



The Tree That Time Built: A Celebration of Nature, Science, and Imagination (A Poetry Speaks Experience)

Mary Ann Hoberman , Linda Winston , Barbara Fortin (Illustrator)

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A poetry celebration of nature, science, the environment, and the wonder of it all, from the Children's Poet Laureate

The Tree That Time Built is a moving anthology of more than 100 poems celebrating the wonders of the natural world and encouraging environmental awareness. With a focus on the outdoors, this collection taps into today's environmental movement and also presents wonders of nature and science, most especially Darwin's theory of evolution, from which this collection gains its name. Included is an exclusive audio CD of many of the poets reading their own work.

Including dynamic introductions to nine sections of poems, plus brief introductions to many individual poems, this collection reaches out to young people and stimulates their innate curiosity and idealism. This rich collection showcases a wide range of poets, including:

Theodore Roethke Dylan Thomas Carl Sandburg Douglas Florian Jeff Moss Jack Prelutsky Mary Ann Hoberman (20091213)

Book Details: Format: Hardcover Publication Date: 10/12/2009 Pages: 224 Reading Level: Age 7 and Up

The Tree That Time Built: A Celebration of Nature, Science, and Imagination (A Poetry Speaks Experience) Details

Date : Published October 1st 2009 by Sourcebooks Jabberwocky (first published 2009)

ISBN : 9781402225178

Author : Mary Ann Hoberman , Linda Winston , Barbara Fortin (Illustrator)

Format : Hardcover 224 pages

Genre : Poetry, Science, Environment, Nonfiction, Childrens

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From Reader Review *The Tree That Time Built: A Celebration of Nature, Science, and Imagination (A Poetry Speaks Experience)* for online ebook

Robert says

POETRY -- KIDS

I applaud the effort to get poetry into kid's hands, but my hackles went up quite a few times while reading this book. I'm a bundle of prejudices! I share them here not to stop you from enjoying the poetry, but perhaps to side-step some of the land mines. 1) The editors "explain" the poems. While I'm sure they intend these gentle lines to help the reader enter the world of the poem, I can't help but think of the opening scene in DEAD POETS SOCIETY where they tear from their books the description of how to graph and analyze the greatness of a poem. 2) Seriousness stalks the pages like caged lion -- miserable and with no outlet for her hunting instincts. Inadvertently, it explains why Shel S is so beloved -- because he's fearlessly silly. 3) It encourages us -- in a good way -- to share great classic poems with children because they can fall under their spell and understand them and be bewitched by them -- far more deeply and easily than this collection which includes quite a few poems that do not -- in my opinion -- fire the imagination. In short, I long for a collection of poems about LIFE and the history of life on the planet that is as fiery and magic-filled and jaw-dropping as that life itself. A tall order! But I'd love to see it.

Michelle says

The photo just doesn't do this book justice. It is beautiful in every way a book can be. The book jacket looks like rice paper painted with watercolours and black ink. It feels nice in hand with a good weight and lovely paper. More important, though, is what it contains.

Hoberman and Winston have compiled a vast array of poetry from scientists and naturalists spanning the years. It contains a veritable who's who of famous poets: Emily Dickinson, T. S. Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, Dylan Thomas, William Blake, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Robert Frost, Walt Whitman, Sylvia Plath, Ogden Nash...I could go on and on. Nestled aside these are new poems from new (or new to me) poets and translations from the likes of Rainer Maria Rilke, Jelaluddin Rumi, Ikkyu Sojun, Wislawa Szymborska or Hans Christian Andersen. The poems are divided into sections, but each poem is treated as its own chapter with footnotes that tie science, nature, art and history to the poem in context. And 44 of the poems are read aloud on the enclosed CD; 28 by the author of the poem.

The Tree That Time Built has become a favorite in our household. It is a pleasure to read for its own merit; it ties into science lessons; the CD of poems is lovely to listen to while doing puzzles, coloring or painting.

Katie Fitzgerald says

I am by no means a poetry scholar, and as time goes on, I become more and more okay with that fact. I like to read poetry, but I don't like to be told what it means, or asked to analyze it. I like to just let the words drop down on me, and then I take away whatever little snippets mean something to me and disregard the rest.

