



The Fig Tree: A Lesson in Gratitude

Heather Lonczak

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IngramSpark

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The Fig Tree is an adorable picture book in which a girl learns to feel grateful for nature's gifts.

Heather S. Lonczak's picture book *The Fig Tree: A Lesson in Gratitude* takes a gentle approach to teaching the interconnectedness of humans and nature.

After a bad day at school, Lydia finds her grandfather sitting under the fig tree in their backyard. She asks him why he works so hard to maintain the tree. In the pages that follow, he tells her all of the ways that the tree supports her, from a branch that held up her baby swing, to its fruit in her favorite snack, to its autumn leaves that attract monarch butterflies during migration season. By the end of their conversation, Lydia's mood has improved, and she's realized how grateful she is for the tree.

Though it reads most as an ode to nature, the book touches on gratitude, too, when Lydia thanks the tree at the end of the story. Lydia's grandfather imparts valuable lessons via touching examples of how the tree has shaped Lydia's positive memories. His contributions are balanced by Lydia's curious questions. One or two examples of the tree's support come on each page, resulting in a relaxed, engaging pace.

The book's edge-to-edge illustrations depict Lydia, her grandfather, and the tree in various stages of the family discussion. The pictures are cohesive and thoughtful. Their backgrounds and foregrounds are developed in beautiful layers; there are thought bubbles and cute details, too. The natural landscape teems with uplifting colors; there are various birds, bugs, and other critters, and shifting colors in the tree's leaves match the changing seasons. Grandpa and Lydia's large eyes and the details of their wardrobe and faces are endearing and sweet.

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AIMEE JODOIN (October 12, 2021)

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