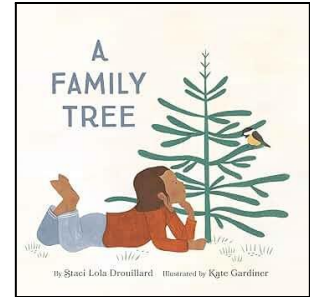


## Discussion and Activity Guide

**Book Title:** *A Family Tree*  
**Written by:** Staci Lola Drouillard  
**Illustrated by:** Kate Gardiner

**Recommended Ages:** 4 – 8 years



### **Book Summary to Share With Children**

*Francis loves spending time in Grandma’s garden, especially with a small spruce tree that grows beside her and is just her size. Grandma and Francis feel at home near the big lake called Gichigamiing. But when Grandma and Grandpa decide to move, Francis doesn’t want to leave the tree behind. Can the tree come too? Let’s read to learn how families and trees both grow strong roots through love, memories, and connection, even when things change.*

### **Reader’s Note**

*A Family Tree* is based on the author’s story of a white spruce that stands in her family’s yard in Minnesota. Read the **Author’s Note** in the back of the book to learn more about the Ojibwe history behind this story, as well as the importance of white spruce to the Anishinaabe.

There is also a **Glossary** of Ojibwe words. If you are not Ojibwe, it is important to learn how to pronounce the Ojibwe words in this story and know their meanings before reading the book aloud to children out of respect for the Ojibwe language and culture.

Listen to Staci Lola Drouillard talk about the real spruce tree that inspired this story and her writing process on The North 103.3 (10:03):  
<http://bit.ly/3U37tQw>



### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why is Grandma’s garden so special to Francis?
2. What does the spruce tree mean to Francis and her family?

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3. Why did Grandma and Grandpa decide to move? How do you think Francis felt when she heard Grandma and Grandpa were moving?
4. What are some ways the family took their memories and traditions with them when they moved?
5. Have you ever had to move or say goodbye to something special? What helped you feel better?
6. What helped Francis and the spruce tree adapt and get used to their new home?
7. How do the land and nature help Francis feel connected to her family and her Ojibwe culture?

### **Activity: My Family Tree**

Create your own version of the spruce tree using paper, paints, or natural materials. Include symbols or words that represent your roots (family, culture, traditions, or feelings). Then write or draw about a family memory that is important to you. You can include people, pets, or chosen family.



Find **Staci Lola Drouillard's Alphabet Forest Activity**, here:  
<http://bit.ly/44SpU0p>

### **About AmazeWorks**

The mission of [AmazeWorks](http://amazeworks.org) is to champion equity and belonging for all. We believe that every child should see their families, identities, and lived experiences reflected in positive mirrors. They should also have windows into the lives of others who are different from them. AmazeWorks is happy to sponsor Alphabet Forest at the Minnesota State Fair and offers this discussion and activity guide because we all believe in the power of stories to inspire, educate, and connect us all.

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