

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND THE COMPANY



The performance of *The Man Who Planted Trees* that you will experience was adapted from a short French novel by writer Jean Giono. The company that created the stage adaptation is Puppet State Theatre from Scotland.

Read on to learn more about the author and the creators of the stage performance.



Jean Giono, the author of *The Man Who Planted Trees*. Image courtesy of mots.extraits.free.fr.

"I wrote this story to make people love trees, or more precisely to make people love planting trees."
-Jean Giono

THE AUTHOR

Jean Giono, the only son of a cobbler and a laundress, was one of France's greatest writers. He wrote stories, essays, poetry, plays, filmscripts, translations and over thirty novels, many of which have been translated into English.

Giono was a pacifist, meaning he did not believe that conflict should be resolved through violence. He was twice imprisoned in France for speaking out at the outset and conclusion of World War II.

He was born in 1895 in the little city of Provence, and died there, too, in 1970.

AWARDS:

- Prix Bretono
- Prix de Monaco (for the most outstanding collected work by a French writer)
- Légion d'Honneur
- Member of Academie Goncourt



ABOVE: The narrator sets the scene at the beginning of the performance. What can you tell about the setting based on what you see in the photo?

THE SHOW'S CREATORS

Puppet State Theatre was founded in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2003 by Richard Medrington, a professional puppeteer since 1984. In 2006 he teamed up with Rick Conte and Ailie Cohen to develop an adaptation of Jean Giono's *The Man Who Planted Trees*, which has travelled to all corners of the United Kingdom, Ireland, Bermuda, Malaysia, and the United States of America.

AWARDS:

- Eco Prize for Creativity 2007
- Total Theatre Award for Story Theatre 2008
- Best Children's Show: Brighton Festival 2009
- Victor Award for best show: 2009 International Performing Arts for Youth showcase

ABOUT SCOTLAND



The Man Who Planted Trees is coming to Des Moines from the international company Puppet State Theatre, which is from Scotland. Learn more about Scotland prior to seeing the show.

GEOGRAPHY

Scotland is in north-west Europe and is part of the United Kingdom. It shares a land border to the south with England and is surrounded by the North Sea on the east and the Atlantic Ocean on the west.

Scotland is a mountainous country that is famous for its fresh water lochs (lakes). There are over 600 square miles of them. (One of the most famous is Loch Ness, where a mysterious monster is said to live.)

EDINBURGH

Scotland's capital is Edinburgh (which is also the city where Puppet State Theatre is based). Theater lovers from around the world come to Edinburgh for its famous theater festival.

Other major cities are Aberdeen, Dundee, and Glasgow.

KNOWN FOR

Scotland is also famous for its clans, kilts, medieval castles, and poetry.

Well-known people from Scotland include:

- Walter Scott
- Robert Louis Stevenson
- Arthur Conan Doyle
- David Hume
- The actor Sean Connery

ABOVE: Scotland's largest lake, Loch Lomond, surrounded by mountains.
Image courtesy of loch-lomond.net.

OTHER FACTS

Currency: Pound Sterling (£)

