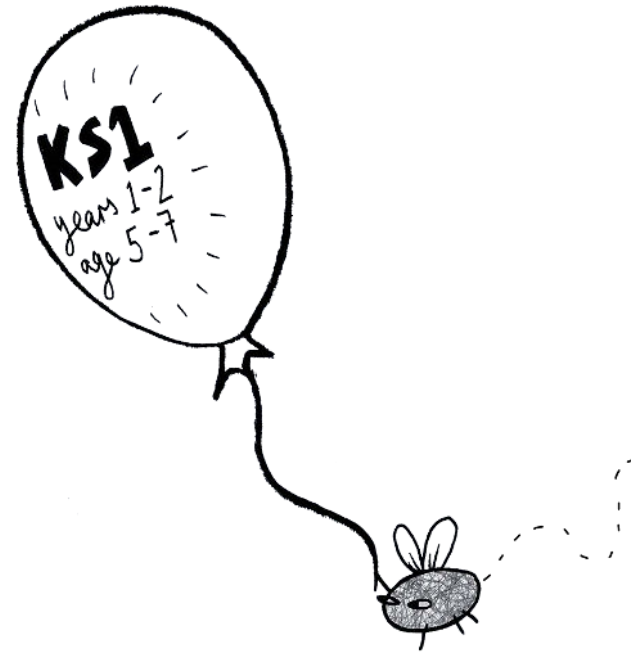
Grace Pinner

Cricket Green School (Year 6 – Age 10)

Standing tall like a tower,
Roots going down like little worms.
Stretch your branches up to the sky,
Dream as you listen to the tree song in the clouds.



highly commended
★ POEMS ★



Trees Are Amazing

Alice Whatling

Ursuline Prep School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Without trees, we wouldn't be alive
They help us grow and thrive
Trees cool the air by reflecting the sun's light
They also protect us when the sun gets too bright
So many trees get cut down,
Hearing about this makes me frown
Why do we not care?
So many trees cut down- it's really not fair

When spring arrives, lots of trees wake up now
New flowers & leaves cover their branches- wow!
Throughout summer, trees get growing
Fruits and berries come every year- mind blowing!
As the weather starts to cool down and the days are not as long
The leaves begin to change and Autumn comes along
At last the air is icy and still
Winter is here, be careful not to get a chill
Deciduous trees are bare, but evergreens' branches are still full

Many animals find their homes in trees
Owls and squirrels, beavers, bats and birds
Good news; there are lots of trees or it would be a squeeze
Little chicks are snug in their nests
Their parents pick out bugs from the tree bark and other pests
Insects and ants feed on leaves, fruit and bark
And trees make people happy when they are walking through the park

As you can see, trees are so important for us all
If you plant more in your gardens it would really help the world

You can grow trees indoors and out
Plant seeds in pots from fruit you have eaten
And most of all remember the 3 Rs
Reduce, reuse & recycle.



Majestic Tree

Auriana Burdett

Ursuline Prep School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Tall, majestic tree,
branches swaying in the breeze,
strong roots in rich soil.

Like fingers spread wide,
your roots drink the earth's goodness,
a web reaching far.

Solid, sturdy trunk,
standing elegant and proud,
cradling fine branches.

Rough bark, cool to touch,
a mosaic of deep browns,
scent of the forest.

Branches, reaching high,
strong arms, stretching to blue sky,
to touch the bright sun.

Fresh green leaves floating,
gently waving in the wind,
whispering softly.

Tall trees together,
standing in misty forests,
shoulder to shoulder.

Trees, you give us life,
you breathe fresh, clean air for us,
you are wonderful.



I Love You Tree

Charlotte Bae

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)

Trees are green.
Trees are red and yellow when it is Autumn.
Trees sometimes have white flowers.
Birds make nests in trees to lay their eggs.
Squirrels make homes in tree and have their babies.
Trees make fresh air for us.
Trees give us fruits and chestnuts.
Trees give us shade when it is hot.
Trees give us wood to make fireplace.
Trees give good Christmas trees to decorate.
Trees make good paper for me to draw and write.
I make sure I do not waste paper because it is precious.
Thank you tree I can give you water and my love.



Spring Days

Elisha Cregan

Ursuline Prep School (Year 2 – Age 6)

Trees will sway, twirl and loop-de-loop in the warmth of the burning fiery flames of the sun.
Blossoms blooming, birds chirping, children running shouting “Hooray”.
Plants growing spring has come, let us all go outside and play.
People playing, explorers exploring, seeds sprouting.
The breeze makes me feel calm and relaxed.
The rustle of the leaves on the trees makes me feel overjoyed.
Blossoms falling in the wind, children dancing underneath twirling.
Swirling snowstorm in the middle of spring.
Leaves replacing blossoms showing that summer is coming.
Birds coming home to build their nests and lay new smooth eggs.
Eggs cracking, chicks peeping out to see spring has come.

Trees Poem

Jasper Howard

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 1 – Age 5)

I have to write a poem about trees
With alliteration like 'bees in the breeze'.
I should put in lots of interesting verbs,
Like 'mowing', 'growing', 'flowing' herbs.
No, that's not right. To mow and flow and grow
Are only verbs if you use them just so.
Maybe I should write about seeing Grandma
She lives in France and loves good grammar.
At Easter we went to her woods to climb
The steps up the stumps (oh, that doesn't rhyme).
The colourful leaves were pinks and orangey-browns...
Hmmm... I think I need some better nouns,
Perhaps the rushing river, the playground in the park,
Strange granges, boyish voyages... and an exclamation
mark!
I must remember my Capital letters and to end with a full
stop,
And then I will get a lollipop.



The Life of a Tree in One Year

Magnus Zairin Khoo

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 2- Age 6)

Tree, in summer shows a glorious green,
Branching out like a giant living machine.
Autumn, dried leaves fall gradually on the ground,
This is the time when shiny conkers are found.
In winter, the tree is bare but sometimes covered in frost or
snow,
And evergreens are decorated in magical Christmas glow.
In spring, flower blossoming trees are a nice sight to view,
With colourful, fragrant petals falling down to you.
There are lots of trees from the woods to the shores,
from the mountains to the swamps and the grasslands to my
garden.
My favourite's the oak tree, what is yours?



The Banana Tree

Quentin Quail

Pelham Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)

There was a young, poor man who had nothing but a bomb shelter.

He found a seed on the ground.

He planted it on a bomb shelter.

It grew and grew.

It was a banana tree.

He ate the bananas every day.

He used the leaves to make plates.

He used parts to make clothes to wear.

He sold things to buy land.

He took the seeds and planted more.

He then made a shelter out of leaves.

He sold the bananas to the village.

Then became rich and happy.

He could have a family and get what he wanted.

What a Tree Means to Me.

Riano Miller

Merton Abbey Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)

Once upon a time, there was a big brown tree it had lovely green leaves. And it was the closest thing in nature that represents me.

Its roots stand firm, its branches built strong, a tree-like my family is forever long.

From green to brown from brown to gone. That's how the tree sings its song.

Throughout summer autumn winter and spring. The tree is where the birds rest their Wings.

The owls and squirrels, mice and bees the tree provides all the animal's needs.

That's what a tree means to me.



A Rhyme About Trees

Sophia Evans

Merton Park Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)

Tree, tree what can it be, out in the sea?
I believe it's a bee
Or maybe a tree.

Tree, tree what can I see?
Can it be a queen, wearing green?

Tree, tree what can I hear, with my ear?
A mummy and baby deer

Tree, tree what can I smell?
Bluebells!

Tree, tree what can I feel?
I feel me, under a tree. Be free!



Autumn Leaves

Sophie Doughty

St John Fisher Primary School (Year 2 – Age 6)

Autumn leaves are falling down.
Watch them dance and swirl around
Slowly floating to the ground
Autumn leaves are falling down
Leaves all shapes, colours and sizes. They fall to the ground
in a great big mound. Red, Orange, golden yellow, shiny
acorns and giant conkers.
Autumn leaves are falling down.
Watch them dance and swirl around
Slowly floating to the ground
Autumn leaves are falling down
I love to play with my friends, throwing and kicking and
leaping in the leaves! Hear the crispy crunchy sound as we
stomp around on the Autumn ground.
Autumn leaves are falling down.
Watch them dance and swirl around
Slowly floating to the ground
Autumn leaves are falling down



The Amazon Rainforest

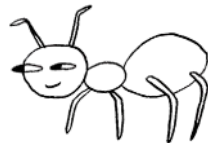
Theo Ali-Khan

Wimbledon Park Primary School (Year 2 – Age 7)

You burn me down and my animal friends homes.
I look after them but you don't help me.
I give them homes and homes are precious.
And so are you so help me.

You cut me down year by year all my trees are disappearing.
I help you but you don't help me.
I give you air, air to breathe, air is fantastic.
And so are you so help me.

You clear me away to make farms,
I feed you but you starve me.
The food I produce is awesome,
And so are you so help me.



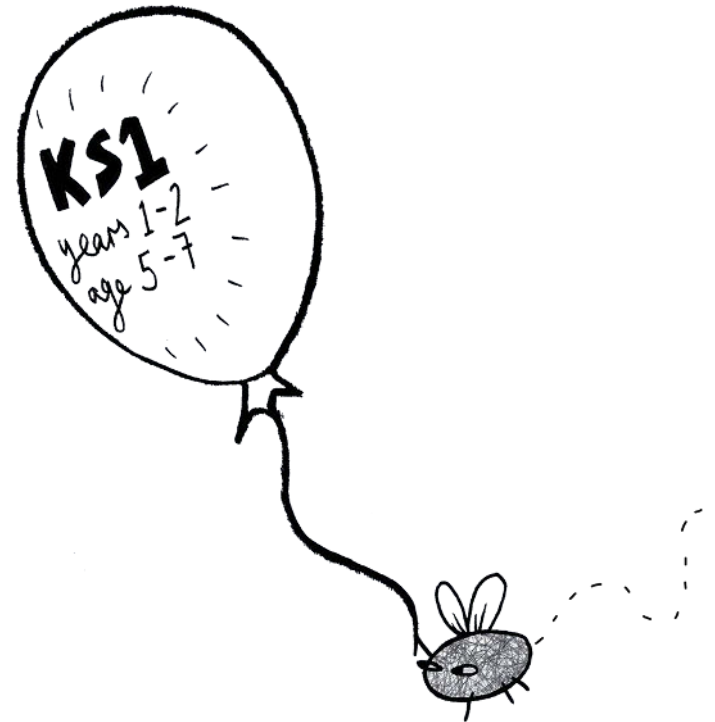
The Tree

Unity Ordonez

Pelham Primary School (Year 2 – Age 6)

A magic tree so big I can fit in it so I can live.
Sometimes I struggle to open my door, my leaves are the
colour of the rainbow so if you say sparkle sparkle a magical
unicorn will come out and if you wish a magical wish it will
come true!
I can spin around if you say spin spin magical tree and if you
don't spin you will never be seen.
My window will lead you to a magical candyland but don't
eat too much otherwise you will be full!
My branches are edible so they taste like Nutella and vanilla
cake.
And if you say rollercoaster you will be in a huge, beautiful,
amazing rollercoaster!

HIGHLY COMMENDED
Stories:



The Tree

Adrianna Buchanan

Pelham Primary School (Year 1 – Age 5)

One day there was a storm and in the storm a thick wind blew a tiny tiny bud. The bud grew and grew until it looked like a secret house inside there lived a astonishing tiny tiny unicorn. Then because the beautiful tree was amazing, the astonishing tree moved to Scotland. The unicorn played a loud bagpipe, and a wonderful tune it was, but soon the unicorn got very tired of playing tunes so the wonderful tree moved to Jamaica where the unicorn had her lovely holiday, but soon the unicorn missed her own wonderful forest home so she flew back home as quickly as she could.



A Little Lucky Bird

Alvin Kapllani

Merton Abbey Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)

I have a big tree in my garden. I know in this big tree live a family bird. One day I saw a little bird stayed by himself in the tree. I called him Lucky bird. I like to feed a little bird. I wish I could have this little baby bird to live with me in my house. If the family bird doesn't have a tree house to live in, I would like to build a tree house for the family bird. I think mum bird and daddy bird going to find a food for this little baby bird. I don't know if this little baby bird has a brother or sister. I have a brother. I wish I could have a sister! I think this bird is gone go when the weather get cold. I will miss him. I still gone meet him again because is gone come in a summer time. I cant wait for him to come back and meet him again. I am dreaming or not? Oh noooo. I'm not dreaming it is a real story. I have a big tree in my garden and is family bird lives there.

I wish I can fly like a bird to go everywhere and touch the sky, but I couldn't. I can see the sky when I'm flying by aeroplane.... ohhh maybe I can see my Lucky bird in the sky.



The Lonely Tree

Anna Gajon

St Mary's Primary School (Year 1 – Age 5)

The lonely tree was all alone because he was all rusty and he was the oldest tree in the forest and his leaves were all falling down.

The animals were all scared of him and they were not even climbing his thin long branches. He was the only tree on the top of a windy and sunny hill. One day one of his branches broke and the tree discovered he had lots of little insects that were crawling inside him and they were his tiny little friends.

The lonely little tree wasn't alone after all and now he was the most beautiful tree of all time and the animals came back and said hip hip hurray for the beautiful tree.



The Little Tree

Anthony Tianyi Cocula

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Once there was a small and beautiful Little Tree in the middle of John Innes Park. The little tree looked around and felt sad while he saw so many enormous trees around him. An old oak tree standing by his side asked, “What is the matter, little tree?” “I want to be like those big trees and be as useful as them,” replied the little tree. “I see”, said the big oak tree, “Don’t worry! As you get older, you will be as big and useful as them.”

The next Spring, the Little Tree grew much bigger and were with lots more branches. Children loved to do role play under it. Sometimes, they used the Little Tree as their Head Quarter when they played Super Heroes. On other occasions, they pretended the Little Tree was a humongous pirate ship that sailed the Seven Seas. The Little Tree was delighted!

The following Summer, the Little Tree grew a lot bigger and created much bigger shade. Under the wonderful shade of his, people played thrilling games and enjoyed delicious barbecues and scrumptious picnics. The Little Tree was ecstatic!

The next Autumn, the Little Tree became massive. Children enjoyed climbing up his rough trunk and swinging on his leafy branches. The Little Tree was thrilled!

The following Winter, the Little Tree grew even bigger. Sadly, it was so cold and the park was very quiet. Finally, it started to snow. The next morning the whole park was covered in white. Lots of Children came to the park. They

enjoyed snow ball fights and built snow men under the Little Tree. The Little Tree was joyful again!

Over the next few years, the Little Tree continued to grow and enjoy its beautiful life in John Innes Park being useful to others. One day a class passed by, the teacher started to tell the children about how trees can beat air pollution. She said, “Trees can help us breathe by absorbing carbon monoxide and producing oxygen.” The Little Tree was so proud to hear all this. He couldn’t help but dance with the wind shouting “You were right! You were right! Oak Tree! I am so big and useful now!”



The Magical Tree

Chloe Desaedeleer

Wimbledon High School (Year 2 – Age 7)

One balmy spring day, Zoe was playing happily in her backyard near Wimbledon Common. She began by playing football with her younger sister, then rugby and then finally jumping on the trampoline. She jumped and jumped and jumped some more. She was having so much fun. “Best day ever!” she squealed! She did so many front flips and so many back flips, going higher and higher each flip. Suddenly, she jumped so high, she didn’t know where she was in the sky! She closed her eyes, took a deep breath of fresh air and relaxed. The wind was breezing through her hair and she flew through the sky like a Pegasus. After a while, she opened her eyes and a big green blob was getting bigger and bigger. PLOP! Zoe had landed gently on the swaying soft leaves of a tree, as comfortable as a cushion.

“Hello there! Want to go for a ride through the village?” Zoe screamed in surprise. The tree was talking to her! She thought she was dreaming but then off they flew. A parakeet, a woodpecker and a squirrel also sat on the tree and hummed as the tree flapped its brown and green wings. Her house seemed tiny from high above. Suddenly they went down, and Zoe felt scared as she thought they might crash into the ground. But instead, the tree’s branch popped out and planted loads of brown seeds into the ground. Back up they went leaving the seeds to grow. “Tweet, tweet, don’t worry Zoe, we are replanting trees throughout Wimbledon where people have cut them down,” sang the woodpecker. Zoe felt proud. She was helping to plant new trees. She was helping this magical tree to give more habitats to animals and clean the air.

After a while they swooped down again and saw a man cutting down trees! He seemed like he was having so much fun chopping down the unfortunate trees. The man was wearing a t-shirt that had written on it “Wimbledon Paper Factory.” Once he put his axe up in the air ready to kill another tree, the Magical Tree dove down and flapped its branches so strongly that the wind blew the axe away! The tree had been saved.

“Hold on Magical Tree, we have to explain to him that we can recycle paper instead of chopping down new trees,” said Zoe. The Magical Tree nodded at Zoe and flew down again close to the man so Zoe could explain to him how precious trees are and how paper can be used and re-used and re-used. The man, still surprised at seeing a flying tree with a girl, a woodpecker, a parakeet and a squirrel nodded his head and he promised to start making new paper out of recycled paper. Zoe and her friends invited the man for a ride on the Magical Tree so he could see from the sky how precious the forests are.



My Granny Tree

Dalga Ozdemir

Holy Trinity Primary School (Year 2 – Age 6)

What do you think happens when you die? Well, in this book I'm going to tell you about a granny who died and became a tree.

One day after school, I was playing with my friends at the park. I heard a strange noise. I went to investigate. Soon, I saw a tree but, not like any tree...

It had a big hole which was moving like a mouth and as I got closer, I heard a voice saying my name.

"Dalga! Dalga!"

"Who are you?" I asked.

"I am your mom's granny tree."

I felt amazed. "How did you get here? I thought my mom said you were dead."

"I am back." she answered. "but, I missed you and her so much so, I came to stay as a tree near your house."

"I am telling my mom straight away!"

"No don't!" granny said. "She already knows about this"

Just then, mom came and asked. "What are you 2 doing?"

Then, she understood. "You met with granny!!!"

"Oh yes" I said. "I am happy I met your granny tree."

...

Just then, my mom woke me up from the best dream ever.

The end.

About the author

Dalga is a human who likes cereal, toys, strawberries, writing, drawing, stapling, video games, poop and wee.

Freddie & Tom

Dingling Han

Ursuline Prep School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Long ago, in a faraway place there were two oak trees, they were called Freddie and Tom. They lived beside a lake. The two oak trees dreamed of what they wanted to be when they grew up. Freddie declared : ' I want to be a treasure chest filled with lots of gold for pirates to look for.' Tom exclaimed: 'I don't want to leave this lake at all, I will grow so tall that when people look at me they will rise their eyes to heaven and think of god!'

