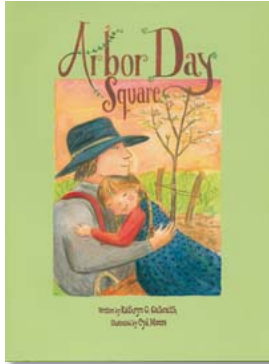


# TEACHER'S GUIDE

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## Arbor Day Square

Written by Kathryn O. Galbraith | Illustrated by Cyd Moore

HC: 978-1-56145-517-1

PB: 978-1-56145-922-3

Ages 4–8 | Realistic Fiction

AR • RC • Lexile • F&P • GRL N; Gr 3

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### ABOUT THE BOOK

*Arbor Day Square* is a story told through the eyes of a young girl as she works with her prairie community to bring trees to their town square. Amid new stories, churches, and a school in the growing town, the settlers take up a collection of coins to add to the square what they miss most—trees. Working together, the families plant the newly arrived trees until the square is filled. Year by year, the neighbors come together to celebrate and plant more trees until the sense of community and love spreads deep roots among the families. The story comes full circle for a grown-up Katie, and the annual tree planting is now celebrated as Arbor Day in every state.

### THEMES

- Arbor Day
- Prairie life
- Tree species
- Community

### BEFORE YOU READ

- Discuss what the students already know about trees. List on a chart several activities that can be done with trees, in trees, or about growing trees.
- Talk about what trees provide for people and ask why they are important.
- Ask if trees are living organisms and discuss why or why not. Identify the places where trees grow.
- Introduce the word prairie and discuss the characteristics of a prairie.

### AS YOU READ

Ask the students to look for the prairie in the art and to watch for the changes that take place in the town and throughout the story as you read the book.

### AFTER YOU READ

Discuss the changes the students noticed as you read. Reread the story and on each page, discuss what the prairie looks like and the changes that took place over time. Talk about the differences that the trees made in the town and ask if any of the activities they listed before hearing the book were included in the story.

### BACKGROUND FOR THE TEACHER

- **Trees** – Parts of a tree include trunk, roots, branches, leaves, bark, and twigs. For older students, you may want to include heartwood, the dead inner layer in the center of the trunk that provides support for the tree, and sapwood, which is the living tissue under the bark that brings water and nutrients up the trunk to the branches. The canopy is the upper part of the tree and includes the branches and leaves. There are two main kinds of trees: deciduous or broadleaf (trees that lose their leaves in winter) and coniferous or evergreen (trees with needles and cones). Oaks, maples, and fruit trees are examples of deciduous trees. Pines, spruce, and junipers are conifers.
- **Prairies** – A prairie is a region of flat or rolling, hilly land where tall grass is the dominant vegetation and where there are few or no trees. In the United States, prairies are located primarily in the central part of the

country. The soil type and the low or varying rainfall totals create conditions that favor grass growth over other vegetation. The Center for Great Plains Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln defines prairie as a region with highly variable weather set against grassy, rolling land, where the Great Plains stretches westward from the Missouri River at Omaha and Kansas City to the Rocky Mountains, and northward from the Texas Panhandle into the Canadian Prairie Provinces. It includes most of Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, South Dakota, and North Dakota, and parts of bordering states and provinces. East to west, the Great Plains area, that holds the prairies, extends from the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains.

- **Arbor Day** – J. Sterling Morton, a journalist who moved to the plains of Nebraska Territory, proposed that a day be set aside to plant trees. This successful effort led to the eventual establishment of Arbor Day in Nebraska in 1885. Arbor Day is celebrated today in all states and has spread around the world to many other countries. The author's note in *Arbor Day Square* gives further information about the origins of Arbor Day.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

### LANGUAGE ARTS

- Write the sentences from the book that contain the following words, underline them, and post them for the students to copy. Using a thesaurus, have the students find a synonym for each of the underlined vocabulary words. Then write the sentence with the new word under the original sentence and compare the two.  
Vocabulary words: prairie, eager, telegraph, dust devils, fiddles (verb), saplings, spindly
- Choose one of the trees from the book. Look up information about that tree and write down those facts. Write a descriptive paragraph of the tree and its characteristics. Some types of trees: maples, oaks, elm, apple, chestnut, flowering dogwood, willow, cedar
- Review the art from the book. Then have the students write a cinquain or diamante poem inspired by a specific tree, the prairie, or an illustrated spread from the book.
- To write a diamante poem, choose a subject and then

its opposite.

- First line: one word, the subject
- Second line: two adjectives describing the subject
- Third line: three words ending with -ing telling about the subject, separated by commas
- Fourth line: four words, where the first two words describe the subject and the last two describe its opposite
- Fifth line: three words ending in “-ing” telling about the opposite
- Sixth line: two adjectives describing the opposite
- Seventh line: one word, the opposite of the first word in the poem.
- Write a cinquain poem. A cinquain poem has five lines and a specific structure. See chart below.

