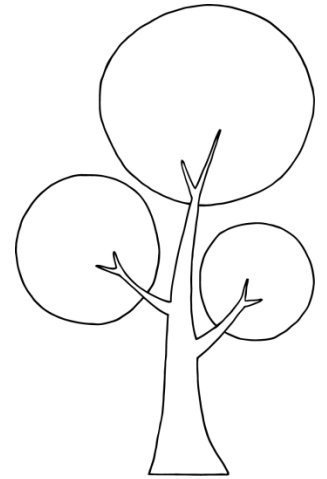


Arbor Day

All the students in Mrs. Wilson's class were excited. Today was Arbor Day and they were having a field trip to plant trees at the park. Everyone had been told to wear clothes that they could dirty and to pack a sack lunch. Several parents had volunteered to be helpers, including Justin's mother and Emma's father. The kids all loaded up on the yellow bus that would drive them to the park, and the parents met them there.



Emma saw her dad's truck in the parking lot at the park. The back was loaded with shovels, bags of soil and dozens of tiny trees, each wrapped in a sack around the root ball. Mrs. Wilson divided her class into small groups, and assigned each a parent volunteer. Justin got to be with his mom, and a group of several of his friends

They walked through the park carrying their supplies, until they came to the field where they were supposed to plant the trees. Several yards away he saw Emma's group, along with her dad, select the spot for their tree too. They each started digging with their shovels at the same time, and it became a fun race. They didn't have to go far, just deep enough to cover the root-ball of the tree, but the ground was harder than they expected.

"I think we can say that race ended in a tie." Emma's dad laughed, as the two young diggers both collapsed at the same time. Luckily, the holes had gotten deep enough that the root-balls would fit.

One person from each group had to hold their tree steady and straight, while the rest of the members filled in planting soil all around the roots. It wasn't often they got to get their hands so dirty for school, and it was a lot of fun. Finally, they watered their trees with bottles of water they had brought. When they were done, Mrs. Wilson passed out the lunches and they got to have a picnic beside the new trees they had just planted.

"Just think, in a few years these trees will have grown, and we'll actually be able to sit underneath them, and enjoy the shade." Justin said.

"Yeah, and animals like birds and squirrels will be able to use it for shelter and food." Emma commented.

"Don't forget, it will also give us all clean air to breathe" said Emma's dad. Everyone looked proudly at the trees and smiled. It felt good knowing they had done something good for the environment and the community.