One evening, an explorer passed by the lake and saw Freddie and Tom, he said: ' Wow! You look beautiful and I want to cut down you and show it to my wife on Christmas!' Then he cut down Freddie and took it home. He planted Freddie in the back yard when he got home, and went to bed. Meanwhile, back at the lake, Tom was worried about Freddie and miss him so much, he cut himself with a strong stick and set off to find Freddie. When Tom reached the place where Freddie was and they were so happy to see each other again! Freddie was so surprised that Tom had come to find him and they lived together happily ever after.





The Girl Who Brought Back Spring

Elena Formisano

Dundonald Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)

Once upon a time there lived a girl named Elena. She was a beautiful and hungry girl because she had run out of apples. She lived in a small village near the forest. It was snowing in the village and no apples were growing because it was winter. So she had to go to the forest to get some apples. But she was worried about getting lost and she didn't want to move further into the darkness of the deep forest.

Suddenly she heard a strange voice that wasn't a normal voice. It said, "I'm going to help you if you try to move one step forward closer to me." She knew that she could do it so she tried and found a rainbow unicorn. She was very surprised because she had never seen a creature like this. So the unicorn cuddled her and said, "Jump on, we will find what you're looking for." The unicorn lifted up her shimmering wings and up they flew. They started to search for the apple tree from the sky.

At that point a strong cold wind blew in their way and rain was coming down with thunder and lightning. It was very windy and the girl nearly fell off. So they decided to go to shelter and found a dark gloomy cave. The unicorn said to the girl, "Fetch some wood and I will breathe out fire on the wood." Elena took out a torch from her bag and started searching in the back of the cave.

She found a narrow path with beautiful flowers and some sunlight. So she went through the secret passage and discovered a wonderful apple tree. It was a magic cave because it was spring at the end of the cave and there were plenty of apples on the tree and some were falling off on the

ground. Elena was the happiest girl in the forest because she found what she was looking for and thought she could bring it to the village to make a yummy apple juice. She picked up the apples from the ground and went back to the unicorn. Together they flew back to the village. When she arrived, the village turned into spring and the people were very happy because they could drink the fresh apple juice.



The Tree

Elsa Srouji

Links Primary School (Year 2 – Age 7)

This story starts with Mary. Mary was born in 1950. She was one of 4 children, two boys and two girls. Mary's family were very nice but it was noisy in their house, so Mary used to go out a lot to play.

One of Mary's favourite spots was in a field behind their house. In the corner of the field was an apple tree. The tree was big, with lots of branches. It was home to lots of animals including squirrels, an owl that lived high up in the tree and a bunny who lived in a burrow at the bottom.

Mary used to sit under the tree and read her favourite book. When she had finished reading, Mary would collect some apples from the tree and take these home to her mum who would make them into a yummy apple pie.

Mary grew older and had children of her own. She had two daughters called Sophie and Sarah. One day Mary showed the girls her favourite apple tree. They loved it too and their daddy made a swing for them out of wood and rope and hung it from the biggest branch. Sophie and Sarah sometimes had a fight about who got to go on the swing first but they were friends most of the time. Sophie and Sarah did not tell their friends about the swing or the apple tree, it was their secret spot.

Sophie and Sarah grew older too and forgot about the tree. Then Sophie had two daughters. They were Elsa who was the oldest and Cara who was the baby. One day Elsa asked her mum to tell her a story from when she was younger. Sophie told Elsa and Cara about the secret tree with the

swing and they were so excited that they wanted to see it straight away. Their mum said they had to go to sleep but she would show them it at the weekend. Sophie showed Elsa and Cara the tree and told them about how their Nanna used to go there too. Elsa and Cara loved the tree and would go there to play. Sometimes their mum told them they had watched too much TV and should go and play in the field.

The old swing was a bit broken but they enjoyed climbing the tree and sometimes Elsa would read the Beano to Cara. Their cat would follow them to the tree too and would curl up next to them and fall asleep in a pile of leaves. She liked the tree as well.

Elsa and Cara called it their happy tree.



A Growing Friendship

Greyson Quickfall

Ursuline Prep School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Once upon a time there was a tree in an enchanted forest, and it was all alone. It grew delicious apples and wished one day that it could share its apples with a friend. The tree waited patiently for a hundred years to meet a friend. Then one day after an afternoon nap, the apple tree noticed a small pear tree growing next to her. The apple tree looked down in excitement and said, “hello down there my name is Treena and I grow these red apples, what is your name?” The little pear tree replied “Hello Treena, nice to meet you. My name is Pearl, how old are you as you are very tall?” “I am 110 years old, and I share my apples with people walking by, so they have something to eat. It’s very nice to meet you. I have been waiting for a friend to grow alongside me. Would you like to be friends with me?” Asked Treena. “Yes, please” replied Pearl “that sounds lovely. Can you help me learn how to grow?”

Treena thought about how she grew, and she couldn’t remember. How was she going to teach Pearl if she couldn’t remember herself? Then she had an idea! She was going to think back about what she needed when she was a small tree.

“The first thing you need is water as it makes you strong, do you have water?” Asked Treena.

“Yes” replied Pearl “I get my water from the rain.”

“Me too,” said Treena. “The next thing you need is the sun, so you are always warm, and it helps you grow up towards the sky.”

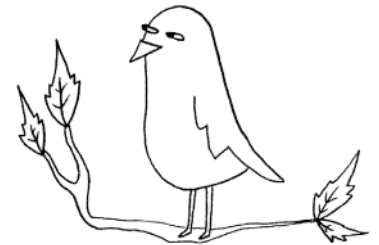
“I love the sun” said Pearl “It helps to make my pears sweet.”

“Food is the next thing I could remember. Food is important because it gives you energy which helps you grow” added Treena.

Pearl thought to herself, is it really that simple. Sun, water and food?

“The final thing and the most important is friendship because you have someone to love and care for you,” said Treena.

Pearl smiled inside and thought to herself she found her friend in Treena and with that they lived happily ever.



The Mysterious Hole in the Big Tree

Mohisha Sutharsan

Merton Abbey Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)



When I was younger, I lived with my family in a beautiful house. The house was big and wonderful. I really liked the house. My favourite thing was the huge garden. In the garden, there was a big tree in the middle. The tree was a Cherry Blossom tree. It was pink and pretty.

I always wanted to climb the tree because I was a very brave and strong child. But, my parents always told me not to climb it. One day, I did not listen to my parents and I sneaked to the tree. I looked up at the tree and my heart was pumping fast. I took a deep breath and started climbing. It took me a long time because I was very small and the tree was too big. Half way through, I found a hole in the tree. My mum always said that it was the home for squirrels. The hole was big so I can fit. Carefully, I crawled into the hole.

Suddenly, I fell down and landed on my bottom with a loud thump. I rubbed my eyes and opened them. I was amazed. I saw an enchanted city in the tree! There were mushroom houses, twinkling lights and fairies everywhere! I love fairies. I have many fairy toys at home. I got up and started exploring.

In the Enchanted City, I made many friends. One was Jackson. He was a fairy and had rainbow wings! He showed me around the city and showed me his flying. He even picked me up and I flew with him. But, I could hear my parents calling me for dinner. I really like the Enchanted City but I loved my home more. So, I told Jackson I needed to go back. Jackson was upset but he still let me go. Jackson helped get back up to the hole. I hugged him and said my

goodbyes and crawled outside.

The next day I was very excited to go back to the Enchanted City. I climbed back up to the hole but when I got there it was gone! I searched all over the tree but there was no hole. I was very sad. Maybe I was dreaming or maybe the magic disappeared.

My Story

Navya Sah

Wimbledon High School (Year 1 – Age 5)

I am a climbing tree in Holland Park and I am ninety years old. I was born when a young girl planted a seed. Over many years I grew into a tall tree with strong branches. I love being a part of Holland Park because it is so peaceful and quiet.

When I was a plant I had soft leaves and stem. To protect me from getting hurt there was a sign that said no playing ball games or walking over the plants. Not everybody follows rules so sometimes I got hurt but luckily that gardener always fixed me. When there were thunderstorms I would get nervous with the noises and I worried that the strong winds might blow me away. But the big trees around me kept me safe. I had fun when I was growing up. When I was strong children used to climb on me and see the view. They would sit on my branches and they would talk and share secrets with each other. I am a good secret keeper because I keep them to myself. I learnt lots of different games from children playing around me. My favourite game is hide and seek because people can hide behind me. Naughty children trick their mums by pretending they are lost.

The best part of being a tree is that I enjoy all of the seasons. My favourite season is autumn because my leaves change colour. Also squirrels bury their acorns under me. My second favourite season is spring because people have picnics in the park. There are colourful flowers and birds chirping all around. There are lots of birthday parties in the park. My favourite part is when the cake gets cut and when everyone sings happy birthday. The only thing I do not like about being a tree is that dogs wee on me and bark loudly.

Now I am an old tree with weak branches. Children cannot climb on me but I still give people oxygen and shade when it is hot. One day when I will get cut I will still give paper to everyone. I like being a tree because I can help everyone all the time.



The Tree

René Uzdin

Merton Park Primary School (Year 2 – Age 7)

A towering apple tree stood, still as a statue, in a summery garden. In a flash, hungry children surrounded apple tree and took turns to pick juicy, mouthwatering apples and munch them with great gusto. “They are succulent!” the children exclaimed.

A wildly powerful storm and raging rain were lashing the ground. Two families ran full tilt through the extreme weather to the nearest tree possible: a gnarled acacia. They reached the tree and were panting, hidden under its leaves and branches. They had escaped the beating rain and the wind which howled like a hag.

In the bitter cold North Pole two weary men glumly trudged through the thick blanket of white snow. They felt all numb as they stumbled in their tiny house. They looked at their small tree (which was planted in a pot) and, faster than lightning, their emotions rose. They felt at home.

At a park in spring, an oak tree was solemnly standing like a proud king of the forest. Suddenly, some squirrels sped right to the oak tree. They dashed towards the biggest acorns and gobbled them with a CRUNCH!

In a spacious park, a steady tree stood and bushes were rustling. A mum and two brothers came into the park and breathed in fresh air slowly.

Never slay trees as they do lots of important things for you and are as good as gold.

The Mysterious Treehole

Serena Lee

Joseph Hood Primary School (Year 1 – Age 6)

I am in Year 1 and I am new in Joseph Hood Primary School. I found a mysterious tree hole in our playground. During break time, I saw my classmates squeezing themselves into the treehole. I was so scared that I didn't join them. But then when I walked back to the classroom, my classmates were already there!

On the second day, I decided to join them to the tree hole. I followed Joshi and Archi, but then I found a blue heart-shaped door inside the treehole. I tried to push it open but I couldn't, it said “PULL” .Okay I pulled it.

I saw my elder sister Jasmine. How come I was in the Year 5 woodpeckers class!

On the third day, I went to the treehole again. I thought I could go to my classroom (I love my chaffinches class and I don't want to go to the woodpeckers class any more.)

When I pulled open the green square door, oh no... all the teachers were there. It's the room for the teachers! Oh, how could I find the right door in the treehole to get back to my classroom?

The Enchanted Snow Tree

Sofia Lis Cruz

Ursuline Prep School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Once upon a time, 1000 years ago, there was a beautiful sparkling snow tree. It was able to make snow crystals and had magical healing powers that others wanted. It had to be protected.

In a village, there was a young girl named Ariana and her big sister Marina. One day their mother took them to an antiques market where they discovered The Magical Snow Tree in an old book. Immediately, Marina felt that she had to find the tree to protect it. By the time they went to bed, Marina dreamed that she was the Snow Tree protector. Ariana woke up the next morning and could not find her sister. Marina was gone. “She probably went to find the Snow Tree”, Ariana thought, so she went to find a map. Meanwhile, Marina was walking in an enchanted snow forest when suddenly she appeared next to a sparkling tree. She could not believe her eyes; she had found the Magical Snow Tree. It had blue snow crystals, white leaves, silver branches, and sparkly roots. Then, the Snow Tree spoke to her:

“You will protect me, and you will rule the enchanted snow forest”

Marina felt blessed, “Thank you”, she said, then she went on to find her sister.

Back at the village, Ariana was studying the map when a message appeared next to her. It was a message from Marina, and it was delivered by the Snow Tree! Luckily, it showed where Marina was! Ariana set off to find her. Ariana followed the map and found the sparkly forest. She

remembered when she and Marina were looking at the old book and she read that the Snow Tree could only be found in a magical enchanted snow forest. Ariana gazed at it when a magical snow arrow appeared. It zoomed away and she followed it until it stopped in a clearing. Ariana took a closer look and the arrow disappeared. “The arrow must have brought me here for something”, thought Ariana, as she looked at the crystals and other sparkly leaves. But there was something else that was sparkling under a rock, she lifted it and found a snow crystal in it. “It is one of the Snow Trees’ crystals”, said Ariana, as she placed it carefully on the palm of her hand and took it with her.

At the same time, Marina was going back and feeling contented as she was finally a protector of the Snow Tree and can visit it any time she wants.

Finally, she was out of the enchanted snow forest and went towards the mountains where there was a steep hill, there she found Ariana. She finally reunited with her sister, and both had a secret to share: they were protectors of the Magical Snow Tree.



The Tree That Couldn't Grow in the Village

Zoya Khan

The Priory Primary School (Year 2 – Age 7)

Once there was a plain old tree. A tree that would never grow because it had no roots because it had no soil and lots of people couldn't find soil in the country called Secretea. The country Secretea has lots of dry land and mostly sand. And one day in the town of Secretea there was a beautiful girl who was named Isabella and she was super helpful. One day, she noticed the tree that couldn't grow, and she took a closer look and realised there was no soil so she asked her nice and caring mum if she could find some soil, but her mum was afraid if she would lose Isabella.

Many many years later Isabella was now seventeen and she looked at the poor little tree. She really wanted to help the tree. One day she went to a mysterious and sandy desert and before she did that, she got her bag and coat and left the town of Secretea into the mysterious and sandy desert. She was travelling for so long until she found some mud which was an incredibly good start and a very good clue. Then she went further and further until she found it. SOIL!!! Then she gathered up the soil and put it in her bag.

Then Isabella ran back home for hours and hours then she had a rest. The next morning she woke up and started travelling for several minutes and she was back home. Then she put the soil where the seed was, and the tree started to grow higher and higher until it grew to its normal size. Everyone was cheering and her mum hugged her perfect Isabella and her mum said, well done my Isabella, well done.

And everyone was happy ever after in the town of Secretea.

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COMMENDED

poems



The Red Eyed Tree

Aeronwy Vaughan-Williams

Joseph Hood Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

“HA HA HA HAAAA”

“HA HA HA HAAAA”

I cackle at the people,
Who seem to be so feeble,
But I am more evil,
Than anything else you know.
I have all the power,
And I am cooler than a flower,
But I know that they will cower,
From nothing except me.
Their biggest fears have gone,
I know that I have won,
Against all the worst stuff that couldn't come,
I'm their only creep,
I'm their only freak.
My red eyes glow,
And glow, and glow,
Then fall into their minds, which become the one big image
inside their heads,
It flows,
And flows, and flows.
I bend my branches,
Fighters lower their lances,
Unfortunately, they lose,
Because their steps are too smooth.

(Five years later)

The same thing happens again,
Until one day, a bird said to me, “why is everyone running
away from you?”
I laughed devilishly: “HA HA HA HAAAA, well then....”

Suddenly, I realised it was my best friend, a wren.

He talked and talked, nonstop,

He finally asked “why do you have to make them freeze and
then drop?”

I didn't reply, but I felt awful,

Now I really know why the people had felt mournful.

I understood everything perfectly now, I had just said sorry,
When my friend the wren said “sorry doesn't help, you need
to feel the cruelty yourself,”

I nodded my head,

I knew what that meant,

I thought of some horrible things that would happen to
me.

‘They were just so scared, so I'm about to see,
How bad and cruel I used to be.’

My bad day came, I was so not ready,

Then I remembered the sadness, and all the screams of the
people,

I sang to myself:

‘Life is a whole,

Like the darkness in my soul,

I am alone,

Even the charge has run out on my phone...’

I hung my head sadly,

I had a feeling I would never scare the people as madly,

The days had begun badly,

But that would stop soon.

I felt my bad memories slipping back into my mind,

Nothing in them was kind,

No, that's something I'll never find.

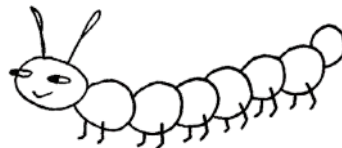
Instantly, I felt a little tear,

So horrible my feelings are, that now they've come back
here,

It's like being attacked by an angry deer,

Like every wall closing in on me, impossible, I can't
escape...
My thoughts ended,
My twigs bended,
I will befriend the whole world.
Just you wait and see,
My dark fiery red eyes drifted off to sleep.
And a tiny, crystal coloured tear appeared in the corner of
my eyes,
It grew bigger,
And bigger,
And bigger,
As I opened my eyes, I didn't feel any burning any more.
Or any hot flames dancing about any more,
Or any dangerous red streaks gliding about my face!
I felt...sort of...normal!

I smiled gently,
Took my frown off my face
...can you guess what happened?
They knew I had changed.
Soon we all became friends.



A Year of Change

Amelie Hardy

The Study Prep School (Year 3 – Age 7)

The chilly winter wind pushes my branches.
The snow hits my bare body
I have yearned for fresh spring
But winter carries on.

Suddenly the sun seems brighter.
The snow begins to melt
And buds begin to grow.
The leaves start to reappear
And I feel reborn once more.

All at once the sky seem more blue
And the sun shines warmly on my back.
The birds begin to come and play,
The green blanket beneath me looks lush
And my heart is full of joy.

The wind comes flowing back
And forces my leaves to fall.
I see the colour of them-
Red, orange, yellow and brown.
I feel sorrow at the passing of the year.

It's Just a Tree, But What Do I See?

Anaya Siddiqui-Puri

Joseph Hood Primary School (Year 4 – Age 8)

It's just a tree,
Nothing special,
Nothing at all
It's just a tree
But what do I see?

Maybe it's a treehouse , full of happy times
Or a house for a gnome?
Is it a place where birds seek life
Or is it thinking up it's own

Is it a place to climb up and observe
Is it a shelter during rain
Maybe the roots of a forest
Or a place to hide from pain

It's just a tree,
Nothing special,
Nothing at all
It's just a tree
But what do I see?



The Redwood

Benjamin Cook

Kew Green Prep School (Year 4 – Age 8)

The redwood stretches into the sky
further than I can see.
Branches shaped like reaching arms
which are holding on to me.

All the other tiny trees
are bowing before their leader,
for the redwood dominates all it sees
and the redwood sees the world.



Our World

Benjamin Grogan

St Matthew's Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

Our world

Our world so freaky green trees and bushes are so keen to grow and grow upwards sideways eastwards westwards southwards not northwards the sun never shines in the north uh, huh.