Line		# of Syllables
1	1 word title (noun)	2
2	2 descriptive words (adjectives)	4
3	3 words that express action	6
4	4 words that express feeling	8
5	1 word (synonym or reference to title in line 1)	2

### SOCIAL STUDIES

- Use a map of United States to locate the states in which the prairies exist. On individual student maps, color in the area to show the prairie location. Label the states containing prairies. Last, identify Nebraska and outline it. Label it as the first state to hold Arbor Day. A map of North America may be used to include the prairie provinces of Canada: Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.
- Look up information about the first Arbor Day. Make a timeline about the important dates. Include the date for your state's addition of Arbor Day to the timeline.
- Research information about Arbor Day in other countries. Use the list from the Author's Note at the back of the book. Learn how other countries celebrate Arbor Day.
- Create your own prairie town. In groups, have the students assemble their buildings. Find the components on the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum website.  
[http://hoover.archives.gov/LIW/pioneertown/activities\\_pioneertown.html](http://hoover.archives.gov/LIW/pioneertown/activities_pioneertown.html) Set up the town and have each group explain the importance of their buildings to the class in an oral presentation.

**MATH**

- Measure the diameter of local trees on your school grounds in standard and metric measurements. Create a double bar graph to compare the different diameters of the various trees in metric and standard measures.
- Using Math Handout 1, post this information from the National Register of Big Trees for the class. Use the information to create a set of math word problems.

**SCIENCE**

- Ask students to name the parts of a tree and make a list of them. Then review the science vocabulary provided here and add in any missing words. [Science vocabulary: trunk, roots, branches, leaves, bark, twigs, canopy, heartwood, sapwood] Next, have the students draw their own tree and label the parts using the science vocabulary words. Ask them to indicate if their tree is broadleaf or evergreen.
- Plan a class celebration for Arbor Day. Find poems about trees, research information about the first Arbor Day, look up how to plant trees in your climate zone, and take up a class collection to buy a tree to plant at the school. Present the information in a program or on a PowerPoint presentation and plant the tree. Be sure to write a class letter to the principal to make sure it's okay to plant a new tree on the school grounds.

**RELATED READING**

***My Mother Talks to Trees*** by Doris Gove

***Hiking Trails of the Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock and Citico Creek Wildernesses*** by Tim Homan

***Pioneer Girl: The Story of Laura Ingalls Wilder*** by William Anderson

***Champion of Arbor Day*** by Sandy Beaty

***Arbor Day*** by Kelly Bennett

***What Good is a Tree?*** by Larry Dane Brimner

***The Tree*** by Dana Lyons

***Sarah, Plain and Tall*** by Patricia MacLachlan

***The Giving Tree*** by Shel Silverstein

**RESOURCES**

American Forests has documented the biggest trees for the past fifty years:  
<http://www.americanforests.org/>

Arbor Day site:  
<http://www.arborday.org/index.cfm>

Herbert Hoover Presidential Library:  
<http://hoover.archives.gov/education/>

The Laura Ingalls Wilder tab has additional prairie related activities: <http://hoover.archives.gov/LIW/>

**REVIEWS**

“An attractive introduction to the celebration of Arbor Day.”

—***Booklist***

“Moore’s gentle pencil and watercolors lend a classic storybook feel to the story...”

—***Kirkus Reviews***

“Galbraith’s poetic text and Moore’s soft watercolor and colored-pencil illustrations recreate those spring days on the prairie when planting trees was a cause for celebration.”

—***School Library Journal***

**AWARDS**

- Parents’ Choice Approved Award  
—Parents’ Choice Foundation

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Kathryn O. Galbraith is an award-winning children's book author with more than a dozen picture books to her credit, including *Boo Bunny!*, *Arbor Day Square*, *Traveling Babies*, and *Laura Charlotte*. She teaches writing for children at the University of Washington.

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**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR**

Cyd Moore has illustrated over 40 children's books, including *What Do Parents Do? (When You're Not Home)* and best selling *I Love You Stinky Face* series. She is a dynamic speaker and always a favorite at conferences, libraries and schools. Her presentations inspire gasps and giggles, and creative thinking; instilling a love of story and art; and includes storytelling and sketches.

[www.cydmoore.com](http://www.cydmoore.com)

**Also available from  
Kathryn O. Galbraith:**

*Where Is Baby?*

HC: 978-1-56145-707-6

*Planting the Wild Garden*

HC: 978-1-56145-563-8

PB: 978-1-56145-791-5

**Also available from  
Cyd Moore:**

*What Do Parents Do?  
(When You're Not Home)*

HC: 978-1-56145-409-9

Peachtree Teacher's Guide for  
**ARBOR DAY SQUARE**  
prepared by Shirley Duke

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***Arbor Day Square***  
**Math Handout #1**

Post this information from the National Register of Big Trees for the class. Use the information to create several math word problems.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Height	Circumference
Sweet Crab Apple	Malus coronaria	39 feet	98 inches
Quaking Aspen	Populus tremuloides	130 feet	152 inches
Ohio Buckeye	Aesculus glabra	73 feet	176 inches
Sweet Cherry	Prunus avium	96 feet	290 inches
American Elm	Ulmus americana	118 feet	273 inches
Giant Sequoia	Sequoiadendron giganteum	274 feet	1,020 inches
Atlantic White Cedar	Chamaecyparis thyoides	57 feet	194 inches
Mojave Yucca	Yucca schidigera	31 feet	58 inches

Word problem #1.

Word problem #2.

Word problem #3.

Word problem #4.