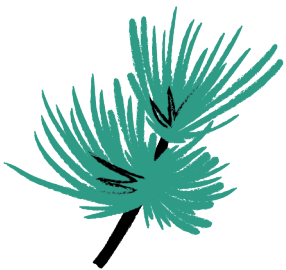




**CAN YOU
HEAR THE
TREES
TALKING?**



**A COMPANION GUIDE
FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS**



PETER WOHLLEBEN



Title: *Can You Hear the Trees Talking?: Discovering the Hidden Life of the Forest*

Author: Peter Wohlleben

Genre: Non-fiction

Themes: Nature, trees, ecosystems, biodiversity, STEM

Suitable for: Ages 8–10, Grades 2–5

Guided Reading Level: T

Common Core Standards:

RI.5.1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

L.5.3,4,4a,4b,5,5a,5c,6

RF.5.3,3a,4,4a,4c

SL.5.1,1c,1d,2,3,4,5,6

W.5.2,2a,2b,2c,2d,2e,7,8,9,9b

Next Generation Science Standards:

5-PS1 Matter and Its Interactions

5-ESS2 Earth's Systems

5-PS3 Energy

5-ESS3 Earth and Human Activity

5-LS1 From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

3–5-ETS1 Engineering Design

5-LS2 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics





SUMMARY

With his groundbreaking, internationally bestselling book *The Hidden Life of Trees*, Peter Wohlleben established himself as a global advocate for forests and our relationship with trees. Now, Peter shares his knowledge and storytelling style with young readers, explaining surprising facts about trees with quizzes, photographs, and hands-on activities to engage even the most reluctant learners.

Readers are asked intriguing questions such as, "Do Trees Have Grandparents?" and "Is There a Forest Internet?" and "What Are Trees Afraid Of?" *Can You Hear the Trees Talking?* shares the mysteries and magic of the forest in language kids will love and understand.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

These discussion questions and activities are designed to support the goal of helping students explore *Can You Hear the Trees Talking?*, the science presented in the book, and their own creativity.





BEFORE READING



The following questions and activities build the context and introduce the topic of the book, and establish prior knowledge and interest.

1. Before reading *Can You Hear the Trees Talking?*, look at the cover. Discuss with the class what you think the book will be about.
2. Share with the class something you know about trees, or what trees mean to you.
3. Do you think this is a fictional story or an information book? What are the clues that lead you to your answer?
4. Open the book and read the table of contents. Make a list of the sections or chapters that look interesting or unusual. Mark the sections you want to read.

LANGUAGE ARTS: VOCABULARY REVIEW

Review the following vocabulary words. Look for these words in the word search. (Some of these are defined within the text.)

algae
aphid
bacteria
conifer
deciduous
fungi
hibernation

lichen
needles (the kind on trees)
nodes
pitch (noun, tree pitch)
pollen
prune (verb, relating to trees)
soot





DURING READING



These activities check comprehension, stimulate interest, involve readers in reflection as they read, and encourage consideration of other readers' reactions.

LANGUAGE ARTS {(INFORMATIONAL TEXT FEATURES)}

1. Glance through the book without reading it. Make a list of the different text features that you find.

IDENTIFY THE AUTHOR'S PURPOSE (COMPREHENSION)

2. Read the author's introduction, "Let's Go on a Journey of Discovery." What does it tell you about Peter Wohlleben's reasons for writing this book? Using the chart at the end of this guide, write down the words or phrases that give you clues.

ALL CHAPTERS: TRY THIS! SECTIONS (EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING)

3. Look for the Try This! sidebars throughout the book. These activities offer excellent suggestions for experiential learning. Most of these activities are possible even if you live in a city or far away from a forest. For example, the Try This! sections on the following pages can be done anywhere you can find a tree (or two).

BARK RUBBINGS (page 23): You can make a scrapbook of bark from different tree species. Press a piece of paper against the bark with one hand. With your other hand, rub a crayon over the paper to make a colorful impression of the bark on the page. You can make and collect different bark pictures this way.

LOOKING FOR BARK BEETLE HOLES (page 33): If you find a conifer with the bark falling off, take a piece and hold it up against the sky. You'll probably see many small holes where bark beetles have drilled their way out from the inside, after having fed under the bark when they were larvae.

RECORD-SIZED TREES (page 43): Do you know any record-holding trees? You could try to find the trees in your town or in the nearest forest with the widest trunks. Simply measure how wide the trunks are by circling them with your arms. If the tree is so wide that your hands can't touch, you'll need your family or friends to help. How many people does it take to hug the tree? If you want to know the exact measurement, use a tape measure. And if you like, take a photo and make a note of where that sturdy tree can be found.