Trees oh trees marvellous magical sensational trees how lofty, mighty and muscular. Robust things they give us oxygen trees are alive you know they feel, heel, peel and are real so remember that when you meet an lumber jack for when we cut them down look carefully you shall see a frown. Woods woods a hundred woods act like hoods to the animals below play a part in posing for art Trees are shelter to cold and desperate creatures so please stop deforestation it is giving me desperation and devastation.



The Trees Life

India Newton-Darby

Wimbledon Park Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

The twisted branches poke at you, like your mum telling you off.

The leaves fly around, like two excited kids playing catch.

The bark falls on the floor, like someone's old skin peeling off.

The trees have treehouses, like you balancing a book on your head.

The trees grow in the seasons, like you growing all the time. The trees wave their branches in the wind, like you trying to get attention.

The flowers on the trees change, like you looking different when you're older.

The trees can be different shapes and sizes, like everyone else.



Sycamore

Jasmin Rafael

Malmesbury Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

Sycamore,
All the leaves are falling off the tree
The rabbits are getting ready to make their burrow
Nothing is growing yet but things will start to grow soon
Sycamore,

Sycamore,
There are no more leaves on the tree and it looks like it had
a haircut
The rabbits are in their burrow and the squirrel is looking
for his nuts that he hid
The tree was with his best friend, Robin
Sycamore

Sycamore,
Lots of buds have appeared on the amazing tree
The cute, little newborn bunnies are so cute
At last some plants have grown on the ground
Sycamore

Sycamore,
So many leaves have grown on the tree
The foxes are sniffing or smoothing and the tree wonders
what it could be
The plants on the ground around have grown even more
Sycamore



It's a Tree's Life

Livia Lewis

Merton Park Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

I am a tree coming into the world
I am only as tall as a short weed, as I have sprouted from a
single seed
But after months and days go by, I start shooting up to the
sky
I will grow up to save the world, taking in carbon as I live in
your garden

Now I feel big as I rise into adulthood, here come the
children to play on my lavish wood
Now I feel heat like never before, when spring comes rushing
through the door
I sprout and I blossom until its flowers galore, and I feel
beautiful forever more

As I grow up, I feel a sudden chill, winter has come to make
the flowers spill
My leaves drop off, my branches shrewd it seems that
winters in a mood
My leaves are turning red and yellow, the wind is now a fiery
fellow
On some grass I see a light and I know it's bonfire night

I now see a pattern in this curious place, it's the seasons
changing with so much grace
I am now an old tree who, has seen so much, triumph and
failure you name it the lot, so I know when I die, I will die
happy.



Majestic Tree

Marina Jovanovic

Wimbledon Park Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

Hello hello dear tree,
How you bow down at me,
Brushing all your rusty
leaves till they tangle in
the swift breeze,
"It's Winter!"



Hello hello dear tree,
Chirp chirp chime the little birds,
It's morning it's morning they cry,
You hold them in your gentle arms,
"It's Spring!"

Hello hello dear tree,
You feel the morning sun touch your face,
Suddenly you are awakened by butterflies
and insects,
"Yay it's Summer!"

Hello hello dear tree,
You are a shelter, a bed,
Until "Puff!", a chunk of leaves falls on the ground,
All the birds flutter out of the branch in fright,
Now you are prepared
for Winter when the snow falls hard,
"Shhhhhhh."

A Tree's History of the World

Noah Crew

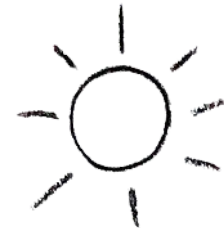
St John Fisher Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

When I was an acorn, the wind carried me up into the skies,
then dropped me on the edge of a lush green farmland. I
watched as many animals grazed, and I felt peaceful.

When I was a sapling, my roots explored fresh soil and my
leaves breathed fresh air. I watched as humans built houses
and factories in the distance, and I felt happy.

When I was a young tree, the air was filled with choking
fumes. I saw the farmland I gazed in wonder upon so many
times before being destroyed, and I felt worried.

When I was an ancient oak, my bark was rough and acorns
plentiful. I looked upon towns and cities, skyscrapers and
cars, but people came to sit under my canopy. I felt hopeful.



The Tree

Sofia Metzger

The Study Prep School (Year 3 – Age 8)

Blossom as elegant as a ballerina,
emerging out of the tall tree
while water drops leap from leaf to leaf.

Branches dancing to the kingfisher's tune,
then standing still and steady,
not moving a muscle.

As night-time falls, shadows lurk in the darkness.
Branches stretch out their witchy fingers,
violently scratching the sky.



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STORIES



The New Beginning

Amelie Dykes

West Wimbledon Primary School (Year 4 – Age 8)

Hi, I'm Fern, a magical woodland spirit who protects nature. My special tree is called an oak tree and my job is to take care of this old tree. I like nothing more than spending time with other spirits in this wonderful wood full of bird song. My oak tree is beautiful, with magnificent leaves, breathtaking bark and a magical feeling. However, all this is at the top of this ancient tree. Sometimes I am unnoticed and my beauty isn't appreciated, but the good thing about this is I am always calm and peaceful. Now, I will tell you the story how everything changed...

One cloudy afternoon, I was feeding the tree when I heard a rumble. I thought it was my tummy, but it couldn't have been, surely! I looked upwards and the sky looked miserable, maybe even furious. There was a thick heavy grey blanket up above. It looked like there was going to be a storm. My heart pounded so loudly everyone could hear. Will the tree be alright? Soon after it started to rain and a shiver went up my spine. I went under some leaves into my hidden house for shelter. I peered out of the window and saw the lightning light up the sky. Suddenly I heard a crack. It looked like part of the tree had a cut. In the next few minutes, the storm got worse and I thought the tree would blow away. My heart leapt out of my mouth as the lightning struck part of the tree. It started swaying slowly and began to lean to one side.

It was clear that the tree was about to split. I was right. In the next few minutes part of the tree fell with a thud and sawdust sprayed everywhere. Tears rolled down my face. It wasn't fair, nothing was fair. I came out of the little hut. I didn't care how windy it was, I just wanted to talk. I felt the

rough and uneven surface inside. I thought I was a terrible spirit. I couldn't even save my own tree. The wind howled at me violently, almost making me fall to the ground.

The next morning the storm had cleared off and I went outside to see the tree and feed it. In a few minutes after I had finished the job children started to appear and climb me. Suddenly a light lit up in my brain. The tree had a new form and wasn't dead. It was like a climbing frame for kids. The message I got from that adventure was when you think all is done for you are wrong. You just have to look at it from another perspective. Ouch! That kid almost kicked me over! Anyway, I had better move before I hurt myself. Bye for now!



Trees and Birds Under Attack

Axel Dahlstrom

King's College School (Year 3 – Age 7)

Once upon a time there was a strong and delightful apple tree. His name was Sherman but everyone called him Mr. Tree. He had a three wonderful friends: one was Wise Owl, another was Mischievous Magpie and the final friend was called Colossal Crow. On a sunny day long ago, Mr. Tree and Wise Owl had discussed his purpose in life. Mr Tree had thought that his only purpose was to grow apples and give them to people and animals around him. He didn't know that he also produced oxygen and it was Wise Owl who explained this to him. Since then, Mr Tree had felt important and valuable.

One charming afternoon, when Mr. Tree was minding his own business, Colossal Crow came crashing into his personal space and settled snugly into his branches. Colossal Crow told Mr. Tree that a vicious attack was ongoing. Tree choppers and bird catchers were around. Every bird had to find a tree to hide in and hope for the best. So, Wise Owl, Colossal Crow and Mischievous Magpie hid in Mr Tree's hefty branches. Soon, most birds and most trees were gone. Mr. Tree was lucky and escaped, because he was in the middle of the forest.

A week later, Mr. Tree was visited by his dryad (a tree spirit). His dryad promised him that she would fight off the bird catchers and the tree choppers. The very next day, the wood truck driver came on the road nearest to Mr Tree. The dryad came to the rescue and attacked the truck with a chopped down tree. The terrified driver fled and was never seen again. She did the same with the tree choppers and the bird catchers. In seconds, she had released all the captured

birds and planted many new trees. Every bird in town came and joined in the joyful party with Mischievous Magpie providing the music.



The Enchanted Tree

Freddie Thomas

Dundonald Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

It was a clear, blue, sunny evening and three friends had decided to camp out beneath the trees. The tulip meadow shone in the sunlight. Blossom fell from the trees in the breeze. The air was so hot the boys thought it would be cooler to sleep outside.

Freddie, the eldest and most sensible of the three, looked for a tree to camp under. Scott's impish smile showed he was excited to stay out all night. Coen's sparkling, polished teeth gleamed as he grinned cheekily. The two younger boys were not planning to go to sleep!

As the sun faded, the boys found they were in a world of wonderful roses and dazzling daffodils. The scent was as sweet as icing sugar. The boys were amazed by the beauty and felt sleepy.

As the boys slumbered, Coen heard a soft groan. He thought he was imagining noises, but suddenly heard it again. Coen thought it came from an ancient, majestic oak tree covered with vines and ivy. Was it a dream? No. The tree spoke.

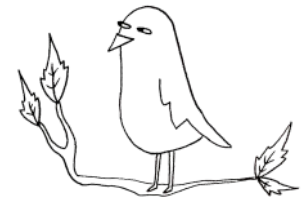
"Good evening," the oak grumbled tiredly. "I am Albert and you are in my garden." "Hell-o?" stuttered Coen nervously. Scott woke too and heard the old oak speak. "Who are you and why are you in my garden?" questioned Albert. "This is not your garden," yawned Scott, standing up for his friend. Freddie awoke in a grump about the noise. "What is this commotion about? I am trying to sleep!" Over an hour, Albert explained how the mayor planned to

destroy the garden. Albert was afraid of any garden visitors in case they brought their axes and shovels to break down the plants. As it got dimmer, the boys and the oak thought of a plan. Albert said oak trees had lined the drive, but now he was the last guard of the garden. The boys promised to protect the garden and to stop the mayor and his workers. The next day, the mayor and workers came to start destroying the garden. Scott and his friends snuck around the diggers to switch them off. "Stop!" shouted the boys. "You must not ruin this garden. The ancient oak speaks and you are wrecking his home!"

"Ha ha ha!" sniggered the mayor. "Trees don't speak. What total nonsense!" "SILENCE!" the oak bellowed. "What? You were not lying? It talks?" the mayor questioned.

"I am 1000 years old," replied the oak. "I have guarded this garden for 1000 years and nothing ever stopped me. I am the last oak. There used to be six of us, but the others were cut down by idiotic men like you!" The mayor was shocked and the workers had already ran home. He quickly followed.

Months later, the boys returned with oak saplings to plant beside their ancient friend.





Accacia

Henry Gustafsson

Holy Trinity Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

Once on an enchanted island concealed in the centre of the unexplored parts of the great and amazing world lay a gargantuan tree with crystalline, lilac leaves and a trunk encrusted with such a dazzling shade of blue that you would think that you were in the greatest dream ever.

The tree was named Accacia and she had made a bond with three animals: a hawk, a fox and a miniature squirrel named Pete. Their lives were nice and small until a terrible day when a hunter and a woodcutter entered the island's magical gates. "How do I cut down that tree after my axe fell into the sea?", grumbled the stumpy woodcutter with his hands clenched together. "You can make another one using iron; or anyway you threw my gun in the sea just because you dropped your grubby axe", replied the hunter glaring at the woodcutter who had no answer for him. The tiny squirrel Pete teared towards Accacia not even stopping for a nut break and reported every word to Accacia, then fainted. Accacia listened without words.

The next morning was boiling hot, the air felt like the inside of the sun. Accacia felt the fox scuttle out trying to get to the godsend water. The crystalline tree was left in the heat with a woodcutter in front of her. Clinging on to not to panic was harder than steel as the woodcutter swung his newly made axe into the tree and "clank", an apple fell on his head knocking him out! Leaves gradually fell off the tree making the words "run or else". The hunter screamed, picked up the woodcutter and ran for dear life.

Then the tree, the fox, the hawk and the squirrel lived happily on the island.

The Silver of the Birch

Kara Jago

Dundonald Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

There was once a silver birch tree that lived in a cold, dark forest in a cold, dark land. It was the smallest tree in the forest, surrounded by big old trees. The silver birch had grown with dark dirty bark that had cracks. It was not a pretty tree, just small and unexceptional. There were lots of noises from the animals like the owls, mice, foxes and deer, but also the creaking of the trees and their branches. It was almost as if the trees were talking to each other....or perhaps even snickering at the little Birch tree.

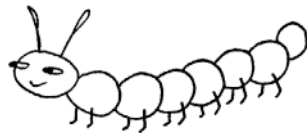
One day five wood pigeons landed on the little silver birch, and started talking to each other. They were talking about where to make a lovely nest. Three of the wood pigeons decided the silver birch was too small and ugly for them to build their nest in and they flew away to find a bigger stronger tree. The remaining two pigeons were both grey and fluffy, and decided to stay because there was a juicy berry tree nearby. They had a quiet chat about what to use for their nest. This time they used some sticks from a nearby cottage roof. They also found some feathers from different birds scattered on the forest floor. These would make their nest very cosy.

The day after they finished their nest, they went and ate lots of red and blue berries. The mummy pigeon was about to lay her eggs. She got comfortable in the nest just in time. She laid 2 eggs in the nest.

On the 17th day the eggs started to move. One by one they started to crack open like they were unzipped. The chicks were chirping like shouting monkeys. The wood pigeon

parents had two boys, one called Billy and one called Sam. But something else amazing happened, the little silver birch started to lose its top layer of bark, like it was shedding its skin like a snake. The wood pigeons got scarred and were worried about their babies and their nest. All of a sudden there was lots of shiny and sparkly light as the bark fell off the tree. When it all came off it was shimmering with light like a diamond. The wind in the forest sounded like the other trees gasped in shock at its beauty.

The Silver birch tree was beautiful and the other wood pigeons wanted to come and be on its branches. The forest did not seem to dark anymore....



The Magic Future Tree

Leo Mayhew

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

Jason gazed intently out of his crystal-clear windows, his eyes were fixed upon the ancient redwood tree that stood majestically at the bottom of his family's garden. How he wished he knew what secrets the tree held.

One warm summer's evening, while he was out playing in the garden, he was sure he could hear the loud, pounding beat of drums echoing inside the tree. Reluctantly, he edged towards the mysterious tree. The beat got louder and louder until the sound was so deafening that it hurt his eardrums. Where was the noise coming from? Little did he know but he was about to find out.

As he reached out to touch the tree, a whirlwind knocked him off his feet and catapulted him inside the tree. Jason spun round and round in a continuous cycle. With every second that passed, he ascended further and further up inside the trunk of the enormous tree. When the spinning finally stopped and his feet touched the ground with a thump, all he could see was an endless landscape of tall, brick, drab buildings. Strangely, there were no plants or natural life anywhere to be seen. Surrounding him, he became aware that it wasn't drums he had heard, but the smashing and battering of axes against the few remaining trees around him.

He realised that he had been transported to the future, where harmless trees were being destroyed by humans without a care. It all started to make sense. Suddenly, Jason had a thought - what if this was the last tree on the planet? Had he been chosen to save it? He struggled to understand

how the ancient, majestic redwood tree from his garden was now the only remaining part of nature left on the planet. In the pit of his stomach Jason felt anger and knew he needed to do something to alter the trees's future. At that exact moment he had a great idea; what if he showed them the beauty and magnificence of trees in his world. Jason urged them to follow him inside the tree so he could take them back to his time. To his surprise it didn't take much persuading to convince the axe-wielders to go with him. It was as if he had power over them. Maybe this was his destiny.

As they followed him back to the tree, the rhythm of their footsteps caused the whirlwind to reform and threw them back inside the trunk. The twisting and turning of the tornado carried them up and up until they landed heavily in Jason's garden. The plants that they saw were so dazzling that one of the men fainted. Amazed by the plants' beauty and Jason's love of nature, the men realised what they had done wrong. They knew change was needed to make a better future for Jason's generation. The Magic tree and all other plants were never threatened again. Jason had fulfilled his destiny.



A Door in a Tree

Leora Reiter-Bootiman

Hollymount Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

Emma steps into a forest with her overflowing happiness and a beautiful calmness, for she is quite alone. The trees around her have something special about them that no one knows of except for her. They each have a door leading to somewhere different. The first one she steps through leads to a warm beach with a refreshing salty breeze to cool her down. She glances at herself, and finds she is in a swimming suit. Emma leaps into the cool waves.

When the time comes to leave, another door lifts her to a jungle full of animals and trees all around. She strokes the broad trunks, which all have a different spiky, but wonderful, texture. A toucan bursting with colours perches on Emma's shoulder. It seems to like her. Alas, once again, she has to part with the jungle.

Next, Emma pushes open the door that awaits her, but it doesn't budge. What was wrong? As Emma scans the other trees, she notices they all have a different swirl in their centre, but this one was plain. To her greatest and least-awaited surprise, the toucan she had befriended with before flew speedily onto Emma's arm. But as quickly as it had come, the bird took flight to a long, hollow log. Filled with eager curiosity, Emma cautiously followed the toucan and unsure of what to do, looked at it hopefully. He pointed his beak into the log. With a deep breath, Emma dipped her head into the log, and under a pile of dry, unwanted leaves that had mainly disintegrated into the moist soil, found a swirly piece of wood. Emma, even with the toucan's lack of words, understood instantly. She picked up the piece of round, intricately carved wood and pressed it into the

door, and as it merged with it, the once still tree glowed a bright yellow, as bright as the sun itself. The moment Emma turned the doorknob, the most magnificent sight appeared before her. Lush, green hills with flowers of every sort and fresh streams as clear as the cleanest glass lay before her. It was exquisite.

It was at that moment that Emma opened her eyes and found she was in bed once more. It was the start of a new day, a day that was going to be as fresh as the streams in Emma's dream.



Blossom's Secret

Lucy Hylton-Potts

Hollymount Primary School (Year 4 – Age 8)

Hello my name is Blossom and I am part of the tree secret agency. As a matter of fact, I am the only tree in the universe who is intelligent. But who says on other planets trees can't be smarter. I can read write and walk though.... Ok fine the walking part isn't true but I can do the other things. Anyway, you need to be a very old tree to do those things. You're not going to believe this but I had an ichthyosaur friend. Weeping willow my boss and an official character in Harry Potter said it is my job to write stories for you. But not just any stories. stories that would make you scream in shame after what you did to our beautiful planet.

Imagine a beautiful Niagara Falls a few million years ago and a flock of birds singing sweet songs above your head. Animals of all kind came in to join the fun as leaves as tender and fresh as wet grass. The radiant sun shone down on all the brilliant flowers as a squirrel's party was playing musical statues. No offence but life was in perfect harmony before you came. You see we shared our land with you, but you decided to invent pollution, climate change and you wanted to destroy the environment. You got everything you wanted. Ok if you want to make the world a better place then read on.