Normally, when I look at a collection of poems, I skip the ones that don't appeal to me, and read only the ones that look interesting. But I did read *The Tree That Time Built* all the way through, and while I don't really think it was for me, I can appreciate the work that went into it.

Mary Ann Hoberman, the U.S. Children's Poet Laureate from 2008 to 2010, and Linda Winston compiled a series of poems by a whole spectrum of poets, dubbing it "a celebration of nature, science, and imagination." Among the authors whose works appear in the book are Sylvia Plath, Christina Rossetti, Vachel Lindsay, Ogden Nash, Carl Sandburg, Walt Whitman, Jack Prelutsky, Eve Merriam, and Douglas Florian. The book is accompanied by a CD where many of these poets read their own works. Mary Ann Hoberman also reads her own poetry, and Linda Winston reads a variety of poems herself.

There are many components to the book, which is probably what impressed me the most. Many of the poems are accompanied by footnotes that discuss both the content and the form of the poem. There is also a glossary of scientific terms, as well as a brief biography of every poet at the back of the book. As an information resource, this book leaves absolutely nothing to be desired. It's very, very well done. The only problem I had was that many of the poems felt too dense and difficult for me, and I didn't see them as particularly child-friendly. I much prefer silly and playful children's poetry, and I can't imagine this being a book kids read for pleasure like they might with a Douglas Florian or Jack Prelutsky book. I can imagine, though, that nature lovers would enjoy these poems a lot more than I did, and that teachers could mine this book for some wonderful lessons that incorporate science and literature.

I will say, though, that I loved hearing Jack Prelutsky's voice. He even sounds like a poet! Ogden Nash also has a great voice, and Mary Ann Hoberman's rhythms are spot-on and that much more enjoyable when she reads them aloud. Definitely check this out if you are a fan of a wide variety of poetry, and share it with kids who aspire to be poets, as well as those readers who like to be challenged.

Kate Brown says

This collection has some great poems and some not-so great poems. I loved the scientific themes and how the poems were organized into different smaller collections. After reading all of the poems, here are some of my favorites.

Birth by Langston Hughes pg. 4

You and I by Mary Ann Hoberman pg. 9

Thumbprint by Eve Merriam pg. 10

The Jellyfish and the Clam by Jeff Moss pg. 25

For Rent: One Moon Snail Shell by Constance Levy pg. 27

Dinosaur Bone by Alice Schertle pg. 40

Think Like a Tree by Karen I. Shragg pg. 50 (good example of shape poetry)

A Narrow Fellow in the Grass by Emily Dickinson pg. 79

The Termite by Ogden Nash pg. 92

Lines on a Small Potato by Margaret Fishback pg. 93

The Microscope by Maxine Kumin pgs. 94-95 (great for science teachers introducing the microscope)

The Spider by Robert P. Tristram Coffin pgs. 99-100 (great around Halloween)

The Bat by Theodore Roethke pg. 127(pairs well with The Spider poem during Halloween)

The animal poems are by far the most relatable and likable for 7th graders. The collection introduces some

important poets from the literary cannon including; Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Carl Sandburg, Ogden Nash, Emily Dickinson, and Walt Whitman.

The poems are extremely short and one can be analyzed within a very short time frame. They would work well as journal prompts or mini lessons.

The CD that goes along with the collection is helpful too!

Lauma says

This is an anthology of 118 poems related to the connectedness of our natural world. In its introduction, the authors draw similarities between naturalists and poets. Both study life on earth and the connections among living things. In the 1800's, Charles Darwin conceptualized his observations as a "Tree of Life", which lead to his theory of evolution. Using the same conceptual structure, these poems are organized for their commentary about our natural world from the beginning of time to the present day.

The book is uniquely structured into themes and contains a great diversity of great poets--both past and present. It also contains a glossary, index, and short biographical sketches about each poet. The book also comes with a audio CD which is about 40 minutes long and contains 44 poems read by 20 poets and artists. (The poems in the book are marked with the track numbers for reference.) The best part of the audio version was to hear some of the poets read their own work!

Excellent anthology for all ages!

