Tree-mendous Tree Stories
6th – 8th grade

Description:
Trees play an important role in our lives throughout the seasons, offering beauty, shade, and many heartwarming memories. If you have a special connection to a tree, or a tree that has a significant meaning to you, share it with others! The Tree-mendous Tree Stories is a website from The Morton Arboretum and Openlands highlighting Chicago-area residents’ unique connection to trees with a curated collection of stories. Learn more about this initiative at mortonarb.org/visit-explore/activities-and-exhibits/tree-mendous-tree-stories

Standards:
- **W.3**: Write narratives to develop real experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- **W.6**: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
- **L.2**: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standards English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- **L.3**: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing.

Learning Goal:
Students will be able to recall experiences and write a narrative based on a special connection with a tree while demonstrating proper capitalization, spelling, and conventions.

Core Questions:
- Why are trees important to people and places?
- Can you tell me about a tree in your life? Is it special to you? Why?
- What would your world be like without trees?

Mini-lesson:
Review the role trees play in the world; how they benefit humans. Have the students brainstorm about a real-experience they’ve had with a tree. Explain/review the organizational format of writing an effective narrative. Model how to brainstorm the topic with the graphic organizer.

Extension:
- **Informational Reading, Science, & Research**: Have students research the type of tree in their story to identify it and learn about its needs for survival.
- **Science & Art**: Have the students illustrate the structure of a plant cell and describe the process of photosynthesis.
- **Writing**: Have the students write a persuasive letter to their principal, parent, mayor, etc. to plant more trees around their home or school, based on facts from research.
- **Research & Math**: Develop a statistical question about trees and pose to their classmates. Display and analyze data.

Technology:
Have students post their story on The Morton Arboretum Tree-mendous Tree Stories website at tree-stories.org/node/add/tree-story.
BRAINSTORMING GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

NAME: __________________________ DATE: __________________________

TITLE: __________________________

Tell me about a memory you have with a tree and why this memory has had an impact on you.
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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What does your tree look like? Describe its height, leaves, bark, texture, etc.
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**WRITING GRAPHIC ORGANIZER**

What are some sensory details to help describe your memory? What did you SEE, HEAR, FEEL, TASTE, SMELL?

| Tell me about your memory as a story. What happens in the beginning, middle, and end? |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **BEGINNING**                  | **MIDDLE**      | **END**         |

Identify some transitional words/phrases that you could use to help sequence your story.

Identify some figurative language examples you can incorporate into your story.
# TREE-MENDOUS TREE STORY RUBRIC

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<tr>
<th>W.3</th>
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<td><strong>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</strong></td>
<td>The student exceeds writing a tree story based on a real experience in narrative form. It is descriptive, in a natural and logical sequential order (with transition words) with effective pacing. They included relevant and effective sensory details, figurative language, and dialogue. There is a clear and effective introduction and conclusion.</td>
<td>The student progresses writing a tree story based on a real experience in narrative form. It is descriptive, in sequential order (with transition words) and paced naturally. There is an introduction and conclusion.</td>
<td>The student struggles writing a tree story based on a real experience in narrative form in sequential order. The introduction and/or conclusion are missing or unclear. Sensory details, figurative language, and/or dialogue are missing.</td>
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<td><strong>Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others.</strong></td>
<td>The student exceeds in producing and publishing their writing online. They were able to publish their writing in a single sitting.</td>
<td>The student progresses in producing and publishing their writing online. They were able to type at least 3 pages in a single sitting.</td>
<td>The student struggles in producing and publishing their writing independently OR they did not produce and publish their writing OR it took more than one sitting to finish at least 3 pages.</td>
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<td><strong>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standards English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</strong></td>
<td>The student exceeds in showing command of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling having 0 errors overall.</td>
<td>The student progresses in showing command of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling having 1-5 errors overall.</td>
<td>The student struggles in showing command of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, having more than 5 errors overall.</td>
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<td><strong>Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing.</strong></td>
<td>The student exceeds in knowledge of conventions, having only 0 errors in grammar (concise, varied sentence length, consistent style and tone).</td>
<td>The student progresses in knowledge of conventions, having 1-5 errors in grammar (concise, varied sentence length, consistent style and tone).</td>
<td>The student struggles in knowledge of conventions, having more than 5 errors in grammar (concise, varied sentence length, consistent style and tone).</td>
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**Score:** _____/40 = ____________________________

**Notes:**