You could:

-Make posters to inspire people

-Turn the tap off when brushing your teeth

-Don't waste paper

-If you're cold put an extra jumper on instead of turning the heating up

-Grow your own fruit and veg

-Reuse and recycle as much as you

Thank you for reading my story, I hope I have inspired you.



Upside Down World

Mia Smith

Pelham Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

It was a peaceful, sunny morning and Rose lay on the branches of her favourite willow tree, located next to a gentle pond. She was going to meet her friends Beatrice and Anita, Molly and Skyler. She stroked the gentle bark and spotted a weird mark. A note lay there, but it had rotted away with time. It said on the side: Do _____ press _____ it will _____ to another _____.

Rose didn't understand so she touched it anyway. There was a whoosh and Rose stared at the tree it was now a deep purple, she looked at the ground then screamed. The ground was the sky and the sky was the ground. "I need to touch that mark" she said. But it was no use. "Wait, if everything's upsidedown I'll need to climb it but backwards"

Heaving herself onto the first (or technically the last) branch she clambered up (theoretically down) she stared. The mark was next to the last (really the first) branch. So, pushing all the way towards it, she hung on a huge leaf thing and she swang on that, scared she would fall, and with her fingertips and there was a whoosh and she landed in the pond with a splash, her blonde hair wet and her clothes soaked all over. Then in the tree she was Beatrice, Anita, Molly and Skyler. Beatrice helped her out, combing Rose's hair with her own fingers. "Honestly," laughed Molly "I know it's hot but to fall in a pond." They all laughed. Skyler hugged Rose and they all smiled.

The Tree of Wonder

Noemie Marson

The Priory Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

As Emily walked into the silent woods, she heard the trees whispering quietly to each other about their hidden mysteries deep inside of them. She thought she heard one say that there was one enchanted tree out there, one full of adventures, one that will make her never want to go back home again, the tree of wonder.

The next morning the sun shone brighter than ever through her window. Emily couldn't wait to go and explore the wonders that were awaiting her in those mystical woods. Slowly but surely, Emily got ready to go on her perilous journey to find the tree of wonder and have the best time of her life.

Strolling cautiously through the enchanted forest, Emily froze. She had never seen a huge tree like this towering over her like a hulk, at such an immense height. It had deep golden leaves like the morning sun with a tip of light purple on the ends. Emily didn't know what to say so she uttered "it's wonderful." The branches twisted and turned in all the ways she could think of with ripe multicoloured fruits dangling delicately there waiting to be eaten.

Suddenly, there was a low rustling sound coming from the bush next to her. Emily, who was a bit frightened, slowly stepped back to avoid any danger. In that moment, a small hedgehog that was collecting berries popped out of the bush and curled into a ball. Emily carefully picked him up and put him on her shoulder.

Nervously, Emily climbed the tall, marvellous tree to find a

wooden platform leading to a big door inside the sturdy tree trunk. Emily peeped inside to find a whole land of beautiful objects, bright pink roses, neon yellow daffodils, deep purple orchids, and then finally, a dark crimson bleeding-heart flower. The hedgehog from her shoulder jumped off and scuttled along the navy-blue path to what seemed like a small house deep within the trunk of the tree. Emily stared at this hidden land with eyes wide open at what she had just seen.

There were great mango trees glistening in the bright mid-day sun, juicy mulberry fruit with shiny orange leaves attached to a strong trunk, and six ripe pineapple plants growing upright in the fresh breeze. Step by step, Emily strolled into the magical land inside this breath-taking tree of captivating objects. Out of the corner, something delicious, something juicy, something that Emily was eager to try caught her eye, the ripest apple tree she had ever seen. Emily grabbed a basket hanging off a branch and rushed to collect some apples from the lovely plant.

After that, Emily hurried home and put the basket on the kitchen table, she was so excited that she scurried to bed getting ready to dream about the extraordinary day she'd had. Her dreams took her away into a different land. Now you know what could be inside a wonderful, marvellous tree like this.



Saviour, Giver & Landmark

Pranav Sreedhar

Holy Trinity Primary School (Year 4 – Age 9)

Starvation had conquered three specific animals who lived on Broadway, Sarty Rd, 98. I didn't know why they settled there until I spotted a poster stuck on their inky-black, refurbished door one day. Quick notice before I continue, they're my new neighbours. Back to the story. Their poster grabbed my attention. 'CARPET CLEANING SERVICES AVAILABLE UP TO 27TH FEBRUARY BY THE TRIO: LOVELY LION, FALCON FLASH AND SNEAKY SNAKES. ONLY £6.49.'

This would have been an awesome opportunity to get my nice carpets, which were now muddy and greasy, hoovered and dusted by my neighbours for a cheap amount. But even I didn't know that a catastrophe was going to occur at House No. 98. A surprise awaited them.

RUMBLE! CRACK! Was No. 100 being demolished? Speedily, I peered out of my window and to my shock House No.98 was being lifted like a U.F.O by something which looked was a tree root. Gaping with terror, I shuddered to see the first floor getting damaged?

Millions of thoughts about my neighbour's safety filled my head the next minute. I wished that they were on the top floor. 24 hours later, I heard another RUMBLE! CRACK! This time it was louder than before. What was happening? After a couple of days, House No.98 went out of existence. A falcon carried a snake and a lion on its fluffy, feathery wings as quick as a rocket. Rubbing my eyes, I stared in disbelief. My mouth widened.

Although the flight of the falcon was quick, it was blocking

a view of a treetop with fresh, plump apples dangling out. Now, our street had a towering, raven landmark. Everyone on the avenue who looked out of their window due to the sound was on cloud nine as they had a large food supply. Everyone praised the Lord for the miracle. Except for three animals. A snake, a vulture, and a lion. Their house was now ramshackle, possibly worse you could say. Luckily, someone in the neighbourhood offered a house for the trilling trio as he owned two houses and they were asked to pay £12 every two months. I was told the news first so that I could explain it more clearly. Either way, they seemed to understand it well. The snake wriggled quickly, the lion roared while wagging his tail and the vulture swooped around the noisy neighbourhood, his face sometimes entering puffy clouds which were candy floss.

After I told them the news, I asked them to clean my carpet with my equipment so that I could pay them the rent money. And for food. Guess what? They had vulture pluck apples with his soft wings and as of the minute raindrops, the tall tree replanted red crunchy apples.





The Tree

Rohan Tokhi

King's College School (Year 4 – Age 9)

I began as a miniscule seed buried in compact soil. Reluctantly, I began my eternal journey. I devoured every bit of water, nutrients and sunlight as my fragile body fought through the provoking soil.

In a month's time I caught a glimpse of the real world which was amazing. There were so many plants just like me! Suddenly I felt droplets of water splattering down on the ground. I tried to find shelter, but it was of no use. Fortunately, the infuriating water storm had settled down very soon. My life was very peaceful for the next year or two as I emerged into a baby plant.

One day while I was marvelling at one of my lush new leaves, in my peripheral vision I saw a pair of beady eyes coming towards me. The creature's nose was flaring as it... POUNCED on me. I sharply turned to the right and brushed on of my spiky leaves along the creature's fur forcing it to run away. Different predators would frequently come but I managed to tackle them off every time.

For most of the next century I gazed at my stem gradually transforming into the trunk of a magnificent and grand tree. I also saw a white substance oozing out of the bark. For a while I decided to look above me. I was completely stunned when I saw a green vast bush hovering above me like a hive of green bees. I stayed in that very position for the next decade. When I decided to look underneath me I nearly fainted when I realized that I was towering above everything. I thought about what an adventurous life I had. I was extremely lucky to be a tree!

The Tree of Secrets

Stanley Millar

St Mary's Primary School (Year 3 – Age 8)

Once upon a time there were two boys. There was one tall boy and one short boy. Their names were James and John. Their father had let them go out for the day and they were joyful and excited to go out on their own.

As soon as their father opened the door, they ran out as quick as their legs would carry them. In a few moments they stopped and started to play with their ball. Suddenly they came across a massive, gigantic dragon fruit tree. Dragon fruit trees' leaves droop down and that's where the dragon fruit are. But there was something wrong about this dragon fruit tree. It had no dragon fruit!

Without a warning the tree started to talk. It said "Kids, will you retrieve my dragon fruit?"

James and John blurted out "Why should we get it?"

So the tree spoke again. "If you do, I will tell you secrets."

James and John agreed that they should find it but were puzzled, so they asked "How are we going to find a dragon fruit?"

Straight away, the tree quietly whispered "Go down the hole.. he has the dragon fruit!" Then one of the tree's leaves pointed to a hole.

As James and John walked away from the tree it spoke again.

"Be quiet, do not disturb him."

James asked "Who should we not disturb?" As quick as a flash the tree answered "The mole!" Then the tree said, "Well, get a move on then!"

So James walked over to the hole and jumped, then John jumped.

In the unstable dark crept two boys. After a while the



tunnel opened out into a lovely, relaxing, warm cave. In a corner was a grumpy, dirty mole.

James slowly said "Do you have a dragon fruit?"

The mole replied in a nasty voice "The only thing that is interesting to me is my pink and green ball."

John bravely said "Can I take a look at your ball please?"

"Well, you can only have it for ten seconds."

"Deal!" cried John. As soon as he finished, he whispered so that the mole couldn't hear him that the ball was the dragon fruit.

James announced "We need your ball", but the mole had other ideas.

"No."

Suddenly, John tripped upon a root and their ball fell out of his pocket.

In a flash the mole noticed.

"What a wonderful ball that is. I want it."

He started to run towards it but James and John held him in the air.

The mole said "Please let me have it, I will even let you have my old ball."

James and John agreed.

So they gently put him down and he scuttled over to where the dragon fruit was, gave it to the boys and they gave him the ball.

So back through the hole they went and in a few seconds they were back.

They ran over to the tree and said "We did what you wanted".

Then they put the dragon fruit into a hole in the tree and it started to grow fruit.

"If you think you can venture to the pomegranate tree, you will have the secret of how to speak with animals."

That's how the adventures with the Trees of Secrets began.

The Curly Tree

Woody Guest

Wellington Prep School (Year 4 – Age 9)

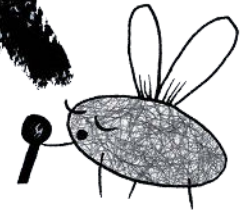
'Haha - you're never going to be a proper tree - never used for anything - haha! Birds and mammals won't make their nests out of you and fairies won't make their homes out of you! The Curly Tree rustled his leaves despondently. The other gargantuan, colossal trees always abased him and put him down. As they always said, he was going to get sliced down. The other trees were infatuated with themselves and spent their time gazing at their immense branches. He found them so conceited and vain, all eyes for themselves and nothing else. The others were much more significant than him, known all throughout the woods. He was known as The Curly Tree, the only one without a name. Others were called names like 'Crunchpound' and 'Snozzletrumpwet', but he was The Curly Tree. No one spoke to him, they spoke about him, making sure he was out of earshot. Occasionally some talked to him but that was only to aggravate him.

They thought they were too imposing and fantastic for him. The other trees left him alone mostly, dreaming about the fairies that were on their way to make their homes in them. Usually, the Curly Tree was auspicious and hopeful about the fact that some birds might make their nest out of him, but that was too optimistic. He was stupid to think that, it was ignorant. Now, one day, a humble, lanky woodcutter was sauntering along the road, happily whistling. He didn't have much money but he still managed to be glad about how privileged he thought he was. He had an axe slung behind his back and clumsily sauntered towards the woods. He raised his axe and CRASH! The tallest tree toppled and plummeted to the ground.

The Curly Tree watched in horror and disbelief. Was he next? Was he? The woodcutter murmured under his breath, 'That tree's too curly to be used for wood.' The Curly Tree closed his eyes and prayed with all his might. The woodcutter strolled over the verdant hillside and stopped at another tree. This tree was the thickest and was covered in vegetation. It would be hard to hack it down. The woodcutter started chopping but ceased soon enough. He slowly lowered himself down and leaned against the tree. It was a tranquil area - so idyllic and serene. He raised himself and walked over to the other trees. An hour later the woodcutter was strutting home, the trees all fallen behind him. He had managed to chop the biggest tree down, followed by all the others. Only the Curly Tree was left. Soon a bird nestled into his shoulder. A squirrel scampered up into his leaves and all sorts of species began to make their homes in him. He was teeming with all of the animals from the woods. The Curly Tree was content.



highly commended
★ POEMS ★



The Tree for Me

Ahana Siddiqui

Joseph Hood Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

I went to the woods to find a special tree
Whispers fill my ears as I wander through the woods
I look around to see many squirrels clamber up branches
Leaves rustling through the wind, I follow them up the tree

I reached the top and brushed the dirt off my skirt
I was astonished at what I could see
Prickly thorns clawed at my clothes aggressively
I knew this wasn't the tree for me

I climbed back down, bewildered at what I saw
I can't give up I told myself as I sat down
It was windy and it almost blew me away
A cat jumped into a fir tree. I needed shelter and did the same.

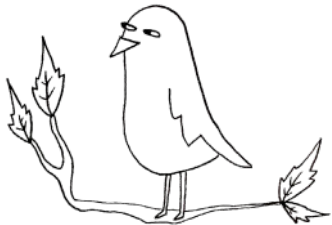
I finally was free from the wind's grasp. I panted
Then as relief washed over me, it drained away when I saw it
Several angry cats pounced and I quickly dodged
I knew this wasn't the tree for me

I frantically climbed down the tree, shaken
It now was raining, the cats were still clawing menacingly at me
I stood, eager not to ruin my clothes, and saw shelter in a willow
I sprinted towards it and sat down under the leaves

There was so much to take in
The trunk was a shade of brown that reminded me of chocolate

Countless vibrant flowers slept, cozily trucked in their leafy
beds
There were green leaves that swayed serenely through the
wind

It was so peaceful and calming. I almost fell asleep
There was a sunset and pink and orange shone through the
leaves
It was such a harmonious, peace-loving place to be
I knew this was the tree for me



The Tree

Alva Lindh-Ilusia

Kew Green Prep School (Year 5 – Age 10)

The winds whipped on the day we first met,
You were bare, cold and shivering.
The howling storm snapping your majestic branches,
My heart beating faster when I stood beneath you.

Your beautiful leaves were blown away,
Your bark crumbled like my heart when I couldn't look at
you.
Your voice was silenced when you were stripped down to the
bone,
And you stood, melancholy and miserable
When you had once been so mighty and proud.



There Was Once a Tree

Amara Khan

The Study Prep School (Year 5 – Age 9)

There was once a tree, whose branches would billow in the wind on a sad stormy day.

She would howl to the wolves in December and sing to the birds in May.

Emerald green and cloudy jade were the colour of her leaves.

She was home to all from beetles to spiders and squirrels to bees.

In July she would sway and in December she would droop.

The tree was a weird one, the weirdest in her troop.

The rest of the troop were short and strong whilst the odd one out was weak and long.

The group's leaves were mahogany and syrup-like whereas the tree's were lime and grass-like.

The troop told her she was mad and the tree soon thought, 'They're right I'm stupid and bad.'

Winter seemed to drag on forever and Spring never came.

Instead of the usual sunshine there were heaps of rain.

The tree hated getting a terrible reputation, she tried to be normal, she even tried levitation.

Idea soon struck the oak's head, 'I just have to be me,' she simply said.

So the tree acted normal but added a little kindness and a smile.

The troop learnt a lesson they realised they were wrong, they were kinder to the tree and taught her to be strong.

That kindness spreaded through the world and so did that smile.

Your smile can change the world.

There was once a tree, a special, kind tree.

Autumn Has Tracked Me Down

Arabella Reed

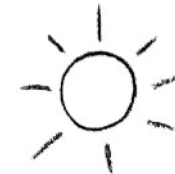
Kew Green Prep School (Year 5 – Age 10)

Autumn has tracked me down,
There is nowhere to run and nowhere to hide,
I can feel the cold breeze eating at my soul,
Shattering my heart weighing me down.

Autumn has tracked me down,
Grabbing my leaves and scattering them around
Tearing my bark, skinning me bare.
Leaving me in agony and despair.

Autumn has tracked me down,
How long to go before you stop giving pain?
The sun has gone, darkness has returned,
And the wind still beats me down.

Autumn has tracked me down,
Rushing away with its last blow,
It leaves me to wither and decay,
Wondering if I shall ever bloom and shine again.



The Last Tree on Earth

Ashvin Waegner

King's College School (Year 6 – Age 10)

I am the last tree on Earth,
And I am alone.

I stand here, in a desolate battlefield,
Where a city called London once stood.
Now, scarred by war and fighting,
London is no longer the bustling city it used to be.
It never will be again.

As the troops from opposing sides close in once more,
Fighting, killing, bombing, exploding,
I wonder “How could a race,
So powerful and connected,
Turn against each other so quickly?”

My flowers are in full blossom,
One day, they will wither and die,
Just like the humans do.
I see them each day, wasting their lives,
Trying to win a war that has already been lost.

The men come closer and closer,
Towards the last tree on Earth.
Although this time, something feels different.
Boom! A shockwave sends shivers all through my roots.
I hear a crackling noise coming from my trunk.

I am the last tree on Earth,
And I am burning up.

Tree of Judgement

Asmitha Vasanthakumar

Beecholme Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Do you ever see faces in the bark of trees?
Like shocked ghouls,
Or miserable grandmas who want to flee,
You may shrug it off,
But it isn't a coincidence,
At least not to my family and me.

To us, it's a tree of judgement,
So grand yet underestimated,
So secretive but important,
We have one in our back garden.

Soul, trapped within the bark,
Awaiting judgement (as you may have guessed)
From the spirit of the tree,
Whether they treated mother nature like a nurturing being
Or did they look to the powerful, mighty thing,
As a source of wood and material for their homes.

Those judged well, fly high above the sky to heaven,
Those judged poorly descend to the underworld,
Your actions make up your future,
Faces never stay forever, in the engraving of the bark,
They disappear after a week or two,
And are replaced by new souls; ready to be judged,
By the tree of judgement.



A Mother's Lullaby

Charlotte Gruenthal

Joseph Hood Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

Listen closely and you will hear
trees whispering quietly in the moonlight,
whispering about something long, long ago.
When mountains have not grown,
there was no one to roam,
a bruised and battered, incredibly shattered, thunderous
earth.

Then one day a tiny seed
with no reason to need
appeared out of nowhere, as if on cue
It grew and grew
against the odds and as if to accuse
the thunder for battering the globe.

It grew to a tall, proud tree
bringing love, hope and taking a new road,
turning a page to a new age.

The seed is you; you are life, life is you.
So stand tall and proud,
rooted to the ground
to what you believe.
You can achieve!