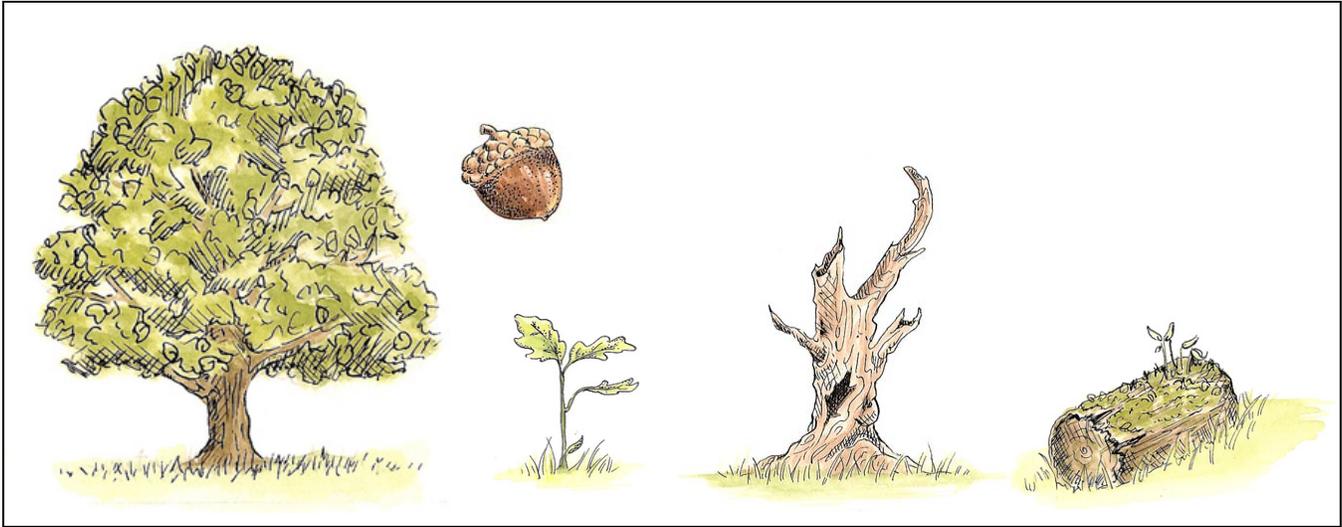
Official Language: English

Largest lake: Loch Lomond
(24 miles long)

National Animal: Unicorn



ABOUT TREES, pg. 1



Author Jean Giono once said that he wrote *The Man Who Planted Trees* because he wanted to “to make people love trees, or more precisely to make people love planting trees.”

Read on to learn more about trees and the many amazing things that trees do for us and our world.

WHAT IS A TREE?

A tree is a woody perennial plant. A tree usually has a single stem or trunk from which limbs or branches sprout some distance from the ground. Limbs and branches carry a spreading crown of leaves. A tree is a living thing with its own natural life cycle through which it germinates, grows and dies. Stages include:

1. Seed
2. Sprout
3. Sapling
4. Mature Tree
5. Snag (Dead Tree)
6. Rotting Log

Which of the stages of a tree’s life cycle are depicted in the illustration, above?

TREES AS HISTORIANS

Trees keep track of history. As they grow, trees record weather, physical events and the passage of time. Some species, such as the bristlecone pine, can live to be thousands of years old.

A tree records “memories” within the structure of its trunk. Everything that impacts the tree throughout its life – from insects, wounds and disease to floods and fire – leaves its mark.

Sometimes the impact will result in rapid or slower growth, which is shown by different ring sizes in the cross-section of a tree. Trees growing in regions where there are marked seasonal changes record their growth in rings. In these regions trees have distinct period of growth and dormancy. A growth ring usually appears each year in dry or cold weather with the outer rings the most recent.

GROWTH RINGS

- ⇒ A narrow ring indicates a season in which the tree grew very little, during a drought, for example.
- ⇒ A wider growth ring indicates a season in which the tree grew a great deal.
- ⇒ Trees growing in regions with no distinct seasonal change, such as tropical rainforests, do not have annual growth rings because their growth is fairly constant.



Image courtesy of idahoforests.org.

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ABOUT TREES, pg. 2



ABOVE: Hikers walk through an old-growth forest.

BENEFITS OF TREES

Trees are amazing and provide many important benefits to the earth and all living things:

CLEAN WATER

Trees' hair-like root fibers help filter groundwater. They trap nutrients and pollutants that are potential contaminants. Tree roots filter pollutants out of soil, producing clean water.

CLEAN AIR

Trees produce oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide. They also capture particulates (dust, pollen, pollutants).

SOIL PROTECTION AND NUTRIENTS

Tree roots hold soil in place so it cannot be easily blown away by wind or washed away by water. Without trees, heavy rains can wash soil into streams and rivers, creating avenues for nutrient pollution and habitat destruction, and increasing the likelihood of flooding.