Ms_Harris says

U.S. Children's Poet Laureate Mary Ann Hoberman and Linda Winston compile a series of poems for the anthology *The Tree that Time Built*. The selections, each of which is individually beautiful, when together form a cohesive narrative designed to take the reader on a journey through evolution. Each section begins with an introduction that links the poems that follow to a Darwinian concept or quote. Darwin states, that "It is not the strongest of species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." In the introduction, the authors draw parallels to this evolutionary process and their own process for collecting and choosing the poems for this anthology.

The poems are printed in black ink with titles in a larger blue font. Of the more than one hundred poems in this anthology, forty-four are read on an accompanying compact disc many of them by the original poet. At the bottom of some of the pages are author's notes and questions about the poems as well as poetic terminology. Some poems are excerpts of larger works. For example, in one instance, three translations are presented of Swedish poet Robert Bly's an excerpt "March '79."

The poetry presented in this text tends to lend itself to an older audience, sophisticated middle schoolers and/or accomplished high schoolers. That said, I would recommend use of *The Tree that Time Built* with students 14 and older. Due to the dense nature of the material, I would recommend using only sections of the

text which correlate with the science topic. In-depth discussions of the nuances of the poems and the complexities of Darwinism might lead organically to discussions of creationism.

Laura says

Hoberman, Mary Ann. 2009. *The Tree that Time Built*. Brainerd, Minnesota: Bang Printing. ISBN: 978-1-4022-2517-8.

Charles Darwin was convinced that the universe and all beings and substances were connected. After traveling the world, he came home and created a diagram that he named Tree of Life, which later developed into his theory of evolution. *The Tree that Time Built* organizes poems from various poets into an exploration of the trees and branches of Darwin's tree. The main trunk is life, and the book is organized into sections covering birds to dinosaurs and everything in between. Each section has an introduction with a brief history of Darwin's ideas about that topic. Many poems have questions or comments at the bottom of the page, which spark self-reflection. The book also includes a glossary and a short biography for each poet included in the compilation. A CD, with forty-four poems read aloud, accompanies the book and provides enrichment for the reader.

The poems included in the book range from old poems by Whitman to modern poems by Hoberman. The styles are different, but the reflection of man's connection to nature and to animals connects all of the poems into a smooth read. Although the ideas range to man's individuality like in Eve Merriam's "Thumbprint" to the connection all of creation shares in Felice Holman's "Who am I?", the poems all support the notion that everything is intertwined and thus influenced by one another.

Because Darwin's theory of evolution states that everything is ever changing (albeit very slowly) and is dependent on the elements surrounding it, "Who am I?" is the perfect poem to introduce this book to students.

Who am I?
The trees ask me,
And the sky,
And the sea asks me,
Who am I?
The grass asks me,
And the sand,
And the rocks ask me
Who I am.
The wind tells me
At Nightfall,
And the rain tells me.
Someone small.
Someone small
Someone small
But a piece
Of
It
All" (p. 167)

Before students can understand how nature and man connect, they must first realize they are a part of the tree of life. Once they do, the poems will resonate more deeply with them. This poem can be used as a prompt for

journal writing, class discussion, or self-reflection. After the students see a connection, many of the poems can be used during science lessons throughout the year. When learning about genetics, “Heredity” by Thomas Hardy can spark a discussion. Life cycles can be studied through the poems “Cocoon” by David McCord and “Butterfly” by D. H. Lawrence. Although few students may pick out this book to read since it is long and lacks colorful pictures, it is an excellent resource for science teachers who would like to add a bit of poetry to spark thinking and self-reflection as students learn about life and how people are connected to nature and to animals.

I reviewed this book for my poetry class at TWU.

Jimmy says

The best thing about this collection of poetry for young people is its connection to science and evolution. You just can't beat that in a world of scientific ignorance:

The Microscope

by Maxine Kumin (1925-2014)

Anton Leeuwenhoek was Dutch.
He sold pincushions, cloth, and such.
The waiting townsfolk fumed and fussed
As Anton's dry goods gathered dust.

He worked, instead of tending store,
At grinding special lenses for
A microscope. Some of the things
He looked at were: mosquitoes' wings,
the hairs of sheep, the legs of lice,
the skin of people, dogs, and mice;
ox eyes, spiders' spinning gear,
fishes' scales, a little smear
of his own blood, and best of all,
the unknown, busy, very small
bugs that swim and bump and hop
inside a simple water drop.