Tree Folk

Coco Coombes

Avenue Primary Academy (Year 5 – Age 9)

A rustle of leaves,
The hooting of owls,
Yet still I wander along,

Tweeting birds,
But the night so quiet,
Yet still I wander along,

An oak tree ahead,
Twisted old branches,
The tangle, the maze,
Of leaves,

I lay a hand down,
On the jagged old bark,
Running a hand round a knot

Splintering wood ,
Sticks out at odd angles,
Digging into my palm,

I slump back,
Slide to the floor,
Ripping the back of my shirt as I go,

Oh, the beauty,
The beauty of this tree,
Oh, may I just stay,
A little while longer?

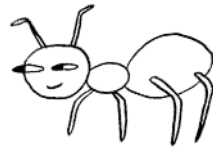
The weak branches sway,
Whilst the strong ones hold
Although both are cowering,
In the strong winter blow,

I close my eyes,
Imagining a door,
Right in the centre of the trunk,

I walk on ahead,
Open the door,
Then I am blinded by white light,

My, this tree holds,
Such wonderful folk,
All waving and smiling at me,

I come to a halt,
Might that be a familiar face,
Who could it be? ...



Roots

Elijah Storey

Beecholme Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Roots
An interesting word
Ethnicity and culture
Diversity and difference
Ancestor and elders
Relatives and family
Like the roots of a tree

Snaking their way through the ground
Crossing themselves and joining
With a primary link, the tree
Or a great, great, great grandparent
Married to another
Making a family
Like the roots of a tree

Deep and meaningful
Never apart
Co-joining
A web of cultures
Married into others
Born into others
Dates of importance
And significance
Like the roots of a tree

Entangled and interesting
Historical and mysterious
Unique and special
Something to be proud of
Everyone has them

Inclusive
Fascinating and signaling
The people you love
Roots



The Blum Blume Tree

Fionn Burgess

Pelham Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

There was once a fruit and when it was eaten
You would gallop, galoot and scream “KASHOOOT!!”
For this is the way of the Blum Blume fruit tree
The Blum Blume tree is a very rare creature
With rainbow colours and many a strange feature
There are those who would hunt it
There are people that are cruel
But anyone who cuts down a Blum Blume tree’s clearly a
fool
For this is not the way of a flumity-flim mitle-kin Blum
Blume tree!
Its fruits should not be bought and sold
After all, they are worth more than any earthly gold
The Blum Blume trees are dying because of human greed
For some fancy hair product called Shamspeed
For this is not the way of the Blum Blume fruit tree
It ought to be loved, it ought to be treasured
For its beauty cannot be weighed or measured
So we must save the bombastic, scrumtastic Blum Blume
fruit tree!

The Gardener

Haadi Mukri

Fircroft Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

A new day was born and so was I,
Nervously I lay, nothing but a weak twig waiting for light,
My master was strong, much older than me,
His muscles heaved as he dug earth around my gentle feet.

A towering man he watered and cared,
Years passed by and my bones grew stronger,
My roots searched deeper for good minerals and water,
I no longer needed his watering can.

My fingers fluttered with emerald green jewels, Whilst his
became wrinkly and slow,
I towered into the clouds cloaked in nature, But he hunched
down low,
Now and again he patted my trunk and looked up at my
magnificent glow,
Birds crowned my head in a grand orchestral feat , But my
master slowed in defeat.

They left a headstone in remembrance of him,
They planted flowers and left notes and hearts,
All of this propped into my roots, sprouting up with new
shoots.

Outside My House There is a Tree

Holly Gibbs

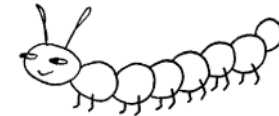
Pycroft Grange Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

Outside my house there is a tree. It always seems to be
staring back at me. I stare at it, it stares at me, outside my
house there is a tree.

Outside my house there is a tree. And before school, it
always seems to be looking at me. I look back at it, it looks
back at me. Outside my house there is a tree.

Outside my house there is a tree. It always seems to be
reading back to me. I read to it, it reads to me. Outside my
house there is a tree.

Outside my house there is a tree. And every night, right
before sleep, it always seems to be singing goodnight to me. I
sing to it, it sings to me. Outside my house there is a tree.



The Spirits of the Oak

Holly Haldane

Ursuline Prep School (Year 5 – Age 10)

How long, how long will it be,
until I get to the top of this tree?
the way the wind blows and the way the tree grows,
how long will I be here? Nobody knows.

Suddenly I hear a crack, then a thud, then feel a smack,
the branch has broken, the roots have woken,
the spirits of the Oak have certainly spoken!

Then without thought I clench my fists,
and feel something writhing around my wrists,
then into the ground I quickly fell,
like a penny dropping into a well.

Deeper and deeper, steeper, and steeper,
I was the vine, and the hole was the beaver.
There was nowhere to run and nowhere to hide,
the spirits of the Oak had come alive.

But then my confusion turned into fear,
I thought my death was getting near.
Why could it be, that this huge tree,
would hit and spit and attack me?

It just seemed too wicked to be true,
the way the wind blew, and the way the tree grew,
the spirits of the Oak were haunting me.

Then quickly and swiftly I opened my eyes,
and let out a humongous cry!
Thankfully it was only a dream,

I could now breath instead of scream.

Will I ever be brave enough to climb another tree after what
just happened to me?



Refugee

Lily Ryder

West Wimbledon Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

They say to spread your roots
She said nowhere felt like home
That she'd seen a thousand faces
Full of unhelpful sympathy

And patronising smiles
That never quite reached the eyes
She's heard a thousand languages
A thousand words she can't understand

They say to bend before you break
Well she said she's already broken
And so did the town hall where the bomb hit
If she hadn't run away she would be lying under a
gravestone

They say to turn over a new leaf
Well, she said she's turned all the leaves
In a thousand forests already
Her life has changed more than she can count

They say to stay grounded
She said there is too much chaos for that
They say to be like a tree
Strong but moves with the wind

What good advice is that in a world with machetes
In a world where war rages
They say it's metaphorical
She didn't like metaphors

I remember her telling me they were lies
She left after that
Never to be seen again
With my own eyes

She continued on her journey
To find peace
We were only a stop on an everlasting route
A page of a book as fat as dictionary

A single branch on a tree that scrapes the sky
Maybe she's forgotten us
Or maybe she remembers
Maybe if she comes back

When she comes back
She'll see the memorial tree
We planted by the quay
For her
And those like her
And those nothing like her
And she might see why strangers became family



The Rings Inside a Tree

Martha Whiteley

Sellincourt Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

In 1666 I have one ring, the great Plague has ended in flames.

I am a feeble sapling trying to flourish in ashes scattered over London.

Fire and emotion spread rapidly as houses disintegrate and crumble to nothing.

Time passes

I am still young but I am thriving

three king Georges have reigned

by the time Britain has defeated Napoleon, the third

George has died, mad

and I now have over 150 rings.

A new age has begun and a war has broken out as people flee their homes to fight, I count my rings over a hundred years have passed, it is the year 1918.

I have only grown 17 more rings when war breaks out once again

aircrafts fly overhead and distance screams bring back old memories

I am getting older, but there is still more to come despite feeling younger, I am now 279.

War has ended and the world is at peace at just 25, Elizabeth the second is crowned the next queen and Britain is already in celebration

My rings have grown in number, I now have 287.

It is 70 years later and Britain is soon to be commemorating

the Queen's Jubilee

Cakes and drinks are sure to be made as celebrations begin on the 2nd of June.

Although it is soon time to celebrate, the world has been living with yet another plague for nearly 2 years

I am now 356, but there is still more to come...more rings to grow.





Who Am I?

Navya Roongta

Dundonald Primary School (Year 5 – Age 9)

I am the ruler of the beach
My leaves are unique, the ocean breeze Choreographs my
flow.
Although I may look deadly, hostile In nature, I am quite
the opposite.
Instead, my sensational colour palette
A light progression from dark, deep green
To a beautiful sunset orange makes me shine. I grow an
abundance of fruit
All sweet and juicy.
A personal favourite of mine Tamil, from India,
Or Acai berries
A superfood, fuelling your brain.
The monkeys nearby are as sneaky as thieves Always stealing
my fruit.
Still, I am the protector of the beach
The shade I provide shelters the little people Underneath
me.
I am worldwide.
All over the globe I am a traveller
Witnessing the world's laughter
But also the world's suffering.
I wish to help
Yet sometimes we are destroyed
Our livelihoods ruined in one foul sweep. So please, next
time you're in the Maldives Or beneath the Californian sun,
Treat us with respect, Not brutality.
For we can be friends, You and me.
Me the palm tree.

A Life

Sasha Weber

Poplar Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

A life of a tree starts with an animal
In a sun dappled forest
Where waters streams trickle down hill
Fish leap freely
A furry chested friend berries a nut
And a willowy sapling is born
Every fresh morning a different height
Hosting children into its tangled arms
Prickly congers fall and they become a mother
Decades later flowers coil round it
Sorrow fill its curvy leaves as it sees its friend cut down
Winter comes and the trees shiver with the winds breath
After a long brutal winter a flower blossoms

Spring

All around colours suddenly emerge and never leave



The Gift from a Tree

Shi Xian Zhuang

The Sherwood School (Year 6 – Age 11)

I was lying in the grass
looking up at our big oak
when I closed my eyes to fall asleep
and when at last I woke
I could not my arms or legs.
I could not speak a word.
I was a tree.
I cried a tear.
But then I saw the bird.
A little bird, so new to flight
with tiny wings and beak,
she landed in my branches.
I listened to her speak--
Your trees are safe and beautiful.
That's what my mama said.
I felt her bird feet tickle me.
She shook her feathered head.
That day was many years ago.
I am a child once more.
But I am different now
because I was a tree before.



The Tree's Dying Wish

Thomas Osbourne

Dundonald Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

A poem inspired by seeing the Ancient Pagoda Tree at Kew.

I was the seed, summoning all my strength,
Pushing up to the shimmering sunlight with incredible
length, I felt the breeze on my feeble arms,
And let it spread like nature's charms.

And then I saw the first leaves fall, Brown, honey-yellow, red
and all. Snowflakes followed, swirling in mist,
The wind was a viper, in my ears it hissed.

I lived a hundred years, a thousand seasons, Part of a lush
landscape with trees on
Every hill. But new sights and sounds increasingly Made me
full of melancholy:

I heard my friends losing their innocent lives,
They called my name hopelessly and part of me died;
Voracious wildfires and shrinking lakes -
All these events made my heart ache.

The time has come for me to rest
My drooping head on Earth's tired breast. My dying wish to
all humanity:
"Please protect our only world - there is no planet B!"

Man and Tree

Varsha Kowsikaran

Malmesbury Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Man and Tree bound by an unspoken, magical, deep bond,
We create something to grasp,
Hand in hand through every task,
An everlasting friendship,
A treasure to cherish within our hearts.

Time elapsed,
And it seems as if it keeps us trapped,
In a world where Man and Tree,
Are united no more,
Life consumed by slow decay,
Instead of focusing on the future,
We dwell upon the past,
As we now wish to grasp,
The pleasures that didn't last.

Left aghast with the long, snaky figures that now roam the
caves,
Lurking in the ebony recesses beneath, serving as slaves,
They cast inky black shadows as they labour out into the
restless night.
Trees uprooted from their homes,
Bruises being made in the soil,
Entangled in dilemma, we neglect ongoing toil.

Forest fires to speeches, uproars of public,
Like an empty vessel makes noise, it stirs up emotions,
We constantly avoid
Aligning us in misfortune whilst
Numbers of species decline,
Left a distress at the core of my mind,

A single ray of light shines through the darkness,
Its name, pray?
Hope,
When this such free bird,
Perches into the soul,
Filling one's hollow heart,
With its soothing tune,
And once it reaches the ears,
The song never seems to cease
Unless you choose not to believe,
Like the everlasting bond between Man and Tree.



Life of a Tree

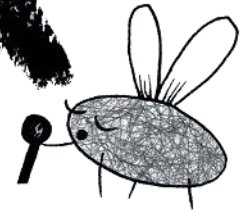
Zoe Jejcic

Ursuline Prep School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Within a forest, rampant and deep,
Was planted in the ground, a hazel seed,
Settling itself down in the moistened soil,
With fresh water and the sun's boil,
When it appears, the birds chant,
Look at that, it's a plant!
With lime leaves and a scrawny stalk,
Growing next to a towering log,
Time flew and a trunk is there,
Bold, brown and bare,
With emerald cotyledon,
It spreads it's leaves out on his home island,
Soon upon the branches something olive-green appears,
With a lopsided shape and a long top is seen crystal clear,
Soon, it multiplies throughout the branches,
And you can pick one off and munch it,
A tree can tell a story with all that it sees,
Peering down and watching people pass by with their
families,
The picnics he has witnessed with families squabbling over
the last chip,
And the musicians playing under asking for tips,
The beautiful women taking refuge beneath for shade,
Waiting for the sun to fade away,

After the people lose interest and care,
The tree must begin to think about an heir,
It drops a seed for a new sprout,
Then says goodbye to the world,
And dies out...

HIGHLY COMMENDED
Stories



The Tree

Aaliya Saxena

The Study Prep School (Year 5 – Age 10)

Displaying it's rays was the sun, revealing my brown fur, bushy long tail, almond eyes and sharp big teeth which were peeping out of my small round mouth. Scampering on the bough of the oak was I and I said hello to my friend. He waved a branch full of foliage and, as always, he gave me some plump juicy berries to eat. Yes, he was much older than me but we were very close.

As the sun became a moon and stars started revealing themselves, I went down for more food but I had to ask to go down for my friend would get cross. Luckily, he allowed me so there I was swinging, climbing and scrambling down. That was my routine for most of the summer until my friend's leaves turned from vibrant green to scarlet, turmeric and auburn. I soon realised it would soon be time for me to go into deep sleep for at least a few months. It was the last few days that I would get the time to spend with my friend before my deep sleep.

I vividly remember that the next day was not as bright, but gloomy, not allowing the sky to reveal itself. The ancient oak was swishing in the breeze talking to the windmill nearby. Both of us were feeling bored and we decided to take a siesta. Out of nowhere, we heard loud noises of men talking. Opening our eyes in tiredness, we saw that people were bringing pointy and sharp equipment near to my friend and, before we could know what was happening, the equipment started making a buzzing sound and a deep gash was already made in my friend's illustrious body. I made a painful cry for help that only I and my other cohorts could hear. His colourless blood started oozing

out of his body. The sparrows flew out of my friend's arms all at once making a huge cry of help. Before we realised what was happening, my friend and confidante took his last breath. I jumped from his branch and stood away when his magnificent body lay helpless on the ground. My eyes were blurry with tears.

It felt like yesterday when I was looking for my home. My coat was fresh; I had just left my family, awaiting a new life. I spent hours finding a home. But something caught my eye that seemed kind, gentle and pleasant, almost grandfatherly. Without a thought, I went rapidly to my friend. He welcomed me in as if was no stranger, as if I were a friend. That moment I treasured. I remember how I used to play on his branches, eat his blossom and fruits and now it was all gone, never to be seen again. I miss my friend, my confidante, my only family-the tree.



My Time to Shine

Abisana Rasiah

Beecholme Primary School (Year 6 – Age 10)

The air was filled with the buzz of chatter and excitement as many families (or last minute shoppers) ran around the store frantically, in search of the perfect tree for their home. I stood there sorrowfully, as I watched my family and friends get picked one by one. Due to my height and size, many people thought it looked as though I was cowering in fear. As I looked on as everyone else was being chosen, memories flooded back to me. I had been in this position before, worrying if I was too small to be cut down for the store, just the same as now, everyone but me got their dream to come true.

Engulfed in my memories, I was oblivious to what was happening. The heavy weight of rope brought me back to reality. My thin, green branches were pinned to my side. Could this be? No ... How would I, a tiny, pathetic twig of a tree, be chosen? That's just ... amazing, but mind blowing. My imagination was set free by this exciting news. Maybe the house I was going to was a huge manor house with expensive furniture and beautiful French windows that glistened like diamonds when the sun shone through them. Oh. The vehicle stopped in front of a two storey building with small square windows splattered with dirt. My heart plummeted to the ground.

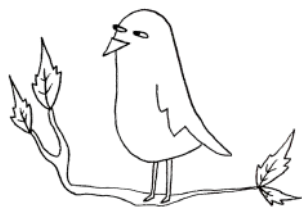
I gave up hope and shut my eyes, foolishly thinking all of this would go away. I immediately opened my eyes again. I was placed in a living room with vaulted ceiling to make it look enormous. There were no adults in the room; only three children: two girls and one boy. The eldest child was a tall girl with long brown hair, green hair and tanned skin. She

looked about twelve years old. The other two were twins. They had the same green eyes as their sister and skin tone, but their hair was a dirty blonde with a brown hue. The day was ending and a voice called, “Kids, dinner’s ready!” In unison they replied, “Coming Mum!” After that, they left the room.

Now, I was lonelier than ever. Exhausted by my rollercoaster of emotions, I sank into a realm of tranquility. At the crack of dawn, I felt something weigh down my branches. I glanced down and saw a nest of brown hair holding a candy cane, still wrapped in the original plastic it came in. “What are they doing? Are they decorating me? No, that can’t be!” “Mum! Dad! Come and look at the tree! We’ve just finished decorating it!”

“Coming dear!” someone replied. The two people that had just come into the room said something that would break my heart.

“They gave us the wrong tree. I didn’t want this puny one,” said the woman. My heart stopped.



Underground

Adna Daadir Abdi

Sellincourt Primary School (Year 6 – Age 10)

I’m utterly alone. 13 days and 13 nights. Not a glimpse of civilization. Alone in this wasteland that used to be full of flora, fauna and life. Now just a crumpled up piece of history.

Everywhere you scrutinise all you see is an emotionless grey and abandoned oil tanks from the days everyone did not have electric cars designed specifically to stop people polluting their land (constructed exceptionally by a team of experienced engineers). You think you finally recognize the sophisticated lands the human race built, but no, it is just the ruins of a once advanced human home. The excitement is brought only to then demolish your hopes. The reason she ended up in the disintegration wasteland was unknown, even to her.

The classified-‘missing’, young girl trudged through the deserted lands. In the frustration of the moment, the anger of being alone she threw herself, straight into the ground face first.

She fell through the earth. Polluted air swirling around her. Wispy strands of white hair swirling her, her eyes rolling to the back of her head, petrified with fear. Thud. The ground was soft under her fragile limbs. Her vision was going blacker by the second. A minute later, the girl was out cold. They grabbed her.

“Ya think she’s dead?” whispered someone or something. “The way she was sprawled out on the ground. You’d thin’ she fell in that garbage hole. Told ya we should ‘ave patched

the darn thing.”

