



EK BOOKS

TEACHER NOTES & RESOURCES

Title: Tree

Subtitle: A Gentle Story of Love and Loss

Author: Lynn Jenkins

Illustrator: Kirrili Lonergan

Publisher: EK Books

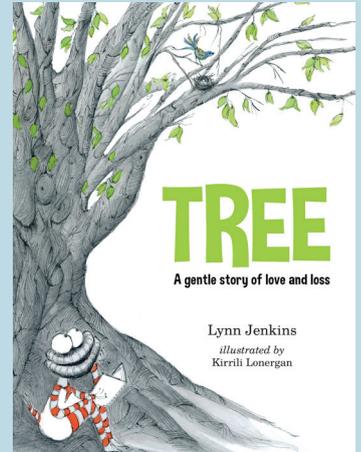
Price: ANZ \$19.99 | USA \$18.99 | CA \$24.99 | UK £9.99

ISBN: 978-1-925820-12-6

Publication date: ANZ: Feb 2020 | US, UK, CAN: Sep 2020

Audience age: 4 - 9

Key Curriculum Areas: English, The Arts, Health and Physical Education



SYNOPSIS:

Tree helps children to understand some things they can do when they are faced with a loss or change. Lopyy has a beloved friend called Tree. His confidante and comforter, Tree helps Lopyy to feel calm when he is stressed and worried. But one day, Lopyy and Curly notice that Tree is starting to leave them. Curly gently helps Lopyy, as well as the other LACs and Calmsters, to say goodbye to their friend and, eventually, to create a way to keep Tree, and her importance to them, in their memories and lives forever. Tree's story is a simple and gentle way to explain to children how things change, including losing important members of their world. They will grow up knowing that when they are faced with loss or change, there are options as to how to deal with the feelings that can come up, thereby building their emotional resilience.

THEMES:

Grief, Loss, Change, Acceptance, Strategies, Anxiety, Wellbeing, Social And Emotional Well-Being, Emotional Skill Building, Easy Well-Being Strategy, Early Intervention

SELLING POINTS:

- This book is the fifth in a much-loved series that supports social-emotional well-being.
- This book is a must for children, both at home and at school, especially those ones who are going through change or loss. Early intervention is the KEY.
- Non-gender specific, and appeals to both a national and international market.
- *Tree* is a gentle story of love and loss which shows that having open conversations with children encourages expression of emotion.
- *Tree* can be adapted to loss of any type, including loss of a parent, a grandparent, a sibling, a pet, or simply something special to a child.
- *Tree* is written and illustrated by author/psychologist Lynn Jenkins and illustrator/art therapist Kirrili Lonergan, respectively. This very passionate duo aim to make a difference to children's emotional wellbeing.



SELLING POINTS (cont.):

- *Tree*, along with all the books in the lessons of a LAC series, appeals to both children and adults. All of the books have a simple message that speaks to everyone.
- All 'Lessons of a LAC' books have been created using simple, identifiable characters that children have learnt to love and relate to.
- The books are a great resource for learning across all settings. They are used in the classroom and are also widely used by learning support teachers, pastoral care workers, allied health workers and in hospital settings

AUTHOR MOTIVATION:

Working for years in clinical practice, Lynn has developed a passion for early intervention. With her knowledge of brain development, she believes it is very important that children receive accessible information about how to manage typical emotional difficulties, so they can grow up with a working skillset and the confidence to deal with such issues as they come up in life. Understanding that grief is a feeling that is best accepted, rather than avoided, is important for children and their carers. Having some simple ideas about how to approach the feelings associated with loss and change can be helpful amidst the helpless feelings carers often experience when children are grieving.

WRITING STYLE:

Conversational, gentle, educational in the realm of mental well-being.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE:

The illustration style is simplistic, effective and consistent with the other books in the 'Lessons of a LAC' series.

AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND:

Lynn Jenkins, Author

Lynn is an author as well as a practicing clinical psychologist and mum. She is very passionate about assisting children with social and emotional issues via the platform of picture books and their coinciding school visits.

Lynn wrote *Lessons of a LAC*, *Brave*, *Perfect Petunias* and *Grey-glasses-itis*, the first four books in the five-book 'Lessons of a LAC' series, to give children a way to think about and manage worry and anxiety. A further picture book authored by Lynn is *Ollie's Treasure*, which taps into another of Lynn's passions: mindfulness. This picture book has been recognised for its quality by being shortlisted for the Speech Pathology of Australia Awards in 2018.

Aside from writing, Lynn teaches mindfulness (to children and adults), children's yoga and emotion regulation classes, and counsels children and their parents from her psychology practice, Life Matters Psychologists in Merewether, NSW.



