



Project Essential Questions

- How do seasonal changes affect life cycles?
- How can humans impact life cycles of plants and animals?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In this arts integrated project, students will explore the story “The Giving Tree” and engage in some theatrical role-playing and creative writing exercises that analyze the life cycle of the main characters in the story. Students will then create their own life cycle story in the illustration style of Shel Silverstein. Their stories will explore the life cycle of a tree and how other life cycles depend upon the tree as it progresses through the four seasons. Digital media will be integrated into the storytelling of the students’ writing.

LEARNING TARGETS

“I Can...”

- Write a letter from the point of view of a character in “The Giving Tree” story.
- Create an original life cycle story that expresses how the life cycles depend upon one another.
- Use technology to digitally story-tell my life cycle story.

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Units provide differentiated ideas and activities aligned to a sampling of standards.

The units do not necessarily imply mastery of standards, but are intended to inspire and equip educators.

Produced through the U.S. Department of Education: Arts in Education—Model Development and Dissemination Grants Program
Cherokee County (GA) School District and ArtsNow, Inc.

DURATION: 2 weeks

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ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do seasonal changes affect life cycles? ● How can humans impact life cycles of plants and animals?

STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>ELAGSE2L2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <p>b. Use commas in greetings and closings of letters.</p> <p>ELAGSE2W6 With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of tools to produce and publish writing, including digital tools and collaboration with peers.</p> <p>S2L1 Students will investigate the life cycles of different living organisms.</p> <p>b. Relate seasonal changes to observations of how a tree changes throughout a school year.</p>	<p>VA2PR.2 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes of two-dimensional art processes (drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed-media) using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.</p> <p>a. Creates drawings with a variety of media (e.g., pencils, crayons, pastels).</p> <p>TAES2.3 Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.</p> <p>a. Communicates a character's actions, motives, emotions and traits, through voice, speech, and language.</p>

KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seasonal changes - temperature, weather, climate, etc. ● Life cycle ● Plant life cycle ● Human life cycle ● Relationship
Arts Vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Character: an actor or actress in a specified role ● Concentration: the ability of the actor/ actress to be "in" character- that is, to be like the character s/he is portraying - in dialog, attitude, carriage, gait, etc. ● Monologue: a long speech by a single character

- Media: refers to the tools and materials an artist uses
- Subject Matter: refers to the things that are represented in a work of art such as people, buildings and trees

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

- Use of Little Bird Tales digital storytelling app: <https://littlebirdtales.com/>
- Video of “The Giving Tree” read aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xODAQbu6bJ0>

ASSESSMENTS

Formative	Summative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher will observe the students as they write their letters, ensuring they use correct grammar and punctuation. ● Teacher will observe students during the pre-writing process. ● Teacher will observe students as they create their digital storybook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The teacher will use the provided rubric to assess students on science content, writing process, and final product.

MATERIALS

- “The Giving Tree” storybook
- Heavyweight paper
- Pencils
- Fine tip markers (black)-class set
- Little Bird Tales App: <https://littlebirdtales.com/>

Activating Strategy (5-10 min)

- Activate prior knowledge by referring back to article “Ten Species that are Evolving Due to the Changing Climate” and discuss how animals, as well as plants are living things and have life cycles that affect one another.
- Read “The Giving Tree” by Shel Silverstein.
- Discuss story and follow with question prompts:
 - *What Life cycles are shown in the story?*
 - *Where do the seasonal changes occur in the story?*
 - *What are some choices the boy made that had an unhealthy effect on the tree’s life cycle? (write ideas on anchor chart)*

Main Activity

PROCESS: After reading “The Giving Tree” students will write letters documenting better choices the boy could have made for the tree. Students will then create a digital storybook that represents the four seasons and relationships with living things.

PART 1: Respond to Literature

- The students will write a letter, assuming the role of the boy from story. The letter will be written to the tree in a monologue format with an “apology” or “request to forgive” theme.
- Suggested letter prompt: “Write a letter to the Tree, explaining what you could have done differently in your life cycle from a boy to a man that would have been healthier for the tree.”
- Students will share letters to class in monologue form.

PART 2: Brainstorm

- Brainstorm how a tree changes from season to season and list on anchor chart. See suggested questions:
 - *Can you explain how the tree change from season to season?*
 - *How are humans/plants/other animals (living things) affected by the tree during each season?*
 - *Can you compare and contrast how a human versus a plant changes throughout the seasons?*

PART 3: Create

- Teacher will explain directions and give expectations for creating 4 page storybook.
- Students will use their **4-Part Story Book Sheet** (See Downloads) to begin creating their 4-page storybook. *Each page is for each life stage, therefore print 4 copies of this document.
- Teacher will facilitate as needed as students create their book, as well as formatively assess students during the process.

PART 4: Perform (Digital Recording):

- After students complete the storybook, they will assist the teacher in taking pictures from their book and adding them to their own digital story app (Little Bird Tales).
- Students will edit and revise information and pages on the app with the teacher's assistance.
- Students will record their voices to "tell the story" on the app.
- Students can share their stories with their peers or other classes.

REFLECTION**Reflection Questions**

- Students will discuss changes they can make to help other living animals and plants complete their full life cycles:
 - *How do seasonal changes affect life cycles?*
 - *How can humans impact life cycles of plants and animals? Where in the book did this happen?*

DIFFERENTIATION**Accelerated:**

- Advanced students could make a list of ways the "child" could have gotten the things he needed from another source other than the tree.
- Advanced students could keep a double column diary for each event in the Giving Tree. At each stage, on one side the students should record thoughts from the tree's point of view, and in the other column, thoughts from the "child's" point of view.