She opened one eye to scan the premises, luckily the group of people were facing the other direction discussing what to do with her and the hole. She turned, she saw it: a tree. It wasn't possible, they had died out years ago. But it was there, the most beautiful thing she had ever laid her eyes on, right next to where she was laying - on a floor covered in green spikey blades, soft and padded under her.

She stalked towards it. Mesmerised by the sight of such magnificents. Her arm reached out to touch the bark. She felt connected to it somehow. A seed fell into the palm of her outstretched hand. Quickly she pocketed the seed, not knowing what would be the impact of her theft, it may have been good or bad. The young girl wandered around the tree, entranced.

She fell though this time she was going up. Fresh air swirling around her. Wispy strands of hair in her face. She was back on the rough concrete of the wastelands. To die all alone. The girl started emptying her drinking flask onto the seed (something that would be illegal in her home city). She closed her eyes to sleep but never woke up again. This half of the story was never known. All anybody talked about was the mysterious disappearance of the king's daughter and the peculiar appearance of a tree in the deserted wastelands of London.



Molly's Tree

Alex Grine

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

For many years, the Williams family had a beautiful oak tree in their garden. This tree could be dated to the beginning of the 20th century, passing through three generations. A little girl named Molly now lived in the house where her great-great grandfather planted the sacred tree all those years ago. The tree had a special meaning to Molly, as though it was a long-lost friend. Every day, Molly would play on the thick, gnarled branches; she loved to climb the tree and mindlessly sway on the swing her father had attached to it. If you looked closely, you would see the names of her relatives engraved into the enormous trunk. Molly and the ancient tree were inseparable; every second of her spare time was spent with her arboreal companion.

One fateful day, Molly's father came home from work looking distraught. Frowning, he went over Molly, who was finishing her (hated) maths homework. He had some very bad news: The neighbours had just told him that the tree must be cut down.

With a clatter, Molly's pen fell to the floor. She felt as though her jaw had dropped fifty feet. Somehow managing to get the words out of her frozen mouth, she asked him anxiously, "Why?"

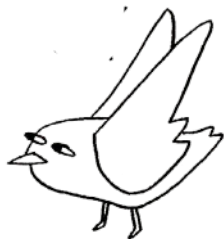
"The roots are threatening their house and their water and electricity lines," murmured Molly's father, a deep look of sorrow in his eyes.

"But surely a tree is more important than a house! I mean, the house is the one that got in the tree's way. It's hundreds of years old," Molly choked through her tears.

“I’m sorry, sweetie, there’s nothing I can do,” he said, his eyes also watering. Molly ran into his arms, and they cried for what seemed like hours.

Molly couldn’t sleep that night; she just sobbed into her pillow in a futile attempt to get over her feelings for the tree. When she woke up in the morning, she made her way to the table and solemnly ate her breakfast. Her father stopped reading his newspaper and suggested that Molly write to the neighbours, telling them why they should not cut the tree down. However, she was too downhearted to do anything. That afternoon, just before the tree was to be cut down, Molly was staring at her old friend from her bedroom window. She noticed an acorn fall from the top of the tree down to the soft ground below, and ran out through the back door and across the yard to save it as a memento. In no time, the specialists had dismantled the tree, lifted it onto their truck and taken it away to be chopped into planks. Once they had left, Molly knew it was the end. She started to cry again.

Suddenly she stopped. She grabbed the acorn, sprinted out to the garden and dug a little hole. Cautiously, she buried the tiny acorn. One day, this would become a giant, towering oak and the child of a once-great tree.



My Life as a Tree

Alexander Rengifo-Bilbao

St Mary’s Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)



This is a tale of despair, happiness, excitement and freedom. I am a tree and this is my story.

When I was a little seed, I woke up in a black void with earth crowding me. I twitched my tiny roots as I tried to open my wooden eyes. All I could see is rough soil in front of me. I twisted and turned into a small ball. I tried to look upwards, waiting to sprout and see the above. My fragile, small body was cramped in when suddenly, I felt a sensation that made me wriggle in the bitter dirt. That is when I grew up, over the soil. I felt a ringing tone pierce me as if someone stabbed me.

I then felt something grow from above me. I then saw my green locks. After that, I felt something root out of each side of me. It was my thin, long branches. I saw many things after many days. I spotted rabbits prancing about dusk till dawn and birds chirping until the owl hooted, which was the signal for the white sphere to brighten up the night sky. I saw many more trees pop out from the ground and many more fall to the soft, green grass. I was surrounded by clouds that looked like blankets covering the sky.

After those wonderful days of youth, it was time for me to become a tree. My roots dug deeper and I felt them thicken. My body was beginning to stiffen and my evergreen hair popping out of my head. The bark was as solid as sturdy steel. I felt closer to the sky than ever before, every second growing higher, almost as if I could touch the clouds with my sprouting branches. I became wiser and older by the second. I was afraid of the moment that I would break my roots and rot in the soil.

I was a joyful person until the day that my first branch fell on the grass. I stared, horrified that my limb broke. I felt a slight change after that incident. My bark lay on the ground like someone chipped it off and the locks I used to have turned brown and once they fell off, it would not grow again. I felt my trunk getting weaker, my roots were breaking apart. The pain wanted to make me scream with agony, but it was no use. The time was coming. I felt my branches tremble with fear. My heart skipped a beat as I gulped at the fact that someday, I will have to face death.

One sunny, warm day, as the ball of fire rose into the sky, my hopes did not go with it. I was depressed that the day was coming, the day I would pass away. I just didn't know it was that day. Suddenly, I felt unstable, but it was too late. That was the day my story ended, like many others...



Stag Lodge

Alice Pegram

Wimbledon Park Primary School (Year 6 – Age 10)

Slowly, the sirens faded away as a big tear ran down my cheek. My whole body trembled while sadness filled the room. Mum, too shaken up to even murmur, slipped back into her room. Not daring to speak, I thought of all the beautiful things she had said to me over the years: don't be afraid, stand up for yourself, when you're all doom and gloom, do something you love to cheer you up and forget negative things!

Suddenly, I scrambled to my feet and ran to the back door of our cosy bungalow as an idea howled up my veins. Grabbing my corroded old bike, I fled our house like there was a war on. The wind ran through my hair while I ran desperately, bolting down our old garden path. I was free; not free from my worries. Just free.

Soon enough, moonless trees surrounded me. I shrivelled back into my endless hood. Gradually, I crept onwards. Further on the forest seemed alive; the trees whispered to one another and the dust scuttled beneath my feet. The inky abyss went on and on like an endless whirlpool dragging me further in. A huge lump started to form in my throat and my shoulders started to hunch; there were still parts of me fidgeting in excitement.

As if out of nowhere, a gnarly twisted oak tree stood firmly in front of me glaring down as if to say 'oi, you, get out of my way!' The roots were sprawled out on the bog filled floor causing me to stagger every step of the way. SNAP! What was that? I hurled my body around cursing under my breath. I circled around several times observing my

surroundings. It felt like a continuous maze; once you have gone far in there is no chance of getting out.

Quickly enough, the growing shadows grew into absolute darkness. The sun snuggled into bed as the moon rose up high in the star-filled sky. I knew I couldn't just wander through the woods all night long so I went on a bed hunt. Surely I could find a decent enough bed for the night?

Eventually, I found a large rounded tree with a wide enough hollow for me to squish in. Once in, I realised there were more secrets hidden in the depths of this one isolated tree. A wicker basket sat just next to me rocking in the gentle breeze. Inside sat a note covered in sap. I opened the crinkled note and in scribbly writing it said:

Have a lovely stay at Stag lodge. Please go up.

Behind me was a large opening to a dark path. Luckily, it was no longer a bog inside and was easy to walk in. After about two yards, there was a staircase with sticks screwed to the walls acting as hand rails. I knew this place! Quickly, I galloped up the staircase, with happiness and the most amazing memories filling my head.



The Forgotten Tree

Alyssa Langan-Joseph

St Thomas of Canterbury School (Year 6 – Age 11)

I woke up with a sigh as the sun stretched its blinding fingers of light, it was a glorious day, in fact, the perfect day to go for a walk.

I got out of bed to get ready and went outside, the birds were singing while radiant flowers danced in the wind. I decided to abandon my regular route when a peculiar path came into view. I've never noticed it before so I decided to be adventurous.

I walked down the narrow path with caution where my eye caught a majestic tree. The tree extended its bony branches to touch the sapphire sky. It stood tall with pride gazing down at me. My eyes widened. I know it was only a tree, but the sight of its emerald leaves and spiral trunk mesmerised me.

I reached out, desperate to feel one of the shining leaves. I pulled and pulled as if the tree wouldn't let go. Eventually, after what felt like eons of trying, I finally managed to separate the leaf from its home. Before I even caught a look, I jumped as my cell phone sang with vibration. I received a call from an unusual number. I hesitated before answering only to hear a female voice beaming, "Congratulations, you have been chosen as our lucky winner for the weekly lottery, receiving £3,000,000 in cash."

At first, I was speechless, but mostly confused, considering I have never ever signed up for the lottery; I always believed it was a scam! However, I couldn't give up this opportunity. I accepted the offer and jumped in joy. However, in the heat of the moment, the leaf flew out of my hand, drifting away

into the wind.

I immediately grabbed another one. As soon as I did, I got another call informing me that I have won a holiday! I looked at the phone, then at the leaf. I grabbed another one and got another call. My face lit up. Ignoring it, I took another leaf and another, and every time I did, something good, no, something amazing happened.

Every morning I visited the tree, pulling more and more leaves of it. I couldn't help myself.

Months later, I looked at the tree, seeing only one leaf left. Taking a deep breath, I grabbed it. I waited, but nothing happened. Except, the emerald green colour started to fade. And worst of all, what was once a gorgeous, exquisite tree, was now ashes...

After that, I had the same normal, boring life. No more money, nothing. Everything I once had was now gone...

Never take anything for granted, learn to appreciate what you have before it is no longer yours to appreciate.



The Million Secrets Tree

Amina Moghal Prieto

The Study Prep School (Year 5 – Age 9)

Lenny paused. The moment she put the ivory stained key in the keyhole, the tree glowed up revealing blinding lights of pale pink and mint green. There, a long line of ancestors with their greatest secrets written in gold.

As the summer sun rose over Northern Australia, looking like a laburnum of fire, saying goodbye to the eerie moon and erasing the ebony sky, Lenny woke up embedded in her silk bedsheets. This girl named Lenny lives in an old cottage, where she just moved to with her parents: Mike and Jennifer. Her house is surrounded by unfurling vines and overgrowing flowers running all over it. Walls painted in shades of beige, making her mahogany door stand out like black birds flying through pure snow. Their windows are warped, with tiny cracks scattered over them. Lenny has cyan blue eyes that clash against her sorrel brown skin. On top of her head are perfect plaits of blonde tied with velvet ribbons.

As she potted down the stairs for breakfast, Lenny realised there was a mysterious object hidden in the walls; a key! Her eyes were fixated on it and her fingers slipped through to reach it. She pulled until she got it. Her hands were grazed with unforgiving markings but Lenny thought it was worth it.

Mike started calling, “Lenny bunny, it’s time for breakfast!” She immediately shoved the key inside her spotted pyjama pocket and rushed down the remaining stairs. “Hi Mom, hi Dad! What’s up?” she asked nervously. “Dear, why sound so worried?” chuckled Jennifer.

“Oh, nothing...” Lenny replied, “I have to eat quick to... um.... get my homework done!”

“Ok sweetie, now go, you don’t want your teacher Mrs Madson to see no work!”

She couldn’t let her parents know that she just got an ancient key that led to nowhere. So, relieved to see her excuse worked, she sprinted like a deer to change into a pair of denim jeans and a ragged top with some leather shoes. She took out her key and ran to the garden pushing the heavy iron gates leading to a cobblestone path, bordered with dark, dry shrubs. Dappled trees craned over her forebodingly.

Unlike the other ones, an unusual tree stood before Lenny. One with multicoloured petals swaying in the zephyr breeze and a gnarled tree trunk with tiny letters strewn across it.

Lenny turned around to see a keyhole that fits perfectly with her key underneath a plaque that says “Dedicated to the Fields” the previous owners of the cottage.

Lenny paused. The moment she put the ivory stained key in the keyhole, the tree glowed up revealing blinding lights of pale pink and mint green. There, a long line of ancestors with their greatest secrets written in gold illuminated the murky night sky.



Imagine

Amy Fiddimore

Joseph Hood Primary School (Year 6 – Age 10)

Imagine. Just imagine. You see something in the distance. Far away, beyond your reaches, something tall and stretched out, high up the pines touching the sky. As tall as you could imagine, the branches as dense as you could imagine. There it was. Tree.

You are older, taller, so is the tree. It has been there your whole entire life. If trees could talk this one would have lots to say. This tree has seen everything, your first steps, your first word the first time you hugged the trunk of it and much more. It knows everything. You reach up and stretch as high as you can. You grab the first branch and climb your legs up and reach the next. Repeat. When you secure your feet and arms you look up through the pines and branches and see the most amazing view. The whole street, you could see everything along the road. Slowly, you climb down, descending the rope at the bottom. Touching the soft soil below you start to walk, pounding the ground with each step. Reaching the decking you look back; you see the tree dancing in the breeze. A smile creeps across your face as you experience happiness. Warmth in your heart.

Winter is upon you once again. It is cold as you start ascending upwards towards your favourite place with your favourite view. As the branches wrap themselves around you, you can feel a sense of safety, a sense of happiness. As you make your descent, the branches unravel, all the worry drains out of you. You walk away pounding the ground as you go, once again you look back and see the tree swaying in the cold winter breeze, once again you feel a smile creep across your face. You look out, the tree is still swaying but

you notice something white starts falling from the sky, powdery and light. Snow. It is falling fast making a puddle on the treetop.

You are yet older and so is the tree. The person that loves you the most gave you downhearted news. About the tree. Your favourite place, the place you feel safe, the place that drains the worry out of you. It is to be cut down, it is too large. You feel a prickle in the back of your eyes closely followed by tears trickling down your cheek. You try to not cry; you try being brave, but you cannot it is impossible to be fine when a thing you love will be no more. You may think trees are just a piece of wood, but they could mean the world.



The Island, the Girl and the Tree

Deren Blacker

Ursuline Prep School (Year 6 – Age 11)

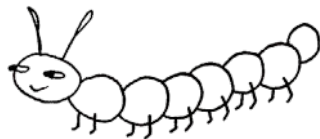
Far, far out to sea there stands a lost and forgotten island. A large, craggy rock with no inhabitants except a single tree and a girl. The tree's roots are embedded firmly in the granite, and it stands tall and strong. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the child who, each day grows weaker and weaker. The icy wind cutting her cheeks like daggers as the rags which she is wearing hang limply on her providing no warmth.

One day when the wind was sharper than ever, ominous dark thunder clouds gathered in the sky promising a storm. The girl sat under the tree hugging her knees and rocking slightly to and fro on her heels. She was daydreaming about sitting under palm trees in golden sand with warm sun beating down on her. She was brought back to reality by a booming clap of thunder. She waited until the thunder had passed and then fell fast asleep, curled up into a ball. Soon after she had fallen asleep it began to rain, lightly at first, but a few minutes later it was pouring heavily like a waterfall. Despite being sound asleep and not knowing anything of it the tree was proving to be dreadful shelter for the girl for, its branches were bare and dead. A few hours later when the rain had stopped, and the child had awoken from her slumber drenched. The girl noticed something different, something unusual, something odd.

Apples. Apples growing on the tree. Beautiful, crimson apples growing on the tree that she was just asleep under. She stared at them awestruck, she had never seen an apple tree produce fruit this quickly. Mesmerised by them she reached out to pick one. It felt glossy and smooth in her

hands and as she lifted it to her mouth there was a little part of her that told her don't do it, it said, "please...don't you remember the fairytale about the girl eating an apple that was poisoned." Instead of listening to the voice, she did the exact opposite. She lifted it up to her mouth and took a bite. She regretted it immediately for, seconds after she had taken a bite, she felt herself falling and her life flashing in front of her eyes.

Then she landed on something soft that cushioned her fall. It was a bed. When she opened her eyes, she was tucked up in bed. The warm covers pulled up to her chin and her head propped up by a mountain of plumped pillows. Her head felt sore, and she was so tired that her eyelids wouldn't open properly so, she decided that the best thing to do was get some sleep and figure it out in the morning.



A Girl's Wish

Edison Fahy

West Wimbledon Primary School (Year 5 – Age 9)

During the 7th Industrial Revolution of 2157, scientists discovered Oxykon, a new element which was formed only in tree trunks, and had its own powerful energy source. Big companies cut down billions of trees and sold them worldwide. Although Oxykon made us travel faster, it made our air less and less breathable. With the lack of oxygen, all humans were forced into glass domes well pumped with enough breathing gas.

It was a sunny day outside, just like everyday of my life, always outside and always sunny. I was burning with heat. I could see everybody else locked inside, relaxing in a cool room while me and few of my scared friends, with no shelter, had been forced outside. You would barely see anyone come out of their shelter.

At about 6am, while the temperature was at its coolest (30), a short figure covered completely with a white costume came up to me. You could tell she was a young girl as she had a flower on her costume. She could barely walk under the weight of her oxygen mask.

She tried to talk, stuttering and stumbling over her words. She eventually managed to communicate with me.

“Please.....”

“Please help me. Tom will be cut down tomorrow. T-t-tom is my only friend.”

With a massive effort, she tried to speak louder: “And-and

he is my great-grandpa's tree. He will be cut for fuel."

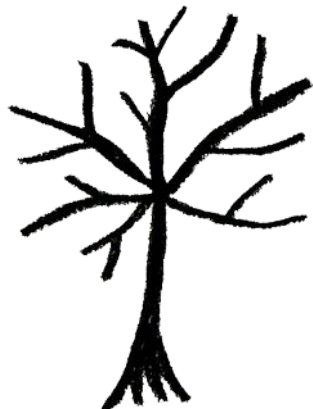
And with that she wrapped her arms around my disintegrating bark. I wish my oak arms could wrap her as tightly as she was squeezing me, but I could do nothing.

I was a wishing tree, and throughout the recent years the heat broke down my magic and I became this mess, seemingly useless and vulnerable tree.

But with this final hug, my magic woke up and I felt energized again. I am not sure what happened next until a few days later, the same girl gave me an emotional and heartfelt:

"THANK YOU!"

Although I rarely got to feel that humans could care and love trees like me, I started to feel like my existence meant something again.



Like a Tree

Eunice Hui

The Study Prep School (Year 5 – Age 10)



All of us have experienced some problems, like moving countries, knowing that people you loved have passed away, meeting new people that don't speak your language or even fighting to maintain freedom for your country or city. Well, I have experienced all four of these, but something makes me feel stronger - trees. I think trees are powerful because most of the time they don't fall down when there's a storm or a typhoon. I'm from a city (Hong Kong) where freedom has been taken away from our government. Students from high school have been imprisoned for taking back our freedom and reporters, who reported true news, have been locked up too.