APHID TICKLING (page 53): If you want to see how well ants watch over their herds of aphids, take a blade of grass. Now look for a leaf that has a small bunch of aphids on its underside. Are there also ants running around on the branches? If so, that's perfect. If you tickle the aphids with the blade of grass, the ants will come running to defend the aphids. They will rear up on their hind legs as if to say, "Get lost!" Sometimes they'll even bite into the blade of grass, thinking it's an attacking animal.

LEAF AND NEEDLE PRESSING (page 61): Find out how many different trees grow in your neighborhood. Take a leaf or needle from each tree and place it between the pages of a newspaper. Now stack heavy books on top. After a few days, the leaves will be dry and completely flat, and you can glue them onto a piece of paper. They'll keep like this for several years. Use a guidebook or the internet to see which kinds of trees you've found.

You can find more ideas on these pages:

- 11 (birch log bubbles)
- 19 (tree partners)
- 21 (counting nodes)
- 27 (needle rubbing)
- 41 (looking for fall leaves)
- 47 (playing trunk telephone)
- 49 (sticky pitch testing)
- 67 (birch and spruce tasting)
- 69 (shade testing)
- 71 (leaf chromatography)



4. Pick one of these activities to try yourself. Afterward, tell a partner what happened when you tried the activity. What did you notice? Did it turn out the way you expected?

CHAPTER 1: TREES AND HUMANS (COMPARE AND CONTRAST)

5. Using the chart or the Venn diagram at the end of this activity guide, compare and contrast the human body with a tree's body. How are they similar? How are they different?

CHAPTER 3: FOREST BLOG

6. Imagine you are an animal, plant, or fungus living in a forest or on a tree near you. Write a short blog post, one or two paragraphs long, for the Wood Wide Web, a news blog for the forest. What message do you want to share? What comments might other members of the forest add to the post?

CHAPTER 6: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TREES AND PEOPLE

7. After you read chapter 6 ("Trees Are Awesome"), write down three ways trees have an impact on our daily lives. Then write down three ways human activity has an impact on trees.





AFTER READING



These activities inspire continued reflection and response to the text, bring conclusion to the experience of reading this particular text, and stimulate further extensions.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE: CLASS FIELD GUIDE

1. In this exercise, the class will create a tree identification guide.
 - a. First, list the different species of trees that are familiar to you.
 - b. Beside each species name, write down one defining feature (such as the shape of the leaf or the texture of the bark).
 - c. You can present your list in a slide show. The slide show can highlight one species per slide and can include a general description, any defining features, a drawing of a tree silhouette, or a photo or drawing of one or more parts of the tree (such as the leaf, bark, or seeds).
 - d. You can share your slide show in small groups or with the rest of the class. How many different types of trees can the class identify?

SEEING THE FOREST: FOREST MURAL-MOSAIC

2. In this exercise, the class will create a mural of a forest. Each student will draw four tiles, which will then fit together with tiles drawn by other students to create the mural.
 - a. To create the tiles, fold and then cut two sheets of letter-sized paper lengthwise, to make four rectangular tiles. Each tile will be 4.25" x 11".
 - b. Place the tiles on your desk horizontally. Then draw and color a tree in four segments: one tile for the root system, one for the trunk, one for the branches, and one for the canopy. Don't forget to include some plants and creatures that live in the forest—worms and fungal filaments below ground, forest animals, insects, or birds.
 - c. In order for everyone's tiles to fit together into the final mural, the class (or teacher) can decide on the placement of certain elements that will extend to other tiles. For example, the class (or teacher) might decide that on the root-system tiles, the horizon line (the forest floor) will be half an inch from the top of the tile. Or, on the branch tile, that a branch

will cross over halfway up. With a pencil and ruler, measure and mark these crossover points. See diagram at the end of this activity guide for reference. Alternately, you may decide that no elements should extend to other tiles.

- d. To assemble the mural-mosaic, collect together the tiles for each layer (root system, trunk, branches, canopy). Pin up each layer in rows across a wall. Step back to enjoy your forest!
- e. A variation on this activity is to draw your own tree on a tabloid-sized sheet of paper. Before drawing, fold the sheet into four along the 11-inch edge. This is to remind you of all the parts of the tree, above and below ground. Once your tree drawing is complete, you can pin up your tree on a display board.

