

Stories

## Golden leaves...

You could use this story  
in a **Flyers** class.

Richard, Julia, Katy and Fred were sitting around a fire in the middle of a dark wood. Richard was listening to some music on his phone and Katy was sending messages on hers. But Julia and Fred were quietly looking at the fire and talking about a hundred different things.

Fred pointed to a tree that was full of golden leaves.

'I think that tree is watching us,' he said.

Julia didn't say, 'Don't be silly.' She said, 'Perhaps it is!' instead. Then she kicked her older brother's foot. 'What do you think, Richard?' she asked.

Richard took one of his earphones out of his ear. 'Sorry? What?'

'Fred said, do you think that tree is watching us?' Julia answered.

'No,' Richard said, 'but that bear is, Fred!'

'Which bear?' Fred asked. He suddenly felt a bit frightened!

Katy put her phone down. 'Yes, which bear?' she asked. She thought bears were really scary.

Richard laughed. 'Sorry, Fred,' he said. 'I was joking. There are no bears in this wood.'

'Are you sure?' Julia asked. 'There's a strange furry shape behind you, Richard. And it looks just like a bear!!!'

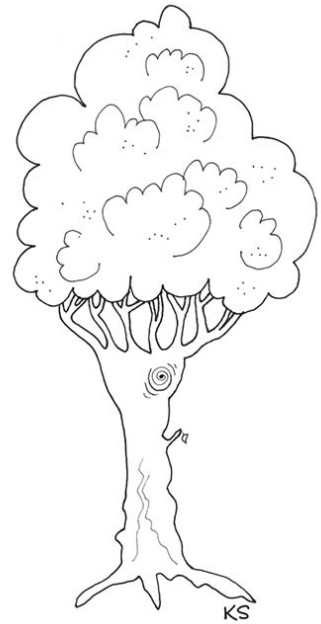
Richard jumped up and turned around then sat down again. There were no large animals behind him. But two or three beetles were busily looking for food in the grass by his feet.

'OK!' he said and laughed. 'Well done, Julia. I really believed you for a minute!'

Richard took out his other earphone, turned off his phone and put it in his pocket. Kate put her phone down, too. She and the others then sat quietly looking at the fire again.

'What do you want to be in the future?' Fred asked.

'A famous photographer,' Julia said. 'I want to travel to wonderful places and take amazing photos and to win important photography competitions.'



‘And you?’ Julia asked Katy.

‘I want to be a mechanic and fix racing cars,’ she said. ‘I’d like to drive them too, and be rich because I’ll win races. What about you?’ Katy asked Richard.

‘I’m going to be a special doctor. I’ll win prizes and everyone will know my name because I’ll invent all kinds of new medicines,’ he said. ‘And you, Fred?’

Before he answered, Fred looked at the ground quietly. Then he picked up some earth and then two beautiful stones and held them carefully in one hand. Then he looked up at the stars in the sky and at the tops of the trees and touched the soft grass that he was sitting on. He listened to the warm wind and to the water in a little stream when it turned this way and that way through the forest.

‘We all hope to do different things, and that’s cool. But I just want to be a different kind of farmer. I want to look after the ground and all the animals that live on it and the flowers and all the other plants that grow in it. The trees too, of course.’

The children looked at the fire again. No-one spoke. They had hundreds of things to think about.

And a bear (that WAS quite near actually) that was watching the fire and listening to the children’s conversation looked at Fred kindly and smiled.

And the busy beetles stopped looking for food and looked up at Fred instead. Then they jumped up and down excitedly because they suddenly felt happier about their futures.

And the tree that WAS watching the four children AND listening to their hopes, looked very carefully at Fred’s face and at the earth and stones in his hand.

And its golden leaves – there were thousands of them – waved in the air and smiled happily at him, too.

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## Teaching notes

*Not on the YLE wordlist: 'joke' 'shake' 'earth' = 'soil', 'ear phones', 'golden' and 'photography' and 'happily'. However, 'gold' and 'photographer' are on the Flyers wordlist; 'earphones' (or 'earbuds') are guessable. I've included happily, busily, kindly and excitedly. See bullet 3 about adj > adv forms.*

### You might like to:

- review / teach the past continuous, the difference between a **kind** (n) of, and **kind** (adj) and hundreds/thousands of/full of something.
- review / teach unknown story vocabulary if necessary. Tell a **joke** in L1. Ask learners to **shake** a hand/a leg/an elbows/a knee. Make a joke about your own ability to shake your ears! Teach 'to shake someone's hand'. Teach 'to nod or to shake your head.'
- teach learners how to change some known adjectives into, as yet, unknown adverbs by adding -ly. For example:  
**happy** > ran happily to school; **sad** > walked sadly down the road;  
**easy** > won the race easily; **brave** > bravely climbed the tree; **angry** > angrily said 'no'; **hungry** > hungrily ate his pizza; **excited** > jumped up and down excitedly; **kind** > looked at someone kindly.
- ask learners what the kind tree might say to each of the children – give learners a suggestion or two to emphasise kindness not criticism and say that everyone must have their own dream and that we must respect that each of us has different ideas (and will choose to do different jobs).
- review / teach the jobs on the Flyers wordlist. Then ask the class to work in groups to say what they would like to be in the future. You could write on the board,  
**'One day, I'd like to be a/an ..... because ..... '**  
Learners complete the sentence in class or for homework.  
Encourage dictionary use if their dream job isn't on the wordlist and show learners how we make the names of some jobs by adding -er, -r, -or to the known verb (they 'know' teach > teacher). For example:  
**build** > builder, **paint** > painter, **dance** > dancer, **work** > worker, **design** > designer, **explore** > explorer, **invent** > inventor, **act** > actor.
- do a visualisation. Ask learners to close their eyes for two minutes and silently imagine that they with the children by the fire. What do they see, hear, feel and smell? Learners, in groups, feedback to the others. What might they say to each of the children? Which child would they really like to be friends with? Why? What would they say to them? Learners could write a short dialogue between themselves and their chosen character.
- What do learners think about the importance of looking after our environment? Which projects would they want to carry out if they were powerful. Accept ALL of their suggestions kindly!