The decaying of dead tree parts returns nutrients to the soil.

MINERAL AND NUTRIENT RECYCLING

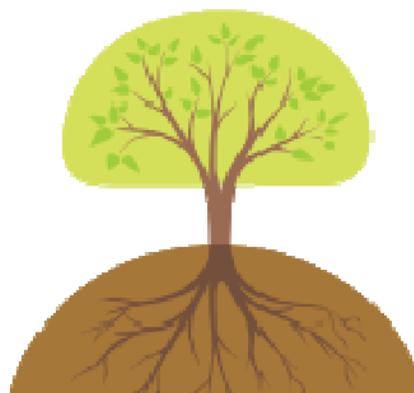
Throughout their lives, trees cycle and utilize minerals and nutrients from the air, water, and soil.

HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE

Trees and forests provide homes for many different species of animals.

RECREATION AND HEALTH

Forests are great places for activities such as hiking, backpacking, skiing, hunting, and bird watching. Looking at trees makes people feel better. Studies have shown that hospital patients who can see trees outside their windows tend to recover more quickly than those who look out on pavement and buildings.



MEDICINES

Trees provide substances with medicinal value. For example, taxol, a drug extracted from the bark of the yew, is used in treating cancer.

ECONOMY

Making room for trees in our cities provides job opportunities and a healthier environment. The forest industry also provides jobs for many people, from cabinetmakers to homebuilders. Trees planted for energy conservation help consumers save money.

ENERGY

Trees are used to shade homes and businesses, keeping them cool and conserving energy. In some parts of the world, trees are the main source of fuel for cooking food, warming houses, and running small businesses.

LEFT: Tree roots below the ground hold soil in place.

VOCABULARY



PUPPETRY & THEATER



mouth puppet: a puppet that has an open-able and moving mouth. “Dog” is an example of a mouth puppet.

multi-sensory: appealing to multiple senses; may draw on a combination of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste.



Image courtesy of stephaniebeeby.com.

object manipulation: the art of taking normal, everyday objects, turning them into found puppets, and operating them onstage.

table-top puppetry: puppetry performed on top of a table. The character of the Member of Parliament, pictured above, is an example of a table-top puppet in *The Man Who Planted Trees*.

FROM THE SHOW:

charcoal: a fuel made by humans from wood that has been slowly burned to “carbonize” it. After the wood



Image courtesy of glogster.com.

has burned, the resulting black ashy material can be burned at temperatures of 2000 degrees Fahrenheit or more. Unchecked use of charcoal has led to deforestation. Charcoalburners were responsible for the ruins and desolation in Elzéard’s world.

lavender:

a hardy and fragrant wild flowering plant that thrives in places with little water and shade. Lavender was the only thing that grew in Eleazard’s land before he started planting trees.



Image courtesy of thisoldhouse.com.

linden tree: a type of tree that grows abundant bright green leaves, and produces nectar-bearing flowers that smell like honey in summer. The linden is known as a “healing” tree, for it’s heart-shaped leaves, sweet smell, and because the shiny sides of the leaves face down, for poets to dream underneath.



A linden tree grows near a fountain at the center of Vergons, Elzéard’s prosperous and happy town, when the narrator visits it at the end of the story. Image courtesy of dreamstime.com.

World Wars I and II: World War I was a major war centered in Europe from 1914 to 1918. World War II was a global war that began in 1939 and ended in 1945. Elzéard continues to plant trees and care for his growing forest despite hardships as a result of the fighting in Europe during both of the World Wars.

PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, pg. 1

1) THE WOMAN WHO PLANTED TREES: WANGARI MAATHAI

Explanation: In this activity, students will research Wangari Maathai, who won a Nobel Peace Prize for her work in Kenya re-planting trees.

Goal: To develop students' understanding that environmental protection promotes peace and quality of life.