Impossible! Most Dutchmen said.
This Anton's crazy in the head!
We ought to ship him off to Spain!
He says he's seen a housefly's brain!
He says the water that we drink
Is full of bugs! He's mad, we think!

They called him *dumkopf*, which means dope.

That's how we got the microscope.

Janet Squires says

This anthology of nature-inspired poems was collected by Mary Ann Hoberman, 2008 U.S. Children's Poet Laureate and Linda Winston, anthropologist and teacher and includes more than 100 poems and a CD.

Poets ranging from Yokoi Yayu (1703-1783) and Wislawa Szymborska (Nobel Prize for Literature 1996) - to names perhaps more familiar: Dylan Thomas, Ogden Nast, Robert Frost, and Tony Johnston share the pages offering a rich variety of styles and thoughts on the natural world. A Glossary, Suggestions for Further Reading and Research, and Thumbnail biographies of the poets provide added depth for this inspiring collection.

Aviann says

POETRY

This is a collection of poetry all centered around nature. The poems are divided somewhat according to their topic, therefore there are sections of poetry on water, trees, flight, and others. To begin each section, the collaborators included a brief introduction to that section, drawing mainly from Charles Darwin's studies. Also, throughout the book, the collaborators would footnote some poems to explain poetical elements or to help the reader understand the context of the poem.

I found much of the poetry beautiful, although it was difficult to read through in a single sitting. I especially loved how Hoberman included current, and traditional poets. I thought the combination afforded readers a vast understanding of the realm of poetry and its possible influences. As to young adults reading this book, I think the footnotes and introductions greatly contribute to the understanding of the poetry. Poetry is not something many teenagers encounter daily, thus a little help with the elements would likely make the reading more manageable and enjoyable.

George Merryman says

This poetry book will accompany the International Conservation web project "Nature is Speaking". <http://www.conservation.org/nature-is...> "Nature is Speaking" is a series of two minute conservation films narrated in the first person by various popular actors and actresses, such as Julia Roberts, Reese Witherspoon and Liam Neeson, who speak from the point of view of different environmental entities. For instance, Liam Neeson introduces himself with, "I am ice," Julia Roberts begins, "Some call me nature, others call me Mother Nature," and Reese Witherspoon announces, "I am home, I give you comfort." This powerful collection of panoramic short films offers an excellent way to hook students and engage them in a discussion of the conflicts surrounding environmental conservation, while simultaneously discussing metaphor, personification and poetry. I will use these short films as mentor text, and have students use first person point of view to narrate some aspect of nature that they appreciate. I will have them get in groups and create Power Point slide shows to accompany their narrations. Each group will share their presentations with the class, with each student reading his or her poem.

N_amandascholz says

What I enjoyed about the collection *The Tree That Time Built* was the confluence between art and science. Oftentimes we assume that the scientific mind and the artistic mind see the world in radically different ways and express that seeing in terms that don't speak well to one another. This collection of poetry explains that the artistic mind and the scientific mind share a great capacity for wonder at the world and seek to understand it through study and reflection. While the scientist may share her reflection in terms of a book or report, the poet shares her reflection lyrically. However, both individuals agree on the compulsion they feel to explore their world in all its endless possibilities. The volume is divided into sections and the first section is called "Oh, Fields of Wonder," emphasizing this shared quality of mind. In this section, the editors include William Blake's line "To see a World in a grain of sand/ And Heaven in a wild flower,/ Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand/ And Eternity in an hour" which famously suggests that the smallest, most insignificant item encapsulates many stories and many ways of seeing if the viewer has the imaginative capacity and perseverance to "see" these perspectives. This sentiment is echoed later by a poem by Florence Parry Heide called "Rocks." She writes, "Big rocks into pebbles,/ Pebbles into sand./ I really hold a million rocks here in my hand." This ability to reimage the ordinary into the extraordinary is presented over and over again throughout the text. For many of the included poems, the authors write explanatory notes at the bottom of the page that instruct a reader in scientific principles or history, teach readers literary terms, suggest possible themes for the poems, and suggest how one poem "speaks back" to an earlier poem included in the volume. I would recommend this book of poetry for older children and young adults because many of the poems are less didactic than poetry often included in anthologies for younger children. In these collections, the poetry very clearly instructs its readers about a concept or it seeks to entertain and amuse. That is not to say that poems in this anthology are not instructive and/or fun; however, the authors also chose to anthologize many famous and challenging poems by well-known poets like T.S. Eliot, Wislawa Szymborska, and W.S. Merwin. These poets demand an older reader who wants to and who can engage the more profound questions raised by their work, especially in the absence of illustrations or pictures. For example, Eliot claims, "We shall not cease from exploration/ And the end of all our exploring/ Will be to arrive where we started/ And know the place for the first time." Younger children may sense a discussion about the circular nature of time and experience embedded in the poem, but older children can explain how/why the poem leads to that discussion and reflect on the truth of Eliot's statement. The editors of this anthology do include poems that would appeal to younger readers; however, the length and breadth of the volume suggests a more mature audience. As I indicated in my opening statements, this collection of poetry challenges our assumptions about scientific vs. artistic ways of seeing the world. A teacher could use this volume of poetry in myriad of ways from a general conversation about challenging stereotypes, to instruction on poetic form and structure, or to a lesson on drawing out common themes or questions through a collection of seemingly unrelated material. The book also includes a CD of many of the poets reading their own work.