Remedial/EL Students:

- Guided Writing with below grade level/ELs
- Writing template for the guided writing
- Other Writing modifications:
 - Small group
 - Guided writing
 - Sentence starters
 - Graphic organizers
 - Word bank based on vocabulary
 - Paragraph frame
 - Modify length/writing assignment based on needs

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- "The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein
- Heavy weight drawing paper (11 X 8.5)
- Black fine tip waterproof markers
- iPads

APPENDIX

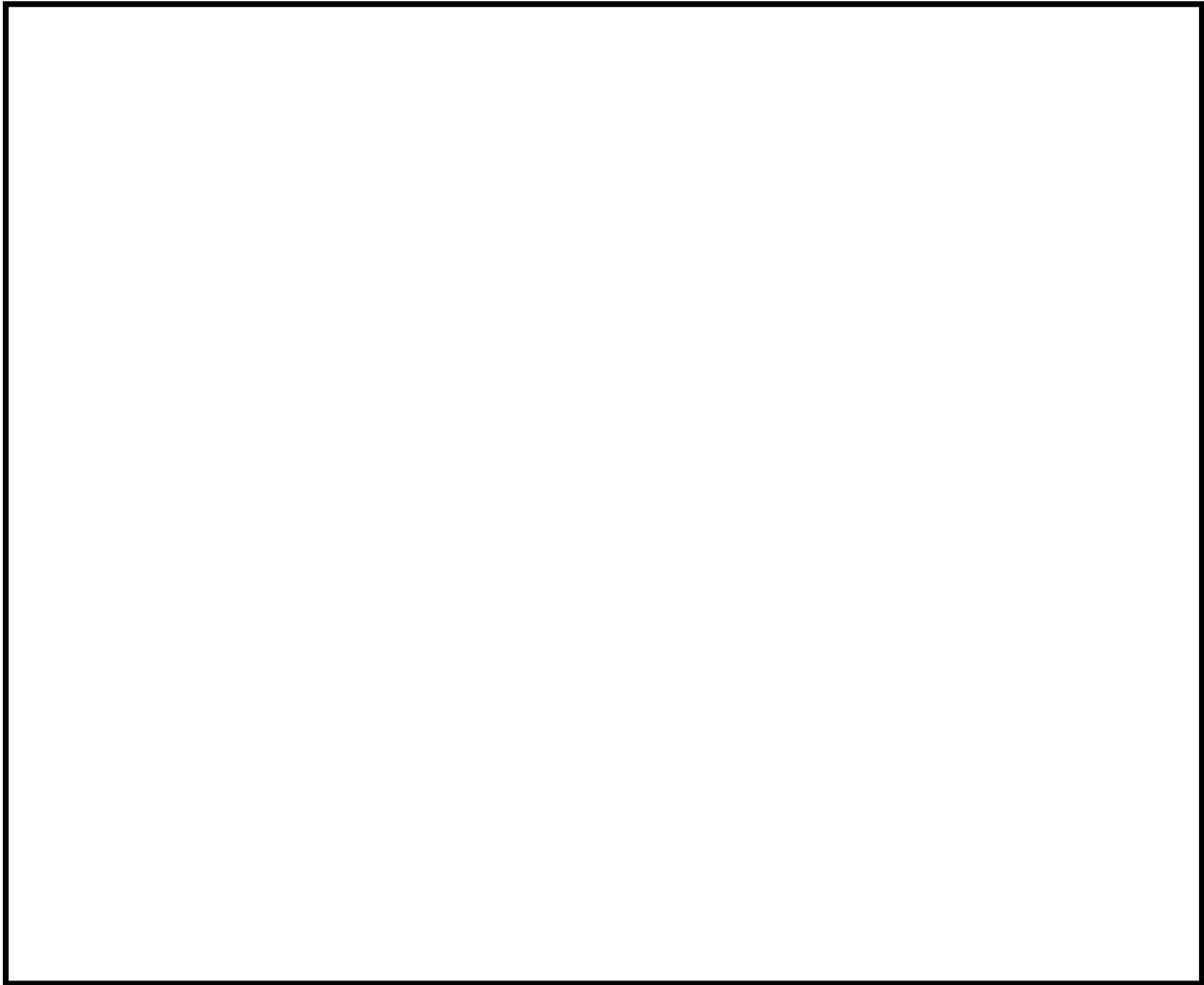
- "The Giving Tree" Life Cycle Rubric
- 4 Part Story sheet

CREDITS

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“The Giving Tree” Life Cycle Rubric

CHECKLIST			
I wrote a letter from the point of view of the boy from “The Giving Tree” to the Tree with sound ideas the boy could have made.	My letter included 3 ideas on better choices the boy could have made.	My letter included 2 ideas on better choices the boy could have made.	My letter included 0-1 ideas on better choices the boy could have made.
I wrote using complete sentences and transition word (<i>first, next, then, finally</i>) in my book.	I had all complete sentences in my book and strong transitions that indicated clear understanding of the 4 stages.	I had some complete sentences but the transitions were not clear and therefore the stages were somewhat unclear.	I had difficulty with complete sentences or ideas that demonstrated understanding of the 4 stages.
I wrote and illustrated my 4-page book with details.	I wrote and illustrated all 4 pages of my book and included lots of detail.	I wrote and illustrated 2-3 pages of my book and included some detail.	I wrote and illustrated 0-1 pages of my book with little detail.
I completed my digital story on Little Bird Tales.	I completed my digital story with no redirection.	I completed my digital story with little redirection.	I did not complete my digital story.



Four sets of primary writing lines. Each set consists of a solid top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid bottom line, providing a guide for letter height and placement.