

Level 2-1
The Fir Tree

Workbook

Teacher's Guide and Answer Key

Teacher's Guide

A. Summary

1. Book Summary

The Fir Tree is a story about the life of a sad fir tree. The Fir Tree was never happy with what he had.

The young Fir Tree spent his days wishing he was taller instead of enjoying his life. Nothing made him happy. During the winter, other trees were taken to homes. The Fir Tree wanted to go to a home, too.

Finally, one winter, a family cut him down for Christmas. Now the Fir Tree was sad because he would not see his home or friends again.

The people decorated him and danced around him. Then, the children jumped at him and took their presents from the tree. No one looked at the Fir Tree again.

The next day, the Fir Tree was put in a dark room. One day, a mouse came and talked to the tree. The mice liked to hear his stories.

One day, the man took the Fir Tree outside. The Fir Tree thought about his life. He wished he had enjoyed himself when he was young. A boy put the Fir Tree in a fire. The Fir Tree was gone.

2. Section Summary

► **Pages 6-11:** The young Fir Tree was in the woods surrounded by bigger and taller trees. He wanted to be like them. Then, during the winter, other trees were cut down and taken to homes. The Fir Tree wanted to go to a home, too.

► **Pages 12-17:** One winter, a family came and cut the Fir Tree down. They took him to their home and decorated him for Christmas. He was very beautiful, and the children danced around him. Then, they jumped at him and took their presents. After that, no one looked at the tree again.

► **Pages 18-24:** The Fir Tree was taken upstairs and put into a dark room. Some mice came and talked to him. He told them about his life in the woods. Later, the Fir Tree was taken outside. A boy cut him up and put him in the fire. That was the end of the Fir Tree.

B. Background and Themes

★ **Regret:** Appreciate everything you have, and try to live in such a way that you do not have many regrets. The Fir Tree had many regrets. He did not enjoy his youth. He did not appreciate the woods, his friends, his home, the Sunshine, or the Air until it was too late.

★ **Jealousy:** Do not wish for what other people have. Sometimes, looks can be deceiving, and what others have may not be as good as you think. The Fir Tree always wanted what others had. First, he wanted to be taller. But the bigger trees got cut down, which hurt. Then he wanted to go to a home, like the other trees. But the happiness of going to a home was short-lived. The Fir Tree only spent one day in the middle of the room covered in decorations. After that, no one looked at him again. Then he was cut up and burned in a fire. If he had stayed in the woods, he would have lived a lot longer.

★ **The Environment:** The environmental concerns of cutting down fir trees for Christmas is also present in this story. Hans Christian Andersen personifies the tree, making it a person with thoughts and feelings, instead of leaving it as an object of wood in the forest. The Fir Tree describes his feelings and the pain he endures when being cut down. Trees in the forest live a long time. But those cut down for Christmas have a very short life. Their lives are ended, only so that they can be decorated for one day. It makes readers think twice about getting a real Christmas tree.

★ **Growing Up:** Many children want to grow up quickly. They wish that they were older, so they can do the things that adults get to do. The Fir Tree wanted to do that, too. However, we are only young once. Children should enjoy being young. They will have the rest of their lives to do adult things. If they try to grow up too fast, they will look back and wish that they had enjoyed their youth—just like the Fir Tree.

Answer Key

Part A. Story Focus

Before You Read

(Answers may vary.)

► Introduction

1. He was born in Denmark.
2. He wrote it in 1844.
3. He also wrote The Little Mermaid, Thumbelina, The Ugly Duckling, and The Snow Queen.

► Characters

1. Fir Tree
 - sad
 - wants to be taller
 - cut and put in a fire
2. Family
 - happy
 - put ornaments on the Fir Tree
 - dance and play around the Fir Tree
3. Mice
 - find the Fir Tree in a dark room
 - like the Fir Tree's stories

While You Read

(Answers may vary.)

► Beginning: Pages 6-11

A. Preview Questions

1. It is about a sad young fir tree.
2. I know the story called The Wizard of Oz.
3. He might be sad because he does not have any friends.

B. Review Questions

1. He wanted to be like the bigger and older trees around him.
2. He didn't like to hear that he was young.
3. They went to the homes of families.

► Middle: Pages 12-17

A. Preview Questions

1. It is about a family cutting the Fir Tree down for Christmas.
2. I think it is bad.
3. They put decorations on trees to make them pretty.

B. Review Questions

1. He was sad because he would not see his home or friends again.
2. They put him in the middle of the living room.
3. They jumped at him because they were excited to get their presents.

► End: Pages 18-24

A. Preview Questions

1. It is about the Fir Tree after Christmas.
2. I think a real tree is the better.
3. I think they should use them for firewood.

B. Review Questions

1. They put him upstairs in a dark room.
2. Some mice came to visit the Fir Tree.
3. They said he was ugly and old.

Mini Quiz

a. Enjoy today, for it will be gone tomorrow.

→ Appreciate every moment because you only have one life, and you never know what tomorrow will bring.

b. Children should be seen and not heard.

→ Children should respect their elders and remain quiet unless spoken to.

c. All good things come to he who waits.

→ People who are patient get great rewards.

After You Read

(Answers may vary.)

► Pattern Practice

4. A: What are they doing?

B: They are laughing.

5. A: What is Brian doing?

B: He is sleeping.

► Challenge

1. He was in the woods.
2. They were cut down and taken away.
3. He wanted to go to a home.
4. The children danced around the Fir Tree.

Part B. Skill Focus

► Vocabulary Preview

A.

1. d 2. g
3. f 4. a
5. i 6. b
7. e 8. c
9. h 10. j

B.

1. fir tree 2. morning
3. children 4. enjoy
5. ax 6. nothing
7. around 8. young
9. upstairs 10. dances

Reading Comprehension

► Beginning: Pages 6-11

A.

1. F 2. T 3. F 4. F 5. T

B.

1. d 2. b 3. a 4. c

C.

1. c 2. b 3. a 4. d 5. b

► Middle: Pages 12-17

A.

1. T 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. F

B.

1. b 2. c 3. d 4. a

C.

1. d 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. b

► End: Pages 18-24

A.

1. T 2. T 3. F 4. T 5. T

B.

1. The Fir Tree
2. The children
3. The man
4. The mice

C.

1. a 2. c 3. b 4. d 5. c

Think and Write

1. tall
2. enjoy
3. home
4. woods
5. old
6. late

Vocabulary Review

1. branches
2. beautiful
3. middle
4. ornaments
5. Tomorrow
6. during
7. winter
8. ax
9. passed
10. young

Summary

A.

3	2
4	1

B.

1. The Fir Tree wanted to be taller.
2. A family came to him in the winter.
3. The Fir Tree went to his new home.
4. The Fir Tree was put in the fire.

Book Report

Story a → d → c → b → e