



HC 978-1930238855

# The Sequoia Lives On

by Joanna Cooke

## Concepts

- Life cycles
- Habitats
- Animal/Plant Relationships
- Parts of a Tree
- Fire Ecology
- Photosynthesis
- Wonder/Mindfulness

# A GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Grades K-3

## *About the Book*

From tiny seed to world's largest tree, the giant sequoia is a living wonder of nature. This ancient and tremendous species grows naturally only on the western slopes of California's Sierra Nevada. Each sequoia begins life as a seed no larger than an oatmeal flake—yet can grow as tall as three blue whales stacked chin to tale. The oldest sequoias have lived as long as forty human lifetimes. The largest are so enormous, twenty children holding hands can't wrap their arms around the trunks. This book shares the life story of the giant sequoia, casting light on natural questions: How does this tree grow so big? How does it live so long?

## Vocabulary

absorb	hollow
buttress	immensity
canopy	larvae
crown	massive
decompose	scaly
foundation	

## Ecology

- What do sequoias need to survive? NGSS K-LS1-1
- Discuss how fire helps sequoias. Study the illustration about sunlight and air. What do the swirling white lines represent? What do sequoias “exhale” that becomes “food” for you? NGSS K-LS1-1
- How is it “good” that sequoias fall? NGSS 3-LS1-1
- Study the underground illustration. What parts of a plant can you see? NGSS 1-LS1-1
- Using the illustrations, compare and contrast a sequoia seedling to an adult. NGSS 3-LS1-1
- Sequoias face many challenges—they endure. Why is that important? NGSS 3-LS1-1
- What animals might live in a sequoia grove? How might they use a sequoia? How do you know? NGSS 2-LS4-1

## Text Analysis

- Is this book fiction or nonfiction? How do we know? CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.10
- What can we learn about sequoias from the front or back cover? CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7
- The first spread shows two kids gazing up at a sequoia. What feelings does this perspective give the reader? CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7
- Find the picture of the blue whales swimming by a sequoia. Is this real? What is this illustration trying to show the reader? CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7
- Contrast the mood of the fire illustrations with the benefits of fire. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7
- Study the illustration showing the grandmother and child. What is happening in this illustration? Why do you think the illustrator chose to create this spread? CCSS.ELA-RI.7

## Activities

- “Stand beneath a sequoia and anything seems possible.” Draw what else might be possible in the natural world.
- Draw a picture of a chickaree or long-horned beetle dispersing sequoia seeds. NGSS 2-LS2-2
- Find the illustration of the fallen sequoia in the snow. Complete this prediction sentence: This sequoia will live on because\_\_\_\_\_. NGSS 3-LS1-1
- Draw a model showing the life cycle of a sequoia. NGSS 3-LS1-1
- Sequoia roots provide a broad foundation to support their weight and also collect water. Design a solution to a human problem using this method as inspiration. NGSS 1-LS1-1
- Create a 2D or 3D model of a sequoia forest that provides plants and animals with what they need to survive. NGSS K-ESS3-1
- Hold hands as a class to see how big a sequoia is.



### Author

This guide was written by Joanna Cooke, author of *The Sequoia Lives On*. For many years, she taught the natural and cultural history of Yosemite National Park to visiting students. Joanna holds a masters degree in education and works as a substitute teacher for elementary classrooms. Her middle grade historical novel, *Call Me Floy*, is set in 1876 Yosemite.



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