Kirrili Lonergan, Illustrator

Kirrili Lonergan is a picture book illustrator, art therapist and book lover who resides in Newcastle, NSW. She has a passion for visual storytelling, which she loves sharing with children, and she relates warmly to the needs of children through her former years working as a paediatric nurse. She is the illustrator for the 'Lessons of a LAC' picture book series and the co-creator of the Lessons of a LAC anxiety management package.

Kirrili was shortlisted for *Ollie's Treasure* in the Speech Pathology of Australia Awards in 2018 and has just completed her ninth picture book. She is an active committee member for the CBCA Newcastle Sub-branch and a regular volunteer for Books4Outback, particularly with regard to environmental awareness. Her works range from naïve and whimsical to contemporary, all with a vintage feel due to the recycled teabags used in every piece. Melissa has won several art awards and is the Director of Art Gallery on Ovens, a gallery in Northeast Victoria. Melissa and her husband are raising twin 13 year old sons who think they are 18.

Together, Lynn and Kirrili visit schools to present the **Lessons of a LAC Workshops**. These workshops extend the lessons in the picture books and leave children with a clear understanding of what anxiety and related moods are, and a tool-belt of skills to manage them.

Lynn and Kirrili believe that **EARLY INTERVENTION** is the key. They also provide professional development training for teachers, to increase teachers' understanding of anxiety and related moods. They will be taught simple techniques on how to manage big feelings in themselves as well as in children, including a variety of ways to calmly breathe and relax, practise mindfulness, and self-talk. They will learn to draw emotions and to teach children how to draw emotions too, as a way to express themselves. Teachers will generally be made more aware of anxiety and big feelings in both children and themselves, and will be armed with a variety of tools they can use straight away!

Tree is also included, arming teachers and children with a lasting awareness of what children need when faced with loss or change, as well as some suggestions of ways to help them handle these big feelings



INTERVIEW:

AUTHOR

What is the inspiration for this story?

Working with children in clinical practice who have experienced loss and change in a variety of ways – from the death of a person or pet to loss of family arrangements and friendships as they have known them. Knowing that it is often difficult for carers to know what to do to help the children in their lives. The aim is to give children characters they can relate to and learn from.

What was the most rewarding part of this project?

Depicting a common struggle for kids.

What was the most challenging part of this project?

Probably coming up with the idea to represent the struggle and strategy accurately and in a way that children can easily understand.

ILLUSTRATOR

What media do you use to create your illustrations? Briefly describe your process.

The illustrations were loosely done in ink, then gouache and charcoal were used to add colour.

What was the most rewarding part of this project?

I find all the books in this series a joy to illustrate due to the therapeutic nature of both the text and the illustrations, combined to give children easy characters to identify with and a great message.

What was the most challenging part of this project?

The most challenging part is always setting up the page to allow the red and white striped tail to flow through the story. Otherwise there is really no challenge involved... just passion!

TEACHER ACTIVITIES/NOTES

Fits into Mental Health and Well-Being (MH) and Relationships (RS).

- In the story of *Tree*, how does Tree make Lopyy feel when he is worrying? (comforted, relaxed, not stressed, loved).
- Who in your life makes you feel the way Tree makes Lopyy feel when you are feeling worried?
- The author refers to Tree as a girl. Why do you think she has done this? (Mother Nature).
- The author refers to Tree's 'long legs' and 'arms'. Do trees have legs and arms? What is she referring to? What grammar function did she use?
- How does Lopyy feel when he realises Tree is leaving?
- Does Curly let Lopyy have and express his feelings or does Curly tell Lopyy not to worry about his feelings? What do you think is the best way to handle feelings – push them away or let yourself feel them? Who could help you when your feelings get big?
- What do you think the Calmsters and LACs might have written on their gifts to Tree when saying goodbye to her? Have a go at making your own gift for Tree.
- How do the LACs and Calmsters keep Tree in their memories?
- How did the illustrator choose to show the various feelings throughout the book? Focus on: sad, worried, saying goodbye, and remembering Tree.
- What do you think Tree would say to Lopyy if she could talk?
- Look at the illustrations of Tree throughout different stages of the book. How do you think she is feeling? Why do you think she is feeling like that?
- If Tree, Lopyy and Curly were able to talk to each other, what do you think they would say?
- Lopyy was sad that he was losing Tree. Create an artwork for Lopyy to give to Tree, something that makes Tree special to him, something to make Tree happy.



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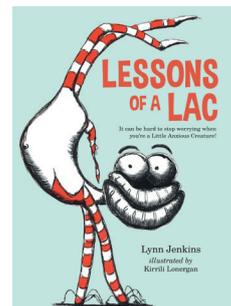
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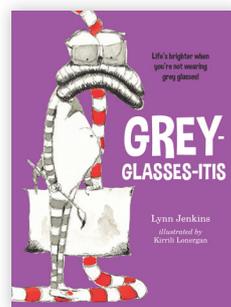
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