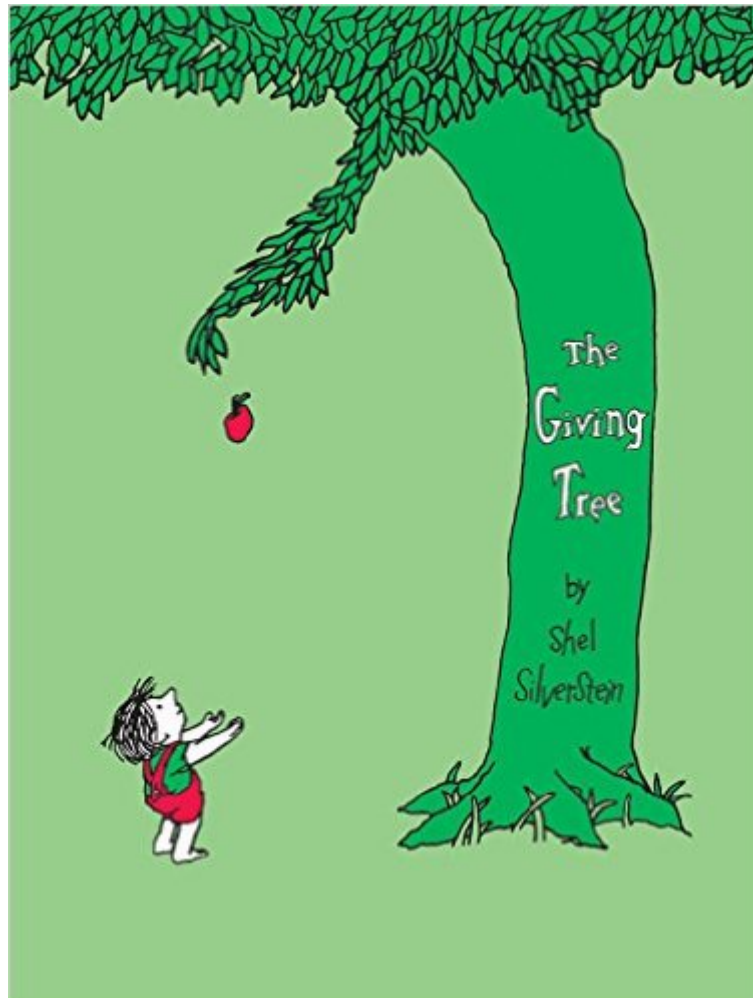


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# The Giving Tree



## Synopsis

'Once there was a tree...and she loved a little boy.' So begins a story of unforgettable perception, beautifully written and illustrated by the gifted and versatile Shel Silverstein. Every day the boy would come to the tree to eat her apples, swing from her branches, or slide down her trunk...and the tree was happy. But as the boy grew older he began to want more from the tree, and the tree gave and gave and gave. This is a tender story, touched with sadness, aglow with consolation. Shel Silverstein has created a moving parable for readers of all ages that offers an affecting interpretation of the gift of giving and a serene acceptance of another's capacity to love in return.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 530L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 57 pages

Publisher: Harper & Row; 1st edition (1964)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060256656

ISBN-13: 978-0060256654

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.4 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2,379 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #171 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in [Books > Children's Books > Classics](#)

Age Range: 1 - 8 years

Grade Level: 2 - 3

## Customer Reviews

There are two extreme ways to interpret this book, as shown by the multiple ratings of 1 and 5. The first: This is a beautiful and sad story of unconditional love between a tree and a boy, in which the tree is generous and gives of itself to help the boy whenever he is in trouble. The metaphor in this case is that of a mother and a child, or God and a human. The second: This is a story of a very selfish boy and a tree who loves him. Whenever he is in trouble, he returns to the tree who gives him another part of her self without ever setting limits, even though it makes her sad (and physically damages her) to do so. In this case, you can compare the story to a metaphor of an abusive, codependent relationship. I can understand both views of this story, but the fact that the second interpretation is just as valid as the first makes me hesitate to recommend this book. Personally, I

would NOT buy this book as a gift, or for my own children. If I had this book, I would wait to read it to my children until they reach the recommended 10 years old (or at least 8), and then I would discuss the book and its concepts (selfishness, limit setting/saying NO) with them. "What did you think of this book?" "Do you think that the tree/the boy did the right thing?" "What would you have done differently if you were the tree/the boy?" "If you were the tree, would you have said 'NO' to the boy at any point?" A story that may be complementary to this one and more appropriate for younger audiences is "Ladies First", also by Shel Silverstein (found in "A Light in the Attic" or "Free to Be, You and Me"), which is about a girl who always gets to be first to do everything, but in the end that is not to her advantage.

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