Some people have moved to England for their own safety, including me. However, we still think of Hong Kong by attending events like walking through London in solidarity holding signs with quotes that promote freedom. We are like trees, they never give up or surrender and fight for what is right.

My mum, who is a perfect example of being strong, stands up for Hong Kong and does not fear the bad guys. She is truly my hero. She organises events for Hong Kong residents who came to England that support Hong Kong. It has been especially hard for everyone during the Covid pandemic but we shall not give up. If you feel sad or lonely, don't worry because your friends and parents are always here for you. Talk to anyone who you trust and talk to them whenever you feel like you should. You are just like a tree; the leaves are your friend, always by your side. Speak out. You will always feel better if you do.

The Moon Tree

Georgia Whelan

St Mary's Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Every blue moon, in the centre of my garden an oak tree appears. The tree's rustic, mahogany trunk glows the brightest gold and its tangled evergreen leaves whisper under the stars. Around the slender branches, hangs a bridal of bulbs, varying from blue, purple and green to the softest canary and rose pink. At midnight when I wake up and peer through my curtains there it is, smiling and beckoning into the night. The soaked grass squelches beneath my feet and the stars twinkle above me. As I approach the tree, one of its huge branches reach out to me and as I clamber on, it lifts me high into the sky.

From my perch, I feel spectacular. I can see the whole world from it and as I reach out I feel like I can touch the stars. The glowing constellations shimmer around me and the leaves sway beneath me telling a thousand secrets. I feel magical. Suddenly, the tree starts humming and glowing like the dramatic introduction of an opera. I gasp, it opens up to reveal a breathtaking abyss of fairy, pixies, elves and gnomes inside. The soft pattering of tiny voices wafts through the air and I find myself shrinking down and down until I can wander around this mythical village breathing and taking in all the sights and smells. After I introduce myself to the other guests and make a friend or two, we dance all night and stuff ourselves with pop-tarts, brownies and a dozen cakes until we feel like cakes ourselves.

The inhabitants and I dance until our legs become numb. We eat our own weight in tender duck, roasted vegetables and other delicacies and talk until it is like we have known each other all our lives. By the time the morning sun rises

from its slumber and pushes away the blue moon, I am bulking out of my pyjamas and wobbling about like a drunk hag. Well, it was about time the party was over. I gathered my belongings and said a fond farewell to all the creatures and returned to the comfort of my bedroom. As soon as my head hits the pillow, I am sucked into a world of endless dreams, in all of them I wait for my adventure to begin again. All of the dancing, the eating and the socialising that may happen again. Or perhaps they may not. But whatever happens, this memory will be with me forever in my heart and in my dreams, replaying until I remember it as though I am stuck in the endless loop forever. It was the best night of my life.

To this day I still remember that exquisite night. My story has been passed down from generation to generation within my family. A tale that will go on forever. The story began with me and a tree...



Memories Rooted

Georgina McSherry

Ursuline Prep School (Year 6 – Age 11)

It was shock more than anything else that brought me down on my knees on to the damp, frost laced grass. I could still see it there: the tree. Standing proudly and haughtily, its great branches holding up an abundance of multi-coloured leaves. Its gnarled trunk immune to each child scrabbling their way up there. I thought it would live forever.

I can still feel the sunlight filtering its way through the thick canopy of greenery. The way it kissed my cheeks, telling me that I'd be alright. In the Autumn when the leaves fell down I would play there all afternoon, throwing them up in the air and shrieking shrilly. In the Winter I'd clamber from branch to branch well equipped with gloves and a warm fuzzy hat. In the Summer I'd bathe lazily in the sunlight reading a book. But it was in the Springtime that I liked my tree the best. When the leaves were just turning a light, cauliflower green and crocuses lined the base of its trunk. When dogs pranced around, sunlight gleaming on their shining fur yanking their owners forward with them. Spring blessed the tree with birds nesting in its sturdy branches tweeting non-stop. I'd spend all day watching them singing their songs of cheer or feeding their newborn. I would spend all of those days in the shade of the tree chatting with the cats that meandered their way passed me, often sniffing me cautiously before turning away upon realizing I had nothing to offer them.

My tree has been cut down. Speech seems impossible to me. I blink hard, confusion taking its hold. Why this tree? Why my tree?
As the day went by the stump did not bloom into a tree

as I imagined it would. Of course it wouldn't happen but gnawing at my lip- I felt so nearly sure that it would grow. I sit here stubbornly waiting.

Finally, I get up. The cold seeps into my very bones. With a shaky sigh I turn on my heel and leave.

A couple of days pass and I refuse to leave the house. It takes the combined effort of my family to drag me out into the chilly air and head to the park. Trees, trees all staring at me yet none mine. I set off in the direction of the stump. Lying on the crisp floor is an acorn. A small little thing barely the size of my thumb. Using my hands I dig a small hole into the dirt and place it in the middle. I pour the grains of dried mud and compressed grass over top of it . This is my little seed I'm planting.
This is my little seed of hope.



The Truth Tree

Irene Skarstein Perez

Hollymount Primary School (Year 5 – Age 9)

As soon as you breathed in the sweet scent of caramel and daisies of the Truth Garden, a leap of joy would twirl in your heart. The garden was surrounded by a thin golden gate with pink petals raining over it. The most beautiful garden you would ever see - however, that is not the reason for its famous reputation.

The garden was well known for the Truth Tree, a tree where you would climb its smooth branch and then you would close your eyes; a deep question would bounce into your mind and the tree would then answer. A slow voice would slide in your mind as letters would form into words and words would form into sentences and that is how the truth would be discovered.

But how did the Truth Tree come along in the first place? Long ago in Greece (just after the world had been created), lived a kindhearted, loyal man named Cornelious, who was madly in love with a beautiful woman, Magia. He told his friend Viper about his love, who then told Magia herself, although Cornelious had clearly forbidden him to. Cornelious was utterly embarrassed, until Magia confessed her own love to him.

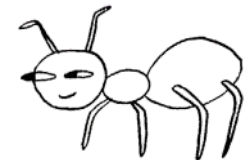
Soon enough, after the pair were married, they became parents. Cornelious and Magia named their child 'Amazon'. Meanwhile, Viper was infuriated with Cornelious, since he believed he had been forgotten by his good friend. He plotted to murder Magia the night of Amazon's eighteenth birthday. However, he did not get the chance to, because Magia and Cornelious unfortunately passed away after

Amazon turned seventeen. Amazon cried dreadfully and prayed to the gods to bring his poor parents back. Athena, the goddess of wisdom, felt sorry for Amazon so she granted him a wish. Amazon wished for a special tree, since he adored nature. Athena told him she promised to give Amazon his own special tree (though it was an unusual wish, she thought) with a power of its own if he went to the land of Rome and collected the first rose he spotted.

Amazon did not want to upset his favourite goddess, so he sailed to Rome. A rose, surprisingly, was hard to find, but finally, he noticed a large red one and instantly prayed to Athena, when he got hold of it.

'I am proud you did what you were told, Amazon,' Athena smiled, 'As I promised, I will give you your very own Truth Tree, a tree which will never die and will answer any question anyone would desire to know. When you die, I will make your soul into this beautiful rose you have collected if you place it on the tree.'

Athena kept her promise and when Amazon died, she turned him into the luscious red rose which was placed in the middle of the Truth Tree. So, my friends, if you want to see the Truth Tree or the garden yourself, just look for the red rose.



Growy, The Memory Collector

Jessica Singh

Wimbledon High School (Year 5 – Age 10)

CRUNCH! I leaned on my garden tree's trunk; my feet were instantly warmed up by her snugly, soft, amber coat of leaves that kept falling on me. It was a bright, sunny Autumn morning, the orange sun, beyond beautiful, lit up the scenery. When I was four, it was this tree here in my garden exactly, I had named 'Growy'. Weird right? Well, not for me. Growy had lived in 56 Rooted Gardens for over 400 years. That is when my great-great-great-great... I have already lost count of how many 'great' grandpas ago of mine had planted this tree! It held all my deepest ancestral moments, and Growy would have already started her calendar for mine. The large mirror in front of me showed my damp, vast, deep love, and care for her. The ruby-red leaves that now lie scattered on the ground were like every one of Growy's memories.

My life was perfect with Growy, until Mum made a life-changing decision – moving house. Why did mother have to move house with me?

"Mum, please. Even after all the past, you had with Growy? I won't let her go that easily. I love her." But my mum is not that type. One decision – final.

"Whew!" whistled the wind like a wailing banshee, hitting me as hard as a whip.

My unstoppable melancholy emotion flooded everywhere. It was so quiet; I could hear the tree's slow shiver as her camouflaging auburn hair of rusty branches and leaves waved. She may have been ancient, but in contrast, she was young for me. As the carpet of merlot-maroon leaves quivered under me, I remembered what Grandma always

said to me: 'Nature is life, remember it and it will remember you'.

Sorrowfully, I watched one particularly large, strong rusty-coloured leaves fall from one of her thin arms. We were alone. I want to stay with Growy, she always cheers me up. Shoving each other along, the angry headmaster wind, pushed his leaf students forward as an instantaneous spotlight surrounded them. A smile lit up my face, I giggled joyously as she provided all my greatest imagination.

Like always, a strong connection of friendship remained between us, like a tight rope pulling us together. Ahead of me, the viridian grass valiantly stood out against the Brobdingnagian blanket of mauve, persuading me to be a brave knight. For the ten years that I had lived, I had never imagined letting Growy go, but I had a plan...

Unleashing my pen and parchment from my pocket, I decided to leave a note on Growy for the next child to live with her, and be her new friend:

Dear Child,

I am Lucy Parker, whose ancestors planted this tree here called Growy. She holds all the memories of the past and she will hold yours too. (She is 471 years old, and her birthday is 26th March.) Care and love her, she is now yours.

I stuck the parchment on her – Growy my human-like nature friend



The Insignificant Sapling

Joséphine Robertus

Merton Park Primary School (Year 5 – Age 11)

The sapling felt its roots soak up the moisture from the earth as it looked around. It decided to visit the Eldest tree again to listen to its stories. But as it uprooted itself, it heard voices. But not the voices of the nearby trees, but human voices. It knew from the stories that humans were bad. They chopped down trees to make their homes and burned down many forests to keep their smelly cows. Thunderpaths were made through the woods that completely destroyed the tranquility. The sapling scrambled faster than ever before, as it thought of all this, to warn the Eldest tree of the danger. As it clambered over an old pine's roots, the sapling heard the pine mutter, "Well I never. Saplings these days, thinking they can just climb over some tree's roots. Harrumph!" These last words were lost to the wind as it raced on.

Finally, the sapling reached the Eldest tree. The Eldest tree told the sapling, "This is serious. Gather all the plants and animals you can find and get ready for war. If they reach the heart of the forest, then all will be lost. Hurry young sapling, don't fail me."

It had already enlisted the help of a herd of deer and some wild horses, 3 pines, 2 oaks, 1 silver birch and an entire family of squirrels when it heard a small voice.

"Pardon me sapling, but am I hearing correctly that there will be a battle?" The voice belonged to a young rabbit.

"Why yes. Haven't you heard? The humans are coming," the sapling replied.

"Maybe me and my family could be of some help?"

"With how many are you?"

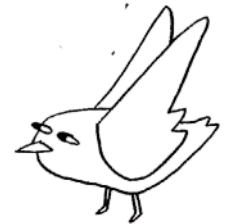
"Ummm. About 50, I'm guessing."

"Yes! Join us! Please join us! Bring your friends too."

When it was midday, it had gathered a whole army and was ready for war.

"ATTACK!" bellowed the stags.

The sapling felt its twiggy fingers stab at the human's weak spots. It saw the gashes its spiky leaves had made. It heard the screams of pain, terror and fear. The deer used their mighty antlers to hurl the enemies away. The horse's hooves sent the humans flying. The rabbits and the squirrels distracted them. The birds pecked at the unprotected eyes. Finally, the battle had ended. They had won, but not without sacrifices. One horse had been lamed and could never gallop again; a stag had lost his antlers and felt too ashamed to appear from the shadows; rabbits had been crushed by the monsters the humans rode in; birds had fallen from the sky, choking to death on the monsters' breath and trees had lost branches, making them feel naked. When all of them arrived at the Eldest tree's clearing, it didn't say anything, it just dipped one of its branches in the sacred water and let a drop fall onto the sapling. The sapling was now a majestic holly tree.





Returned Shadow

Lydia Dorovski

Ursuline Prep School (Year 5 – Age 10)

I am the returned shadow, the tallest tree in the universe, positioned on a snow mountain. Many have attempted to clamber me but have never succeeded.

Overwhelmed by the enraged clouds, all the light of day has been lost, hiding in a blanket of darkness. This darkness was shedding icy tears, transforming everything from its picturesque view into a slate, mundane drama. Needles from my branches were staring down disapprovingly at aggravating new-coming humans, summoning armies of snow, wind and rain to attack them. Glass sheets shattered at the high-pitched yell of the wind, dropping onto pathetic little trees who, of course, are way less powerful than me since they are arching in different directions, and were at that point enveloped in suffocating snow.

As the humans planted their rusted crampons, their eyes glistened – a window to their determined personalities and all their darkest secrets. (How scared they were of me!) But now I could see them properly. Shivers tickled their spines. Their hearts were racing, thumping, hammering. A vast smirk appeared on my crown. Who do these arrogant humans think they were? Did they think they were mightier than the Returned Shadow? Why would they think they could defeat me anyway?

I summoned treacherous gales to distract them. I grabbed their feeble necks like a noose, then started pulling limb after limb off, turning the snow crimson red. Rivers of blood cascaded down my branches pooling at the bottom of my ominous body. No one has ever defeated me. No one ever will. I will not give up. Ever.



The Tree

Lyra Taylor

Southfields Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

It was 8 o'clock on a Monday morning. Maria was just starting out for school. Her bag slung over her shoulder in the rush to get ready and her hand trying to swat wisps of hair out of her eyes. She was already late so she might as well go the long way, she would happily face scowling looks and disapproving shakes of heads if it meant she could pass her favourite spot.

She stopped dead in her tracks, her eyes blank with shock, then her face crumpled into anger. Where a twisted trunk had stood, showered in buds of greenery, there now lay only a heap of sawdust. She'd used to bask in the cool shade under its branches but now that was gone. She flung her bag down and stormed over to a construction worker piling heaps of sawdust with heavy machinery into a truck. "What are you doing?" Her voice rang with anger. "Council's orders, taking this tree down, it was blocking the view from the Mayor's house, over there." She gestured to the large concrete house, just behind her.

Maria looked at the house and scowled.

When Maria arrived home from school a packet of seeds lay on the grass of her front garden. Scrawled across the packet in looping handwriting it said,

'Revenge seeds, use wisely'.

Maria picked up the packet, opened it and examined its contents. Large brown papery pods encased circular seeds. Glancing around, Maria wondered who had sent them, but

the street was quite empty.

Just then, an idea sprang into her head; ‘Why don’t I plant them in the Mayor’s garden?’

She walked quickly to the site of the sawdust, now mostly swept away, and sorrow panged inside her. Then she turned to face the Mayor’s house and a determined gleam appeared in her eyes. She walked towards the house, purposely, but making sure there was some casualness about her. And, as discreetly as she could she tossed the seeds onto the stone slabs of his front garden, she hoped the seeds would find nutrients in the earth between the slabs.

But as the seeds landed, they seemed to melt into the slabs themselves, and green finger-like tendrils crept out and started to twine themselves around the concrete. They wrapped their way around each window. Finally, the tendrils reached the top and a brilliant green eruption exploded from the top of the building like a frozen firework. The green tendrils browned into rugged bark and the house seemed to dissolve into the tree, the green firework at the top mushroomed and turned into the foliage a massive tree.

It just so happened that on this particular evening the Mayor had been on an outing and came home to see, with utter disbelief, an enormous tree in place of his home. Of course, he ordered it to be cut down immediately, but no saw was able to penetrate its bark. So there it stood, for ever more.



The Tree of Secrets

Miri Canonica

Beecholme Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

Help. He’s going to catch me. That great big lumbering blob of a man, armed with his horrible belt. Still, I know these woods better than him, better than anyone. I know where the river starts and ends, where the robins make their nests, where the squirrels hide their acorns. I know everything about these woods, apart from where to hide.

I think I’ve lost him, but not for long. I need somewhere he won’t see me, somewhere he’ll never find me, somewhere... somewhere like that tree. I run over to a small oak tree. The branches are too high to climb, but at the base there’s a hole in the trunk leading to the hollow insides. I get onto my tummy, covering myself in dirt, but I slowly inch forward with my toes and squirm until I’m inside. My eyes closed so no dirt accidentally goes in them. He’ll never find me here. And then I open my eyes, and I see it. Was this what it was like when Lucy walked into the wardrobe and found Narnia?

Well, this isn’t Narnia but it’s nearly as good. Because all around me. Inside this random tree, are moments from people’s lives. Happy moments, sad moments, angry moments, fun moments. Like holograms or ghosts, they float all around me. Some of these must have been from centuries ago. There’s a child taking a cookie from a jar, another gaming, a baby being born, a car accident, someone opening a letter, a man on a plane. There are some amazing moments, like a woman getting a job, or a family going on holiday. But there are some horrible moments, a ... a man getting shot... no I can’t look anymore.

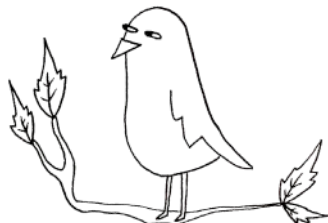
Then I realise. These aren’t just any moments from people’s

lives. These are moments they didn't want anyone to find out about, that's why they hid them here. These are secret moments. These are secrets. I look around, astonished. You wouldn't believe what people keep from each other. Thousands, hundreds of thousands of secrets swimming before my eyes. Then I see someone I recognize. It's my mum being chased by an orangutan. I watch as he slaps her across the face, making her gasp and reel. Then it ends and is replaced with another secret.

I collapse. I know that he's horrible, but how could he go that far? And how could she not tell me? We always tell each other everything, I deserved to know!

No. We can't do this anymore. Not a single one of these people should have secrets kept from them. I didn't deserve it, and neither do they. No more secrets. The world should know.

And just like that, I scoop up every single secret in the tree, squirm back outside, and let them free.



That Amazing Tree

Nadia Iglesias Zawadzka

St John Fisher Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

Dear Diary,

We have a tree in the middle of the forest. It is fifty-five years old and has lovely leaves and acorns growing on it daily. We visit it every day and Sam says it is an oak tree. The bark is rough and coffee brown. Today we trudged through the Luckcharm forest's mud to get to the opening. Sam swung on a swing, while I climbed a white-barked tree. My mum told us that she will go to the shops." Sam, make sure you and Lillie are safe," my mum told Sam and she left.

