

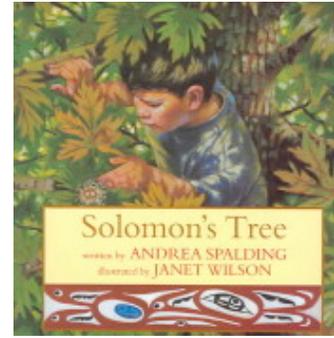


Kashudoha



# Goldbelt Heritage Institute

*"Drink from the Vessel of Traditional Knowledge."*



## Solomon's Tree

By Andrea Spalding Illustrations by Janet Wilson

**Book Summary** A Tsimshian boy has a tree that shows him wondrous things--a hummingbird's nest and "golden leaves and winged seeds." After a storm topples the old tree, the boy's uncle suggests they capture the spirit of the tree by carving a mask. As uncle and nephew work, the boy tells stories of the tree and the uncle shares community stories. The book ends with a description of the mask created for this story by master Tsimshian wood-carver, Victor Reece.

**Before Reading** Look over the book cover with your child. Talk about what the boy might be doing in the picture, what he has found and what he might be thinking. Read the book cover to your child and discuss the idea of a tree belonging to someone or, in this case, a tree belonging to Soloman. Talk with your child about the idea that some people have "special places" where they feel especially connected. If you feel comfortable talking about it and have a place like that or if your child does, talk about it with your child.

**During Reading** As you read, notice similarities and differences to our area - a hummingbird, a chrysalis. If your child has seen either, talk about it. Talk about the leaves and the winged seeds of the maple and compare these to the needles and cones of a spruce or hemlock. As time passes in the book, leaves fall from the tree; talk about how this also happens to alder and cottonwood trees in our area, but not to spruce or hemlock trees.

**After Reading** After finishing reading, look back through the book with your child noting how Tsimshian culture plays a role in the story; how Solomon's uncle plays a critical role in teaching the boy not only about carving but also about the community, and how the family completes a ceremony before and after carving the mask. Also note that this is a contemporary story; Uncle uses a chainsaw at the beginning of the carving and later, Solomon dries the mask in the microwave!

Parent guide for *Soloman's Tree*, a suggested parent read-aloud intended to accompany "Alder and Cottonwood" cultural curriculum unit.

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