Eva Mitnick says

The list of poets is a roll call of luminaries - T.S. Eliot, May Swenson, X.J. Kennedy, Christina Rossetti, Dylan Thomas, Jelaluddin Rumi, Rainer Maria Rilke, Valerie Worth, Douglas Florian, and on and on. Not only does each section have an introduction that gives the reader some background, some context, or even just a telling anecdote, but many poems also include a small note about the poem, poet, or topic that enhance both a reader's knowledge and enjoyment. Tiny drawings decorate some of the poems, like the realistic bugs

that crawl around Every Insect by Dorothy Aldis.

Most of the poems are rather short - only a very few are longer than a page, and many are no more than a few stanzas long. They lend themselves to being enjoyed at random (just open up the book and dip in), but they are even stronger when read as part of their sections - somehow, putting them within a larger context makes each poem resonate all the more. And read from cover to cover, ending with Mary Ann Hoberman's *The Tree That Time Built*, this anthology as a whole is something of a powerful call to arms - because we are an integral part of the world, we have a responsibility toward it that we cannot shirk:

Do not fret
And do not doubt.
You are in time.
You can't fall out.

No matter what
You say or do,
You are in time.
Time is in you.

And everything
That is to be
Will be in time
Upon this tree.

The book includes a CD with 55 tracks, mostly readings of the poems by the poets themselves, other artists, or one of the compilers. As Hoberman and Winston note in the introduction, poems are meant to be read aloud. The sound varies from track to track, with some sounding very soft, but it is a treat to hear Hoberman and others reading their own poems. I can see this as a lovely CD to listen to in the car, but I imagine its best application will be in classrooms, where teachers can play them to students. Not every poem in the book is on the CD - but the book clearly notes the track on which selected poems can be heard, as well as who reads them.

Adding to the general usefulness and classiness of this anthology are a glossary of both scientific ("adaptation") and poetic ("assonance") terms, suggestions for further reading and research, short biographies of all the poets and compilers, and permissions.

This is a scrumptious offering that makes a feast for teachers, scientists, poetry lovers, and kids of all ages. Highly recommended.

Jennifer says

I listened to this anthology on audio CD where 20 different poets and artists read their own and other poets' works. The CD was very engaging. It included some introductions to the poems read and I enjoyed how the readers changed. I also enjoyed listening to the sounds or "music" of the poems. The readers were very good. The book does include more poems than there are on the CD. It also has a glossary and small bios of the poets. The poems related to science, nature and a respect for life. Some of them were funny like "The Termite" by Ogden Nash and "Cricket" by Mary Ann Hoberman. There is a variety of styles including a

haiku called "Metamorphosis". I think this recording would be good for 4th grade and up. It does have some difficult vocabulary that might need to be explained. I think the best part of it is that many of the authors are reading their own poems.

Anna says

Might be great for a older elem classroom.
