



## The Bee Tree

*Patricia Polacco*

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When Mary Ellen gets bored with her reading, Grandpa knows a hunt for a bee tree is just what she needs. Half the town joins the exciting chase, but it

## **The Bee Tree Details**

Date : Published May 4th 1998 by Puffin Books (first published April 21st 1993)

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Author : Patricia Polacco

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## **From Reader Review The Bee Tree for online ebook**

### **Sunday Cummins says**

When Mary Ellen and Grampa go chasing after bees to discover their honey, a group of friends and neighbors join them. While the focus of this story is how the collection of sweet honey does not come easily just like learning to read does not, children can also infer how Polacco has incorporated bee facts into the story. These facts include the long distances field bees fly and the use of smoke to mask the pheromones bees release when danger is nearby.

This would make a good read aloud in the primary grades as part of an integrated unit on the life cycle of bees and related environmental issues. This can be paired with a nonfiction text.

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### **Linda says**

It's hard to admit, but I have never read this book. I think if I still had my own class I would use it for the beginning of conversations about reading, or for sometime in the first week of school. A little girl named Mary Ellen says she's tired of reading and her grandpa says that it must be time to hunt for a bee tree. They find a few bees and collect them safely in a jar, let one out and the chase is on! Others met along the way add to the hunt which makes the story so delightful. They find the tree and you'll have to read the rest of the story to discover the ending that circles right back to reading. Polacco's stories and her illustrations are so filled with joy and energy, I want to jump right into the action. Sweet story!

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### **Sherry Elmer says**

I love reading this book out loud. The characters are wonderful, their voices enticing, the adventure is great fun, and the lesson Grandpa leaves Mary Ellen with at the end is one not to be missed. Join Mary Ellen, Grandpa, and their quirky, lovable neighbors in their quest for the bee tree and give your children--and yourself--a delightful time in their company. You'll be glad you did.

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### **Ebookwormy1 says**

A whimsical tale about a bee finding adventure, which a wise grandfather uses to teach his grand daughter about the importance of practice and perseverance in learning. The story is complimented by some silliness and a plethora of vivid drawings. Highly recommended.

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### **Jon(athan) Nakapalau says**

A sweet story about how a little girl learns to get honey with her grandfather.

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### **Dolly says**

This is a strange, but fun tale about a group of people who run after a bee in search of its nest, in order to get some fresh honey. The various names are odd and, along with the cumulative nature of the tale and the repetitive onomatopoeia, the story is fun to read aloud.

I love how the grandfather explains that reading books can be as much of an adventure as the hunt for the bee tree. At the end of the story, Mary Ellen becomes an avid reader, and any book that shows children loving to read are a hit with me!

We've read many of Patricia Polacco's books and are always looking for ones we haven't yet read. While this isn't our favorite of her tales, we enjoyed reading it aloud together. We will certainly look for more of her stories at our local library.

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### **Ruth Ann says**

Bored with her reading, Grandpa takes Mary Ellen on a hunt for the bee tree. After the honey has been located and shared with friends, Grandpa spoons some honey onto the cover of a book and says "Taste."

"There is such sweetness inside of that book too!" he said thoughtfully. "Such things . . . adventure, knowledge, and wisdom. But these things do not come easily. You have to pursue them. Just like we ran after the bees to find their tree, so you must also chase these things through the pages of a book!"

Of course I adored the "moral" of hard-work and the treasures to be found in reading but I'm not sure young kids will fully appreciate the themes. Nevertheless, they are sure to enjoy the sound-filled chase with the ever-growing crowd.

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### **Judy says**

rating: 3.5

Polacco's mother (Mary Ellen) must have talked about going on a bee hunt with her grandfather. PP listened carefully and recounts the story here.

Now I want to catch some bees and follow them back to their bee tree. Something tells me it won't be as easy as it sounds. I've only found a bee tree once, and that was on the plains of Eastern Colorado, in the middle of a cottonwood grove.

(The end of the tale connects the honey with the 'sweetness of reading.' Nice idea, but it struck me as a little odd.)

