



## RECOMMENDED FOR

Pre-school/ Lower primary  
(ages 3+)

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## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- English: Literacy and writing, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability
- Sustainability: The Environment, Biological Sciences; Geology, Living things
- Art: Visual Artworks and Design
- Science: Living creatures, life cycles; creatures and their environments

## REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- To discuss new vocabulary and respond to texts
- To share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts
- To learn more about our relationships with each other, family, community and the urban and wild environment
- To use the text as a springboard for cross curricular teaching such as science and natural history
- To learn literacy skills

## THEMES

- English – storytelling, communication and fiction
- Relationships – Multi-generational family connections, making friends and building communities and neighborhoods
- Environmentalism and conservation, rewilding and urban gardening
- Generations and generational differences
- Concepts of home and travel

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781760898861 (hardback)

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## The Tree at Number 43

Jess McGeachin



## PLOT SUMMARY

A warm, inspirational story about determination, conservation, the magic of nature . . . and wonderful grandads.

In a noisy, grey city, Sam and his Grandpa long for the deep, dark wonderful jungle. But when their dream comes true and a tree magically grows from seeds that Grandpa brought home from his travels, can they find a way to protect it?

A delightful story book for all generations about the magic of wild places and the amazing things we can achieve when we all work together.

*The Tree at Number 43* inspires hope for the future of our environment without any sense of doom and gloom. A book to share and enjoy with kids, whether they want to create a garden at home or change the world.



## ABOUT THE CREATOR

Jess McGeachin is an author and illustrator living in Narm (Melbourne, Australia).

His debut picture book, *Fly*, was published in 2019 by Puffin and was shortlisted for the Children's Book Council of Australia and Queensland Literary Awards.

Jess has since published seven books locally and internationally, with more on the way.

**Activity packs for his picture books are available at [jessmcgeachin.com/activities](http://jessmcgeachin.com/activities)**

Jess draws quite literally from a day job at Melbourne Museum, where he's lucky enough to help design exhibitions and occasionally get lost in the basement.

[jessmcgeachin.com](http://jessmcgeachin.com)

## CREATORS' INSPIRATION

Like Sam, I live in a big noisy city. It can be an exciting place, but it can also be pretty overwhelming. When I just want a calm spot to sit and think, I look for places with trees like parks, gardens and forests. Trees have a way of bringing people (and animals) together, whether it's to read a good book while leaning against their trunk or sit for a picnic in their shade.

Sadly the green patches in our cities and towns seem to be getting smaller, and it takes a long time for them to grow back. This was my inspiration for *The Tree at Number 43*. Where's your favourite tree?

## KEY STUDY TOPICS

### English

- Read the writing on the back of the book (the blurb). What do you expect the book will be about? Do you have any questions? Are those questions answered in the story?

- How many characters are in this story? Do you think things other than people can be powerful characters in a story? How? Is there an example of an important non-human 'character' in this book? Can you think of other stories that have non-human characters?
- Find three words in the book that are new to you. Try to work out what they mean from the context (the way they are used and the words and pictures that surround them).
- 'Dialogue' refers to the words characters say in books and plays. What do you think each the animals think of the book Sam is reading them under the tree? Write their comments in speech bubbles on a photocopy of the page.
- Look carefully at the card-playing scene on the roof. Can you see the card in the man's pocket? He is cheating! But the lady has won. Break into groups of three and script the dialogue for a scene between these three characters.
- Some books aim to leave you with a message as well as enjoy the story. What is the 'moral of the story' or the message here? If you wrote a book, what would be your message?

### Storytelling

- Think about your family or guardians. Did they travel when they were younger? Ask them about their favourite adventure. Can you draw a picture of them like the 'photos' of Grandpa's adventures?
- Do you have a 'spot, one quiet spot' where you can sit and do your favourite things? Maybe with a member of your family or your friends? Write a diary



entry based on one experience of that place.

- Compare the tree stump after it has been cut down to the picture of it at the end. What is different? What do you think this means? What message is the author trying to convey? What emotions does this make you feel?
- What emotions did you feel when the tree was cut down? Can you make an infographic with that emotion at the centre and surround it with ten other things that make you feel that way?
- Look at the image of Grandpa in the jungle. Draw and script a comic showing what might happen next!

## Science and nature

- Look at Sam's diagram in his letter explaining how wonderful the tree is. What is *your* favourite plant or tree? Can you draw a diagram explaining all the wonderful things about it?
- Have you ever grown a plant or a tree? Write a short instructional text about how to grow something from seed and look after it. How long would it take to grow?
- Is there something about the natural world that you know information about? Create a poster summarising what you know. Find someone in class that has a similar interest and share.
- Most people around the world now live in cities. Write a persuasive text explaining why we need green spaces. You can find some ideas at the link below.  
<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/why-we-need-green-spaces-in-cities.html>
- Some trees are very tall and some are very old. Research a famously big tree or very old tree and write an information report.

<https://www.livescience.com/29152-oldest-tree-in-world.html>

<https://www.livescience.com/14667-tall-trees-grow.html>

- 'Trees are a vital component of ecosystems across the globe. In urban areas they can provide important habitat for other species, help to clean the air we breathe, reduce noise pollution, take up water to prevent flooding and play a role in mitigating the negative impacts of climate change.'

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/schools/explore-urban-nature/discover-the-hidden-world-of-trees.html>

Find a tree in your school grounds.

Follow the checklist at the site above to see if your tree is healthy!

- Do you know anything about the environment and the things that humans are doing that might put trees and wild places at risk? Pair up with another student and interview each other. Where could you go to find out more? Can you brainstorm three things we could do to support the environment or minimise the risk?
- Greta Thunberg is a famous young person who believes that kids can make a difference. She says that 'no one is too small to make a difference'. Do you believe that? How does Sam go about trying to help others understand how important green space is and why do you think it makes a difference if more people agree? Watch this video for some ideas.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5c1WR7bFLyA>



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



**Fly**

*Fly* is a beautiful story of determination no matter the odds, and love in the face of loss.

Lucy had always been good at fixing things, and Dad needed a bit of help. It was just the two of them after all. So when Lucy finds a bird with a broken wing, she's sure she can fix him too. But not everything that's broken can be fixed.



**The Lost Library**

*The Lost Library* is a magical tale of friendship, the joy of reading and the power of the imagination.

When Oliver finds a lost library book in his new bedroom, he decides to return it. But how do you find a mysterious hidden library? With the help of a new friend, of course . . .



**Frankie and the Fossil**

*Frankie and the Fossil* is an irresistible story about being heard . . . and finding your herd. For anyone who loves dinosaur fossils, museums, new friends . . . and cheese sandwiches.

Frankie knows everything there is to know about dinosaurs. But when she ignores a sign at the museum and is followed home by a friendly fossil, Frankie finds there's more to dinosaurs than she ever imagined.

## ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	AGE	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
The Tree at Number 43	Jess McGeachin	9781760898861	3+	\$24.99		
Frankie and the Fossil	Jess McGeachin	9781760898847	3+	\$24.99		
Fly	Jess McGeachin	9781760892562	3+	\$24.99		
The Lost Library	Jess McGeachin	9781760892715	3+	\$24.99		
Herman and Rosie	Gus Gordon	9780143507277	3+	\$14.99		
Lottie and Walter	Anna Walker	9780143787181	3+	\$24.99		
<b>TOTAL</b>						

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