When: Before the performance

Materials:

- Computers with internet access or books on the "Green Belt Movement"
- List of research questions

Activity:

1. Share with students background information on Wangari Maathai and how her story relates to the fictional story of *The Man Who Planted Trees* (provided in right-hand column).
2. Ask students to conduct research to learn more about Wangari Maathai's work. Students should strive to answer the following questions:

- Why was it so important that trees be planted in Kenya 35 years ago?
- What is the Green Belt Movement doing today?
- What were the results 5 years after the movement began? 10? 35? What about the future? In 50 years? 100?

Follow-up Questions:

1. What surprised you about Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement?
2. How did working to improve the environment lead to Wangari Maathai winning an international award for Peace?
3. Does America have a need for a person like Wangari Maathai? Why or why not?
4. Where should trees be planted? In cities? In your neighborhood?
5. What do you need to do if you want to plant a tree? What steps should you follow?

Additional background information:

The Man Who Planted Trees is a made-up story, called fiction. Wangari Maathai was a real woman who lived in Kenya and planted trees. Ms. Maathai really loved the story of *The Man Who Planted Trees*, and wrote the forward for the twentieth anniversary edition of Jean Giono's book. In the forward, she tells this story:

'I first became aware of the importance of trees as a little girl, when my grandmother told me that I should not collect wood from a nearby fig tree because it was a gift from God.



Even though I didn't know then why fig trees were special, I later understood that the fig trees deep roots tapped into underground streams and brought water to the surface, replenishing the land and bringing it life."

Source: *The Man Who Planted Trees* by Jean Giono, p vii. Chelsea Green Publishing Company.

Ms. Maathai began the "Green Belt Movement" when she started to plant trees in Kenya in 1977, and now over 40 million trees have been planted due to her dedication. Wangari Maathai was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts in 2005. She was the first African woman to receive that prize, a source of enormous pride for women everywhere.



PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, pg. 2

2) WHAT DOES A PLANT EAT?

Best for: Grades 3-5

Explanation: Students will plant and observe lima beans in four different conditions to test what plants need to grow.

Goal: To understand that all organisms need energy and matter to live and grow.

Materials:

- 4 lima bean seeds
- Soil
- Water
- 4 clear plastic cups

Activity:

1. Plant a lima bean in four different cups.
2. Label each cup and place it in a location so the following conditions are met:

- Cup 1:** Provide the bean seed with soil, water and sunlight
- Cup 2:** Provide the bean seed with soil and sunlight but no water
- Cup 3:** Provide the bean seed with water and sunlight but no soil
- Cup 4:** Provide the bean seed with soil and water but no sunlight

3. Water the seeds each day (except for Cup # 2). Ask students to predict the growth of the seeds. Which will grow the best? Fastest? Slowest?
4. After a week, ask the students to check the progress of each bean seed. Were their predictions correct? Continue caring for each bean seed at least until the seed in cup #1 has outgrown its cup.
5. Discuss the difference in the growth observed by the beans in each cup. What elements are needed for plants to grow? What happened to the bean in cup #4? (Note: the stems and leaves will likely grow, but not as green as the plant did not receive sunlight and could not produce chlorophyll.)

To extend this activity, ask students to select one kind of plant to study. Research the food chain associated with your plant. How is your plant a primary source of energy and matter for other organisms?

3) CAN A PLANT BLEED?

Best for: Grades 6-8

Explanation: Students will explore how sugar, water and minerals are transported in a vascular plant.

Goal: To understand how water and nutrients are transported within a plant.

Materials:

- Celery
- Red food coloring
- Cup
- Water

Activity:

1. Fill a cup with water and add a few drops of red food coloring.
2. Place a stalk of celery (with the leaves pointing toward the ceiling) in the water. Leave it overnight.
3. The next day, ask students to look at the celery. What do they see? (Overnight, the red water will have traveled up the tubes of the celery. The celery leaves will have turned red or pink as water reaches them through the xylem, or the path the water takes from the roots of the leaves, to the top of the plant.)