Sam hopped off the swing. He took his rucksack and pulled out a book. Sam sat beneath the oak tree, flipping to chapter eight. He leaned his elbow, which had a cut on it, against the bark. And then the strangest thing happened. Instead of bleeding again the cut disappeared! Both of us were speechless. The tree has healing powers! We agreed not to tell a soul. Suddenly, we heard the roar of a chainsaw, coming towards us. I gasped. Which tree will they cut down?

The tree cutters came closer and closer." That oak tree," yelled a man, pointing to the oak tree. Sam's face lit up as mine grew sadder. He whispered a great plan in my ear. I hoped it worked. I grabbed my rucksack and pulled out three ham sandwiches. Sam and I walked over to the tree cutters. I handed the people the sandwiches as Sam explained the beautiful features of the oak tree. He told them its age and the animals living in it. The boss, called John, had tears in his eyes. John cried "It's the saddest yet most joyful thing ever!" The three of them left, thanking me for the sandwiches.

Mum came back ten minutes after John, Andrew and Billy left (we learned their names from the name tags). She gave us a kiss on the forehead. Mum handed each of us a white chocolate bar, for being sensible. “We had a tree problem,” I giggled. “You have a silly imagination, Lillie” laughed Mum. We went home, happy that the tree was saved. I nibbled the chocolate quietly until we arrived home. I sat back, thinking about the stuff that happened all in one hour. And that was my adventurous day.

Lillie.



The Witch and the Tree

Natalia Soldrzynska

Benedict Academy (Year 6 – Age 11)

Long ago, in the middle of a forest stood a tree. But it wasn't a normal tree. In fact, it could tell the future. Only people that have visited it more than 100 years ago knew about the power though. No one has been near the tree since then. It was guarded by thick, tall metal fences that were quiet impossible to climb through. Though, some people of course could. So it had extra protection: a electricity bubble. Now who made the bubble? The witch. She wanted the tree all to herself and didn't want to share the magic with anyone. Who ever unexpectedly passed the bubble though, didn't come out alive. They didn't come out at all. Millions of people tried but failed.

The tree had another power that the witch didn't want to share and it wasn't the future telling. The tree could give people their young beauty back. She was sure that no one would ever try to go past again. But one day, a soldier came, somehow broke through the electricity bubble, climbed over the fence and got in. He jumped which made the tree move and leaves fell down making it weaker. The witch was horrified. She went really sick in a short amount of time. She was so weak that she couldn't guard it anymore. The bubble popped because as the tree got weak, its power worn out and the witch lost her young health and power. She gave up on guarding it. The soldier spotted the cottage and looked inside. He saw the weak old woman and decided to help her even though she's been really selfish. A few days later, everyone was able to enter the way into the tree and get what they really needed. The witch has started sharing and lived in a castle with a queen and king. They lived happy ever after.

Enchanted

Nephelie Zilloudis

Hollymount Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

In London, lived a happy as ever child, Nephelie. She was really blessed to have two amazing parents, a fabulous sister; and four kind and warm-hearted friends from school. Vicky, Boyan, Liam and Minserh. One day the closely connected group, were chatting in Nephelie's room, when Nephelie's beloved sister kicked the door open and was waving a bright children's magazine in the air. "Sisi! Look at this!"

"Calm down Melina. Take a breath or two and then tell me what's wrong." There was a quick pause.

"Remember that gang who tried to steal the diamond in The Great Willow Tree. The diamond that holds The Enchanted Forest alive (that forest Grandma was telling us about)?"

"I remember, but what about that?", replied Nephelie.

"Take a look at this," Melina handed the magazine over to Nephelie looking very anxious and the others crowded around her to take a closer look at what the piece of paper said.

**ALERT! GANG WHO TRIED TO STEAL DIAMOND
HAVE NOW ESCAPED FROM PRISON!**

"So?" asked Melina, full of desperation.

"We are going to do something. Promise. The following morning, Nephelie woke up at crack of dawn to work on her master plan to get to The Great Willow Tree before that gruesome gang did. By morning, Nephelie finished and immediately woke her sister up. She called her friends, and and told them to come over. Soon afterwards, Nephelie's friends arrived and she talked them through her plan. All five of them were pretty impressed and agreed to take part,

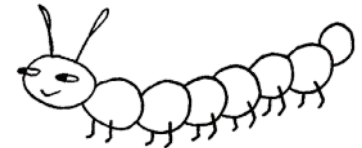
however none of them realised the difficulties they would have to face along the way. That weekend the group decided to meet at a nearby trains station and when everyone was there they started walking in the direction the map pointed in. After about an hour, Liam pointed out, "Hey, we've been walking for a while now. Are you sure we're going the right way?"

"Yes. Just trust me."

"Ok, but when we get lost don't blame me." Luckily, minutes later a note appeared in the sky and the note read, Great Willow Tree you will find in the lowest of places but high in the sky. "

"I know this riddle," Vicky replied, "Right now we're in the lowest of moments so we have to look high in the sky. Wait, what's that."

"The Great Willow Tree!" shouted Nephelie. The group got to the Willow Tree, but when they arrived they saw the gang reaching in for the diamond in the Willow Tree.





The Miracle Rejuvenation

Pia Ece Yaltirik

Wimbledon Chase Primary School (Year 5 – Age 9)

One clamorous evening in a harmonious village in North Australia, called Symphonyville, the last rays of sunshine painted the hills with a hazy, golden mist. The majestic trees in the local park, called Scuba Koala Park, were joined together which looked like a crowd of vivid, green umbrellas. Like some prehistoric beast, the huge, twisted limbs of the trees guarded the entrance. Cloaked in mist, the branches looked like ghostly, stooped figures.

A girl, called Violet, was meandering down the undulating hillside of the tranquil valley. Violet was 10 years old, tall and had luscious, umber hair. She had a long, pointed face like a bird. Her blemished, contorted lip caused her to not have friends. However that did not prevent her from focusing on a lively topic that she can not stop searching. It was biology, mainly; insects, fungi, birds, herbs and flowers.

That day, gripping onto the little packet protectively, she felt apprehensive about planting the Rullah Longatyle seed. The seeds were given to her by her grandmother who kept the seeds having received them from her ancestors.

Violet was delirious to observe what the seed would become when it embraces with the soil.

She rapidly rushed towards the garden behind her house, sniffing her evident sweat. She dug up some mud to place the seeds in, watered it, named it “Miracle” and the journey began.

For the next few years, Violet spent half an hour of her day

to show tutelage and guardianship to the seed. She sung native Australian songs to it; she explained her pleasant days and her unfortunate days at her school to it; she danced to it and she thought of it as her friend.

One night, Violet awoke abruptly during a thunderstorm to perceive that a strike of lightning was travelling towards the house. As the Rullah Longatyle spotted this rapid attack, it pulled itself towards the strike like a magnet in a matter of seconds. Eventually, burning the heartfelt, benevolent tree causing a deafening “Crash!”

With unstoppable tears coming down from her eyes, she blessed the tree with her miraculous words, thanked it for being a part of her life and praised the universe for bringing such a sensational being into the world because it sacrificed itself to protect Violet.

Days were under the sudden shock of not seeing her tree anymore. Violet was grabbing the ashy crumbles of mud to feel close to Miracle but nothing compared to having seen it in person. She felt desperate.

Later, the tree started decomposing. During one of her nature walks, Violet realised all of a sudden, having read about the role of the fungi, that Miracle would stay alive forever. Fungi took the dead organisms and brought the nutrients back to life.

It seemed it started giving all the nutrients back into the Earth, where it all began. A relaxed smile appeared on Violet’s face. Even though Miracle had sacrificed itself, it remained in the cycle of life forever.

The Tree

Samual McDonald

Links Primary School (Year 6 – Age 11)

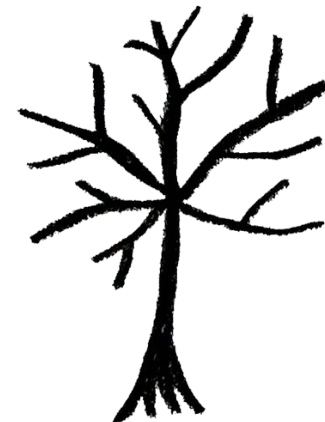
The wind howled through the vast meadows of Alberta and underneath the sapphire sky rested a large maple tree which patiently waited for a taste of sunshine. Below the twisting hands of the tree lay a boy named Alex. He spent his time watching the tree grow as it did to him, its luscious leaves changing from red to green. Yet one thing never changed; he would always reach for the same branch, leaping up with every bit of strength in him, showing his persistence, but failing.

One dark night, under the shivering moon, he heard his father packing their bags. He interrogated his father about what was going on and his dad told him that the butchers weren't making enough money and so they would have to move to Calgary. Alex was distraught, he tossed around in bed, a waterfall of tears flooding down with his head spiralling around like a tornado. The next sunrise he woke up in a pool of tears, miserable and lightheaded, picturing his future. He had always loved his life with his father and never felt sorrow this painful before. He took one last look at his home before starting his new city life.

Many years passed, and the life that he once knew and loved had faded away and he lived a vigorous life with his young son Noah who was as energetic as a puppy. One rainy day when an army of clouds were swarming the skies of Calgary, he heard terrible news: his father had just passed away; he felt lost, frightened and alone.

The funeral was at the lake where he grew up and his childhood came back into memory when he arrived. Soon

after, Noah ran off to a maple tree, no ordinary tree, the one he used to lie under. Noah started jumping up for the same branch that he had when he was younger, just missing. A smile washed across Alex's face when he started to see his past life clear as day. He walked over and lifted Noah up and helped him reach it, a rush of glee came over Noah's face as a teardrop rolled down Alex's.



A True Friendship

Shriya Anatha Ramakrishnan

West Wimbledon Primary School (Year 5 – Age 10)

Here I am, stuck in an endless race trying to figure out when it all went wrong. Perpetual headaches and constant anxiety visit me like ominous neighbours. Bloodshot eyes. Sleepless nights. Recurring nightmares. Forgetting may hurt some people, but to those who lay beady-eyed haunted by night terrors - forgetting is very necessary.

It was a perfect summer's day, fluffy white clouds peppered the sky and swirled like gauzy curtains. The sun shone promisingly onto the Eden-green leaves of this fruitful oak tree. Under the tree was a carpet of floral flowers; this was where I met her- my bestie Blossom! For more than two years she and I had developed an unbreakable bond. I remember the feeling of exhilaration during our picnics under the matted vines of the oak tree that stood proudly at the summit of a cliff overlooking the slothful sea below us.

The real atrocity was uncovered on January 17th 2022. Obviously, I sensed nothing was wrong as I sat cluelessly on the arched branches of the tree. Blossom's voice pierced the unfamiliar silence between us and announced triumphantly that her family were moving to California in a week. My mind was raging at her nonchalant face as her scintillating smile pierced through my downcast heart. Did she even care about me? Me being me, I was astounded and hurt; I sprung up in frustration as my emotions took control of me. Bottled up with fury and contempt, all my senses were impaired- Blossom's words were inaudible to me. All I could see was her Cheshire-cat smile. In frustration, my hands instinctually lurched out before my brain caught up and realised what had I had done.

“Leila - what did you do? Help me!” she screamed in agony as her pale fingers clutched desperately onto mine. Her eyes were a pool of fear. Tears streamed like a waterfall. Her jaw was an open cave of fright. I shut down completely, not willing to hear Blossom's harrowing screams as she plummeted down. THUD! My mind clouded pessimistically,, I tentatively peeked below as the continuous gusts' of wind subsided- she was spread out like an unravelled mattress on the mossy grass that reigned the ledge 10 metres below. Silence cloaked the land as the wind bore my secret.

The week after the news of Blossom's injuries spread like a wildfire. Some tourists had found her on the ledge and she was rushed into the hospital where she was diagnosed with: amnesia, back injury and severe aches. Guilt swamped me as no one else knew my hideous secret including Blossom herself. Shortly after, she moved to California and I lost contact with her entirely. The tree where we used to play together became unkempt. The leaves had turned molten red and their glow faded in the amethyst purple sky, as the gnarly branches withered away as if they had been poisoned. The silvery silhouette of Blossom still haunts my mind every time I pass this Oak Tree.



Tree

Zakariya Khan

Wellington Prep School (Year 5 – Age 10)

On the lonely hill I sat, I watched the small forest in the distance from above. Squirrels scurried along my entwined branches scavenging for food. These curious squirrels were the first I had seen for a while; they were in hibernation during winter. On the muddy ground, above my planted roots marched an army of ants, some crawling up my rough bark, others collecting emerald leaves on the ground. The sweet, singing sparrows sung like angels on the top of my old, wise branches.

These creatures had kept me company over the years. I am fond of my new friends. The trees that I once knew were chopped down by humans for all sorts of reasons. Over time this had left me standing alone without them. Now instead of being around my own kind I watched them in the forest below.

The past few days had been peaceful until I felt a chilling gust of wind. I knew it was coming as the breeze was building up. I rooted myself down into the earth so I would not fall over. The first drop of rain fell and saturated the mossy ground. I felt it brewing, the angry clouds had stretched across the horizon. It started raining harder and harder, it was as if there was a war in the sky. The storm had arrived.

The army of ants tip-toed into a hole in the shield of my bark. The wind hurtled towards my delicate leaves. The sun was blocked by the carpet of thunder clouds. The sky became dark and, in an instant, it felt like night. When I was least expecting it, the bright lightning sparked the edge of

one of my branches, ‘zap!’ setting a fiery light.

Soon after the fire started to burn me, the tremendous booming of the thunder deafened me. In pain, I was lashed by the pelting bullets of rain putting out the ferocious fire that scorched me. While in agony, I saw hope in the sky, the sunlight dappled on the ground and the furious rain clouds backed away.

The emerging sun finally came to my rescue. The ants came out from the safety of my bark and the birds flapped back onto my withered branches. I watched foxes below my hill run off into the forest. All was calm once more.

The forest below had become smaller than before. During the storm some poor trees had been uprooted and were lifeless. Soon after the storm I heard footsteps coming towards my hill. In their hands were tiny tree saplings in soft soil blankets. They dug the wet soil and planted these mini versions of myself around me and walked away. After they had left, I looked around at the baby trees. I was overjoyed.

On the hill, which is full of life I sit, watching these miniscule saplings grow. Day-by-day they get larger and more animals come to live on the now not so lonely hill.



The Fantasy Tree

Zofia Truchel

St John Fisher Primary School (Year 5 – Age 9)

Sorrow wrapped itself around my throat, squeezing the very last remains of my happiness right out of my body, I felt weak from head to toe, a tear rolled down my cheek as I thought of my older brother who isn't here anymore. As I inched down the carpet of evergreen needles which led into an overgrown forest, full of broken branches making its own pathways down the forest, I felt mixed emotions which circled my mind like a perfect circle, in the deep dark corner of my mind as I entered the mouth of the eerie forest. Tweeting birds sounded like my older brother who was still on my mind. I walked down the alleyway where the same birds pushed me, I was confused but decided not to say anything.

A hard tickling push got me further than I expected, as I slowly turned my head back a loud deafening sound blocked my ears making me stressed, I started shaking on the spot until a shot of blurriness covered my vision until, I dropped onto the large oak branch. My ears were still ringing. my vision was still blurry but it felt different it wasn't the same place, the birds weren't there, there wasn't any trees around me, I slowly went on my knees as I felt dizzy a whole new fantasy occurred right before my eyes, an enormous tree was standing, swaying in front of me. A pack of leaves danced to the tune of a hummingbird which stood solitary on a single branch, before I could breathe the tree started moving, the bird started talking, the sun -which was slowly setting- smiled at me which made me confused but warm inside.

All the voices sounded like my brother which made my mind turn upside down, I brushed all the dirt of my knees as I

stood up staring at the tree In Front of me, as I looked up into the sky a large eagle flew right above me and dropped a dusty rolled up piece of paper onto my hands which unrolled itself, it said in cursive "Brother it's me David, I told my birds to lead you here just press the star carved into the wood of the tree, you only have 30 seconds to see me, Signed David" I didn't have word cross my mind I just walked over to the tree closed my eyes -tightly- and pressed it. As I let go of it, I turned around and saw him, my brother standing right in front of me, I was speechless as I thought this wouldn't work! I ran and hugged him, as I did, he said "20 seconds left" but I said "I love you" and squeezed him tighter he said the same but right after he counted down form 5 and as I came to 0, he said "bye I miss you" and left me with a pile of dust in front of me. I teleported back and smiled "bye".



HIGHLY COMMENDED

 sen junior

POEMS

Little Tree

Blerit Zejnullahu

Cricket Green School (Year 6 – Age 10)

Grow, grow little tree,
Will you grow as tall as me?
Can you grow up to the sky?
Can you grow up so very high?
Grow, grow little tree,
Will you grow so tall for me?



Jaden's Tree

Jaden Corker

Cricket Green School (Year 3 – Age 8)

Monkeys in the tree, they are strong
Leaves in the tree, they are big
Birds in the tree, they live in the pond
Jaden in the tree, I like sleeping.



In My Garden

Kennedy-Shay Stephens

Cricket Green School (Year 4 – Age 8)

In my garden there is a tree that looks like an elephant trunk
It is like a balance beam I can slide down it like a monkey
The rocks feel hard
The rocks feel like a fridge
The rosemary smells like detergent
The chickens were talking noisily.



Participating Schools

Auriol Junior School
Avenue Primary Academy
Beecholme Primary School
Benedict Primary School
Bishop Gilpin Primary School
Blossom House (SEN School)
Burlington Junior School
Cricket Green School (SEN School)
Dundonald Primary School
Fircroft Primary School
Gorringe Park Primary School
Hatfield Primary School
Hollymount Primary School
Holy Trinity Primary School
Joseph Hood Primary School
Kew Green Preparatory School
King's College School (Junior), Wimbledon
Links Primary School
Malmesbury Primary School
Merton Abbey Primary School
Merton Park Primary School



Pelham Primary School
Poplar Primary School
Pycroft Grange Primary School
Sacred Heart Primary School
Sellincourt Primary School
Shrewsbury House School
Southfields Primary School
SS Peter and Paul Primary School
St John Fisher Primary School
St Mary's Primary School
St Matthew's Primary School
St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School
Stanford Primary School
The Sherwood School
The Study Prep School, Wimbledon
Ursuline Prep School
The Priory Primary School
West Wimbledon Primary School
Willington Prep School, Wimbledon
Wimbledon Chase Primary School
Wimbledon High School (Junior)
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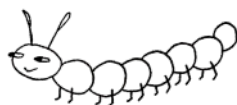
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