A NEW WAY TO LOOK AT TREES

- 3. After you have read *Can You Hear the Trees Talking?* think back to what you knew about trees before you read the book. What do you know about trees now that you didn't know before? How will you think about trees differently now? Share your reflections with a partner.





EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



Name: _____



AUTHOR'S PURPOSE

Read the author's introduction, "Let's Go on a Journey of Discovery."
What does it tell you about Peter Wohlleben's reasons for writing this book?



Title: Can You Hear the Trees Talking? **Topic:** _____

Author: Peter Wohlleben **Type of text:** _____



What is the purpose of the introduction?
What is Peter Wohlleben trying to explain, describe, or answer?



What is the purpose of the book?
What is Peter Wohlleben trying to explain, describe, or answer?



Cite some details from the introduction that Peter Wohlleben uses to support his ideas.



Do you agree with Peter Wohlleben? Why or why not?

Name: _____



COMPARISON AND CONTRAST CHART

HUMAN BODY



SIMILARITIES



TREE BODY

HUMAN BODY



DIFFERENCES

TREE BODY



POINTS OF INTEREST

	←		→	
	←		→	
	←		→	
	←		→	
	←		→	
	←		→	
	←		→	
	←		→	

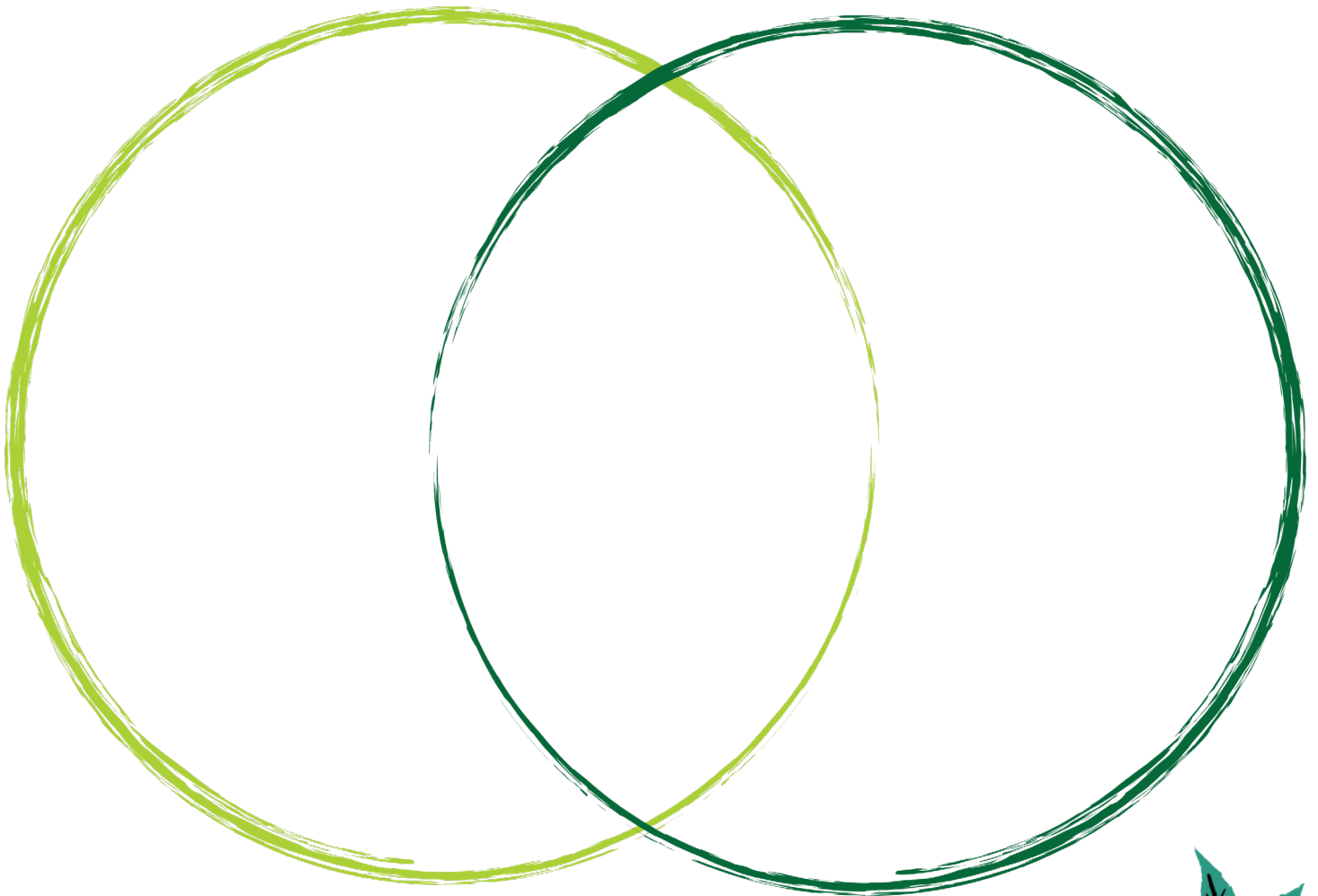


Name: _____

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST VENN DIAGRAM

HUMAN BODY

TREE BODY

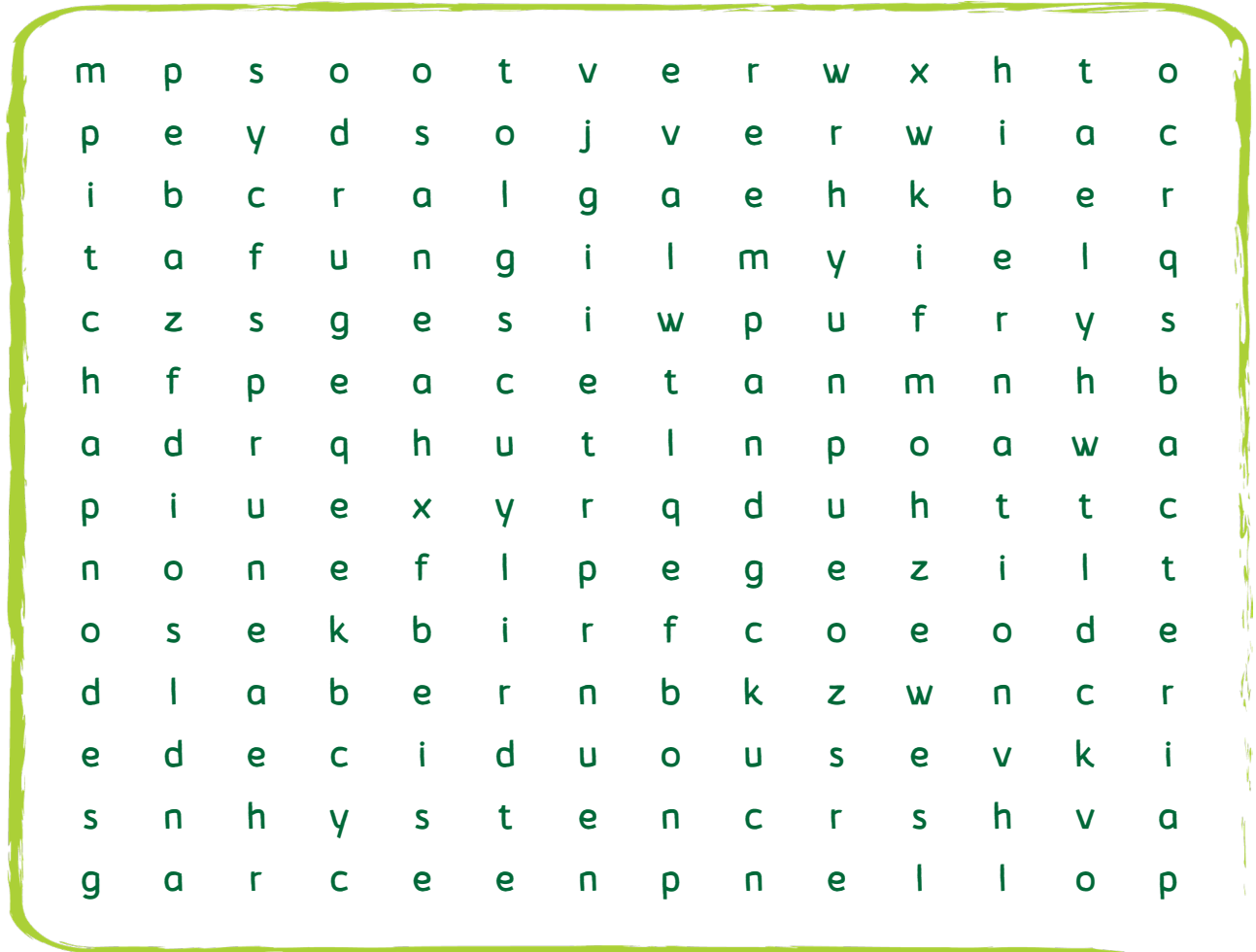


Name: _____



CAN YOU HEAR THE TREES TALKING? WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, and diagonally throughout the puzzle.