Follow-Up Questions

1. What conducts red food color up into the stalk? The leaves? How does it fight gravity?
2. Are xylem and phloem like human arteries and veins? Why or why not?
3. What if we tried a lettuce leaf? Or a tree branch? Would the experiment work then? Why or why not?
4. Can stems absorb pollutants or dangerous materials?
5. What if we water a planted seed exclusively with food colored-water? Will that affect the seed? Or the plant?

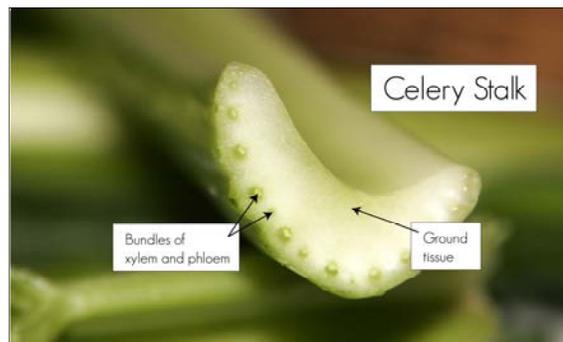


Image courtesy of ocv.openhighschool.org.

POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION, pg. 2

3) CREATE A PUPPET AND SHOW

Best for: Grades 3-5

Explanation: In this cross-curricular activity, students will create a puppet and then write a short skit around their puppet.

Goal: To better understand the art form of puppetry and to practice creative writing and performance skills.

Materials:

- Clean socks
- Buttons
- Needle and thread
- Fur fabric or yarn
- Fabric glue
- Scissors
- Felt
- Felt-tip pen or permanent marker
- Shoebox or cardboard box to “carry” the puppet

Activity Part I:

1. Place the sock on your hand and mark with a pen where you would like the eyes.
2. Take two buttons and glue or sew them to the sock to make eyes.
3. Use a felt tip pen to draw the nose.
4. Glue or sew fur fabric or yarn to the sock’s head for hair.
5. Cut out ears, arms, legs, and a tail from felt and sew or glue to the sock to finish your dog.
6. Use a box as the base for the sock puppet. You can decorate a basket and cut a hole in the bottom and manipulate the puppet through the basket.
7. Encourage students to be creative and find new ways to manipulate their puppets.

Activity Part II:

1. Using their new puppet as inspiration, ask students to write a short skit.
2. Students should first develop their puppet’s character:
 - What is their puppet’s name?
 - What is their voice like?
 - Do they have any distinctive mannerisms?
3. Students should next establish a plot, setting, and conflict.
4. Encourage students to try showing the events of the story rather than using dialogue, like in *The Man Who Planted Trees* performance.
5. Students should also think of ways to build tension or suspense in the plot.
6. If they would like, students may pair together to combine characters and create new skits. They may also gather additional props from home or make sets to prepare to perform their skits in front of the class.

Follow-up Questions:

1. What was challenging about this activity?
2. What did you notice about the ways that puppets were used in *The Man Who Planted Trees*? What did you notice about the puppeteers?
3. Was it helpful to create the character for your puppet first before creating your plot? Why or why not?



Examples of simple hand puppets. Images courtesy of life123.com; ordinary-gentlemen.com; and pixox.biz

POST-SHOW ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION, pg. 3

4) NATURE STORY SHOW

Best for: Grades 6-8

Goal: To reflect upon meaningful interactions with nature in writing.

Explanation: In this two-part activity, students will begin by writing a first draft in response to a prompt about a nature. They may also create a revision of their writing that they will perform as an actor/puppet.

Materials:

- Pen/pencil
- Paper
- “Object” puppets that students bring in

Activity Part I:

1. Brainstorm as a class a list of things we encounter in nature: rocks, trees, mountains, rivers, lakes, clouds, sky, grass, flowers, feathers, birds, eyeballs. Allow the students to name anything in nature, but point out man-made objects and put them in a separate list if students name them.
2. Ask the students to choose one or two of the “things in nature”.
3. Ask the students to write about an experience with their chosen object/creature:
 - Describe what it was;
 - how you felt;
 - what made you remember that moment.
4. Have students share their writing with a partner.