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### **Courtney says**

This book stars a young girl named Mary Ellen that is spending time with her grandpa. Her grandpa likes to read but Mary Ellen gets bored with reading very quickly. The grandpa then suggests they go hunting to find some bees. While the grandpa and Mary Ellen start chasing the bees' different people from the town decide to join in. This story is very witty, and the pictures make your imagination go wild. The colors and facial expressions of the towns' people are priceless and you really feel what they are feeling. At the end of the story they get to the honey and they all have some. I feel that the moral of the story was that in order to get things in life you have to work for it. One quote that stuck out to me the most was when the grandpa said "such things.... adventure, knowledge, and wisdom. But these things do not come easily. You have to pursue them. Just like we ran through the pages of a book!" I feel like this book is very fun and a great life lesson for any child!

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### **Tania says**

This was a wild story that had my children almost falling off the couch in laughter. Then, when we reached the second to last page, my voice caught in my throat as I read it aloud to them. What a sweet (pun intended), unexpected ending to this charming story. Definitely a must-read to all children.

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### **ABC says**

Nice story with a moral. A girl is tired of reading a book, so her grandfather takes her out to chase a bee. Others join in the fun and they reach the beehive. They get some of the honey and have a little party. Then the grandfather explains that the sweetness of honey is like the sweetness of a book.

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### **Meredith Cole says**

#### **Summary:**

One day Mary Ellen tells her grandpa she is tired of reading and would rather go outside and run. Because she says this he takes her on a great adventure to find a bee tree. The whole town sees them and joins them on this journey of chasing the bees to the tree. At the end of the day everyone gathers to enjoy the honey they gathered from the tree. Pulling Mary Ellen aside, her grandpa explains how the sweetness of the honey they found can also be found in books. He compares the adventure they went on that day to the adventures that can be experienced in books and from then on Mary Ellen learned to love reading.

#### **Major Theme:**

The main theme in this book is that there are adventures to be found within books that can be just as exciting as going on an adventure yourself.

#### **Personal Connection:**

I loved reading this book because it emphasizes what reading is to me. I love to read because of the adventures I find in books and sometimes people who don't have that same love of reading don't understand that. I think this book does a good job showing how exciting reading can be if you work hard at it.

### **Why I Recommend:**

I would recommend this book to children who are having a hard time with reading. I think when you are young and reading does not come easily, it is hard to see the point of it. If children are shown that there are adventures waiting to be experienced in books then it might encourage them to keep working at it.

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### **Lisa Vegan says**

Oh, this story was a hoot! It's so much fun to read aloud (and to read to oneself too.)

The story ends up being a paean to reading and to books. Getting there is a fun romp – one person, group, animal after another goes off chasing bees back to their trees in pursuit of sweet honey. I absolutely love the illustrations of the Grampa running with his granddaughter and picking up others along the way.

There's a bit of a moral to the story but it's not at all heavy handed, and since I agree with it, I had no problems with it at all.

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### **The Reading Countess says**

Reminiscent of many of the read alouds my sons and I relished in their toddler years where every page meant someone would join in on whatever fun or trouble that was brewing, Polacco's The Bee Tree takes readers on a similar journey. This time, though, we visit a time long ago and far away and meet names and customs we don't often see nowadays. And we are all the better for it. Quietly tucked into the last few pages is a love letter to the importance of reading.

"...There is such sweetness inside of that book too...such tings...adventure. knowledge and wisdom. But these things do not come easily. You have to pursue them, Just like we ran after the bees to find their trees, so you must also chase these things through the pages of a book!"

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### **Nicolette Roehl says**

"The Bee Tree" is about a young girl named Mary Ellen who is spending time with her grandpa. Grandpa loves to read but Mary Ellen is bored of reading. Seeing how bored Mary Ellen is grandpa suggests they go on an adventure and hunt some bees. While tracking down the bees, Mary Ellen and her grandpa are joined by various townspeople. The story is amusing and the pictures unleash the imagination. The colors and details of facial expressions make you really feel what the different characters are feeling throughout the story. The lesson learned from this story is one about working hard for the things you want in/out of life. The fun filled story is a great life lesson for both children and adults alike.

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