

# Tree Poem

## Poetry & Language



### Set up

- Set aside 30 minutes
- Prepare the kitchen table for the session
- Print out these instructions
- Collect ingredients:
  - Roses (a bunch of roses or a single rose if you prefer)
  - Fresh leaves (redbud, tulip tree, maple, buckeye, and oak work well)
  - Bark, small branches (any tree material that pleases you)
  - Notebook, writing utensil

### Consciously Breathe

- Look your partner in the eyes and say, “Let’s breathe together”
- Take three deep inhales and exhales together

### Sing and Move

- Sing the opening lines of: “Don’t Sit Under the Apple Tree.”  
*Don't sit under the apple tree with anyone else but me*  
*Anyone else but me, anyone else but me*  
*No, no, no, don't sit under the apple tree with anyone else but me*
- Begin to make up easy movements to go with the song.
- Invite your partner to mirror your gestures or invite your partner to hold your hands and sway side to side

- Repeat the song without the lyrics (use la-la-la) and enlarge the gestures or repeat the song without lyrics (use la-la-la) and continue swaying together

## Call and Response

- Say the words below and have your partner repeat after each line
- Start by saying, “Repeat after me.”

*My love is like a red, red rose  
That’s newly sprung in June;*

*My love is like the melody  
That’s sweetly played in tune.*

- After saying the poem together a few times, share a rose. Breathe in the scent, touch the person’s hand or cheek with the petals. Talk about how this smells and feels.

## Create Together

### Materials

- Fresh leaves (redbud, tulip tree, maple, buckeye, and oak work well)
- Bark, small branches, pine needles (any tree material that pleases you)
- Notebook, writing *utensil*

### Process

1. Say the poem “Trees,” together using “call and response.”
2. Explore the leaves, bark, and branches by touching them and talking about the beauty of the color, feel of the texture and scent.
3. Repeat the poem “Trees,” together using “call and response.”
4. Begin to ask a series of questions around the theme of trees and/or nature. (e.g. What comes to mind when you hear the word tree? Have you ever picked fresh fruit from a tree? How did it taste? What do trees give us? Do you have a favorite tree? What does a tree need to grow? If you could talk to a tree what would you say? If the tree could answer what do the tree say?)
5. Write down the person’s answers to the questions. These become the lines of the poem. If possible write the exact words and phrasing they use, this will help strengthen the poem.
6. You may also answer the questions as a way to prompt the person. This may feel like a discussion and their answers should guide the questions.

7. Once you have a number of answers and are feeling the poem is complete, say "I think we have our poem."
8. Perform the newly created poem using "call and response."
9. BONUS add movement as you say the words of the poem.

### **Celebrate Each Other**

- Positively acknowledge a moment of accomplishment
- Examples "Sharing the roes with you made me smile;" "The words you said about the tree reminds me of resting in the shade;" "I loved laughing together when we said the poem."
- Savor the moment