Activity Part II:

1. Invite students to revise their written pieces so that they will be able to perform them.
2. Have students create or find a puppet that can represent the “thing in nature” that they chose to write about.
3. Like in *The Man Who Planted Trees*, each performer will stand behind the puppet when making it talk. When delivering their piece, students should remember to keep their eyes focused on the puppet so the audience knows where to watch.

Follow-Up Questions:

1. What makes a moment in nature memorable?
2. What was challenging about the puppet activity?
3. How did “being” your nature object as a puppet change your thoughts about your nature object? Why?

5) DESIGN A TREEHOUSE!

Best for: Grades 3-8

Goal: To imagine and design a tree home.

Explanation: Students will design and draw a tree house that benefits its residents and local ecosystem while not harming the tree.

Materials:

- Pencils/Markers/crayons/paint
- Drawing or construction paper
- Reference drawings of different ecosystems and tree types (or internet access)

Activity:

1. Introduce activity by asking students what their favorite place in their home is, and why. They may write their answers or discuss them.
2. Then ask students if they ever feel the urge to “get away” from home. What are the basic things they would need to be comfortable?
3. Ask students to define what a home is. From the class definitions, create a list of “requirements” for a home (a roof, a floor, walls, windows?).
4. Students begin independent work by choosing what type of environment they want their tree home in (a residential neighborhood, a rainforest, a desert...) and who the home is for (a person, a raccoon, a bat, a bird). They will choose building materials, and draw their tree house. (Add grade appropriate requirements, such as a crayon drawing including the tree for younger students, and a scale-model drawing for older students.)
5. Finally, students present their drawings to the class or a small group.

Follow-Up Questions:

1. How does your home benefit its residents? Its ecosystem?
2. What considerations did you make so that your home’s construction does not harm the tree?



Ever want to live in a tree? Some architects at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) are developing a plan for living trees to be part of a home!
Image courtesy of archi-node.com.

RESOURCES AND SOURCES



BOOKS

The Man Who Planted Trees
by Jean Giono

*Bark: An Intimate Look at the
World's Trees*, Photography
by Cédric Pollet

For grades 3-5:

The Curious Garden
by Peter Brown

How the Ladies Stopped the Wind
by Bruce McMillan

Planting the Trees of Kenya
by Claire Nivola

*The Man Who Lived in a Hollow
Tree* by Anne Shelby

Hope is an Open Heart
by Lauren Thompson

Wangari's Trees of Peace
by Jeanette Winter

*Johnny Appleseed: the Legend
and the Truth* by Jane Yolen

For grades 6-8:

Forest Born
by Shannon Hale

Toby Alone
by Timothee de Fombelle

The Unfinished Angel
by Sharon Creech

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

Video:

"Forest Man."

16-minute documentary about an Indian man who has been planting hundreds of trees on an Indian island threatened by erosion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkZDSqyE1do>

Websites:

American Forests. www.americanforests.org

Alliance for Community Trees. www.actrees.org

The National Arbor Day Foundation. www.arborday.org

Kids' Gardening Projects. www.kids-outdoor-activities.suite101.com

Project Learning Tree. <http://www.plt.org/>

Trees Are Good. <http://www.treesaregood.com/>

STUDY GUIDE SOURCES

"Facts about Scotland." Project Britain: British Life and Culture.

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/britain/scotland.htm>

"The Man Who Planted Trees." Holden and Arts Associates Website.

"The Man Who Planted Trees Study Guide." Orange County Performing Arts Center. http://www.scfta.org/home/Media/education_bus_ins/Man_Who_Planted_Trees_Teacher_Guide.pdf

Puppet State Theatre. Official Website. <http://www.puppetstate.com>

School of Puppetry. <http://www.schoolofpuppetry.com.au/home.php>