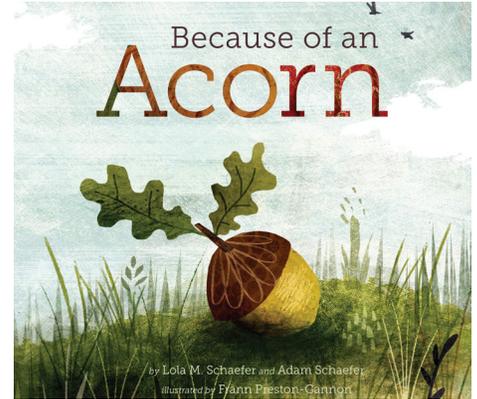


Because of an Acorn by Lola M. Schaefer and Adam Schaefer

Book Synopsis: *Because of an Acorn* by Lola M. Schaefer and Adam Schaefer is the story of how a single acorn can affect the world. Beautifully illustrated by Frann Preston-Gannon, this children's book depicts how something small can make a huge difference.



Connection to Iowa History

The oak tree became Iowa's official tree on March 13, 1961. According to the Iowa General Assembly, they "...chose the oak because it is abundant in the state and serves as shelter, food and nesting cover for many animals and birds... No other group of trees is more important to people and wildlife."

Although a specific type of oak tree was not specified, many people recognize the Bur Oak as the official state tree because it is the only native oak found across Iowa.

Storytime Activity

After reading the story, celebrate the fall season by designing colorful paper oak leaves and acorns to create an "Oak Tree of Thanks" for your household.

Instructions

- 1 **Create tree trunk.** You have two options to create your tree trunk. You can:
 - Print off the provided [template](#). You will glue the leaves onto the paper.
 - Get crafty and create your own tree with colorful construction paper or markers, crayons and colored pencils.
 - If you don't have access to a printer, use the [fillable PDF of the tree template](#). You can fill out the leaves directly on your computer.
- 2 **Print leaves and acorns.** Using the provided [template](#), print out the images on white printer paper. If you cannot print the template, use the template for inspiration and draw your own acorns and leaves on a blank sheet of paper.
- 3 **Be thankful.** On each leaf and acorn, write what you are thankful for this year. Optionally, give leaves to people in your household so they can write what they are thankful for as well. Once all the leaves are combined, it will show what your entire household is thankful for this year.
- 4 **Decorate the leaves.** Color the leaves and acorns with either markers, crayons, or colored pencils. It is easier to color the leaves and acorns before cutting them out of the paper. Be creative with your color choices!
- 5 **Cut.** Use your scissors to cut out the shapes after you have finished coloring.

Materials

- Tree template ([print-off](#) and [PDF version](#))
- [Blank leaves/acorns](#)
- Scissors
- Printer paper
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- Glue or tape
- **Optional:** Construction paper

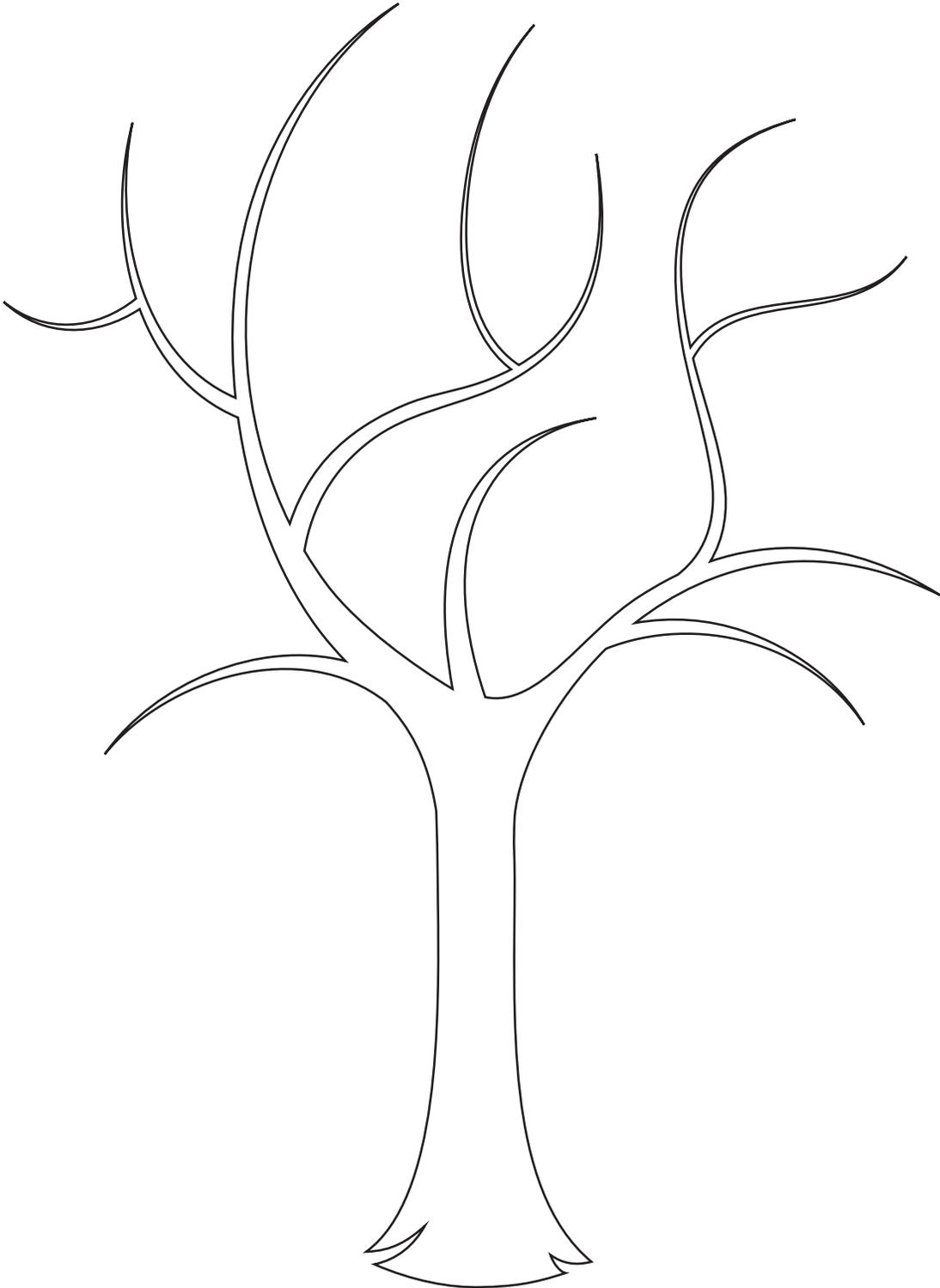
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Instructions continued

- 6 **Attach.** Glue or tape the leaves and acorns to the branches of the tree trunk.
- 7 **Share!** After you fill out your tree, share your work with the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Email a photo of your "Oak Tree of Thanks" to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with others!
- 8 **Questions to Spark Learning**
 - Iowa's official state tree is the oak. Do you think an oak tree was the correct choice for the official state tree? Or should another tree be Iowa's state tree? Explain your answers.
 - Iowa has many official things including a state bird, the goldfinch, and the wild rose as the state flower. Is there anything from Iowa that you think should be included on the official things list? Why?
 - Is there anything else you are thankful for that could not fit on your tree? If so, what is it?

Oak Tree of Thanks Template



Blank Leaves and Acorns

