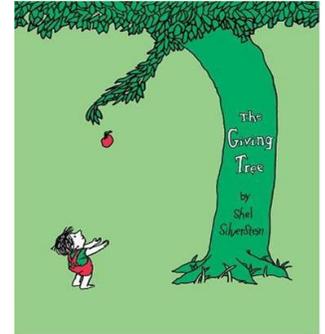


December 2013

Dear P.S. 154 Community,

As we enter the holiday season it is a time to be reminded of giving and thinking of others. The P.S. 154 Community has been working really hard in getting our students involved in many community service projects. We have participated in collecting Coins for Communities and The Ronald McDonald House Foundation Charity this year, as well as our canned food drive, Toys for Tots, Penny Harvest, Hats and Mittens Drive in past years. These community service projects teach our students about the importance of giving to those less fortunate and that by helping others they are making a difference in the world.



Shel Silverstein's book The Giving Tree is a story that teaches us about the importance of giving and receiving while also making the reader question the significance of sacrifice and love.

The story is about the special relationship between a young boy and a tree. Throughout the story the tree shows her love for the boy by providing him with everything he needs to grow strong and achieve his dreams. The boy swings in her branches, eats her apples, and rests in her shade. The story follows the boy as he gets older and as times passes, the tree still continues to care and provide for the boy.

The Giving Tree teaches us that the things we may want most are not things we can quantify. The most important gift we can give is love and friendship.

This book connects to the Common Core Reading Standards for Literature. Some of the CCSS addressed are:

- ✚ Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- ✚ Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- ✚ Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story.
- ✚ Recognize and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, personal events, and situations.

Thinking Maps	Possible Activities
Circle Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a circle map of ways to show friendship. ➤ Create a circle map to define a good friend. ➤ Create a circle map to define love. ➤ Create a circle map on trees.
Bubble Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a bubble map describing the Tree. ➤ Create a bubble map describing the Boy. ➤ Create a bubble map describing the qualities of a good friend.
Double Bubble Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Compare and contrast the boy and the Tree. ➤ Compare and contrast "The Giving Tree" to Dr. Seuss's "The Lorax"
Tree Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Categorize the story into story elements. ➤ Categorize the story by beginning, middle, and end.



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Brace Map	➤ Break apart the parts of a tree.
Flow Map	➤ Sequence the story from the beginning to the end. ➤ Create a flow map for the Life Cycle of a Tree.
Multi-Flow Map	➤ Create a multi-flow map with the event "The Tree is giving" ➤ Create a flow map with the event "
Bridge Map	➤ Create a bridge map with the relating factor "loves", "gives" or "provides". For example: A tree provides shade as milk provides calcium.

As we continue to work towards making sure we address the Instructional Shifts in ELA/Literacy, we need to really spend some time teaching our students the vocabulary words from the book as well as provide picture support so that our students really develop a solid understanding of what the words mean. You may also want to have your students read informational texts about trees to build their background knowledge of trees and how important they are for us. Lastly, we have included the typed text for The Giving Tree so that students can cite text based evidence when they respond to questions, support their ideas if they are writing an opinion essay, and/or use the text to hold rich and rigorous conversations.

Vocabulary Words		
Branches	Gather	Stump
Carried	Leaves	Trunk
Climbed	Sailed	Give
Forest	Shade	Sacrifice

We hope that all of our students really understand the strong message of this book which will lead us into the start of a great holiday season!

Sincerely,
Dr. Davidson, Mrs. LaPorte, and the Teacher Leaders Team