WORDS

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|--------|
| algae | fungi | pitch |
| aphid | hibernation | pollen |
| bacteria | lichen | prune |
| conifer | needles | soot |
| deciduous | nodes | |





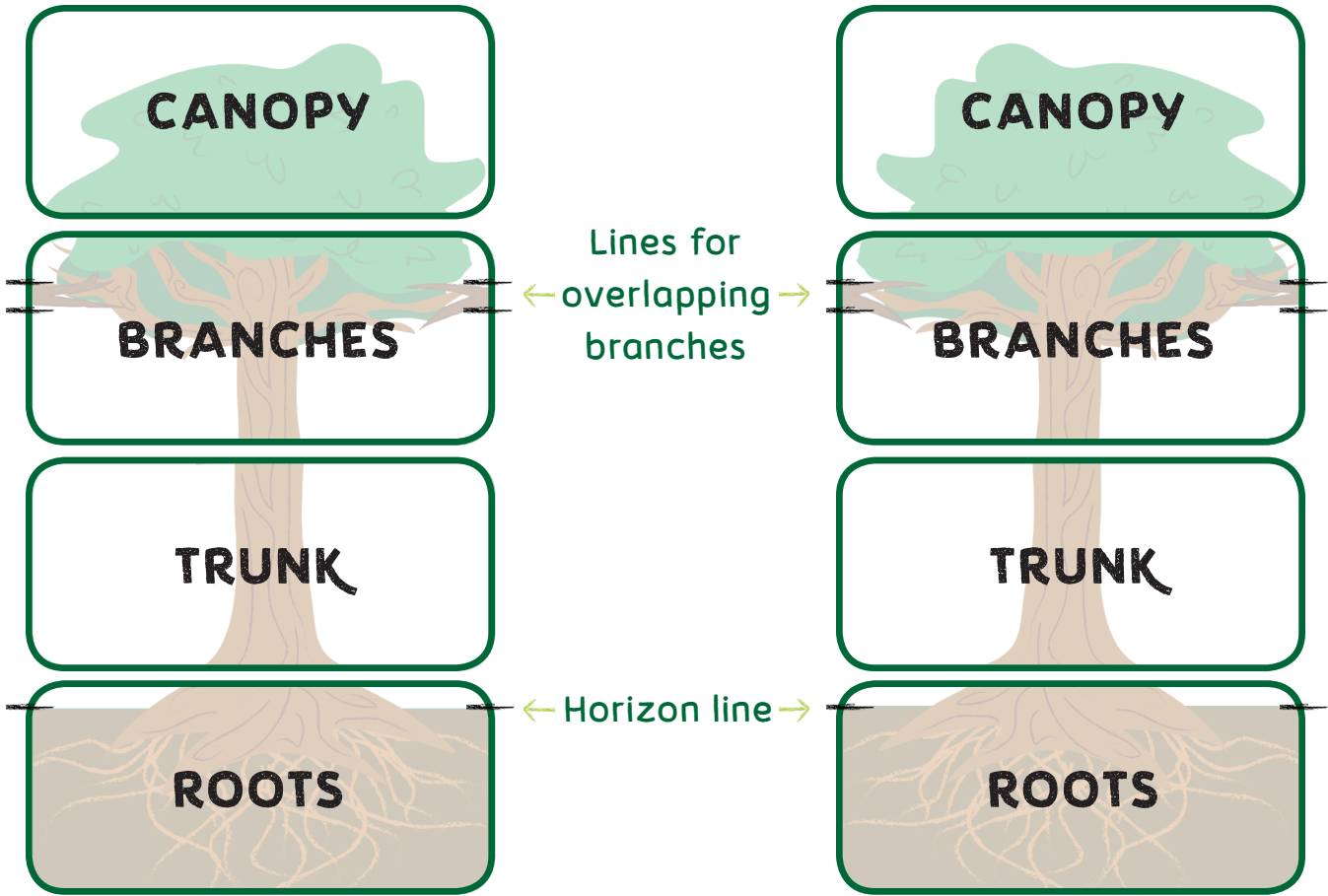
CAN YOU HEAR THE TREES TALKING?



Sample thumbnails for Forest Mural Mosaic activity

STUDENT A

STUDENT B



Sample of assembling tiles for final display

