

# The giving tree summary

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The Giving Tree The Giving Tree, a book ed and illustrated by Shel Silverstein and published by Harper & Row in 1964 explores the life-long relationship between a tree and a young boy. From the very start, it is evident that the tree and the young boy shared an intimate friendship; whereby, every day the young boy would visit the tree to swing from her branches, eat her apples or slide down her trunk. The young boy gleamed with happiness in the company of the tree and vice versa (Silverstein, 1964).

However, as the young boy grew older his disinterest in engaging in the childish games with the tree grew. The boy no longer gleamed with happiness, and this hurt the tree that had no choice but to inquire if there is anything she could do help the boy and make him happy once again. The boy, now an adolescent, desired money; therefore, the tree offered him her apples to go sell so that she could see him happy again (Silverstein, 1964). Time passed, and the boy grew into an adult and his state of unhappiness returned, and the tree inquired once again what she could do to make the boy happy. The boy responded by saying he would like to make a house and raise his family; therefore, the tree gave him her branches and both were happy again. Time passed, and the boy returned to the tree sad. Once more, the tree asked what she could do for him to make him happy and the boy told her that he needed a boat that would enable him to sail far away. Therefore, the tree offered the boy her trunk to build his boat. Both were happy, and the boy sailed off into lands unknown and never returned until he was very old (Silverstein, 1964).

The tree was so happy when the boy returned in his old age, but her happiness was soon short-lived when she realized she had nothing left to give the boy. The tree explained the situation to the boy who told her that he

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only needed a place to sit and rest for he was old and tired. Therefore, the tree offered him her stump, and both were once again happy (Silverstein, 1964).

#### Reference

Silverstein, S. (1964). *The Giving Tree*. NY: Harper & Row.