

HOLIDAY HOUSE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



One Million Trees *A True Story*

by **Kristen Balouch**

ABOUT THE BOOK

The real-life story of a family who planted 1,000,000 trees—yes, it's true!—to fight deforestation in British Columbia.

When Kristen Balouch was 10 years old, her parents made a surprising announcement: their whole family was going on a trip to plant trees! Kristen, her sisters, and her mom and dad—and their pet, Wonder Dog!—flew from their California home to a logging site in British Columbia. There, they joined a crew working to replant the trees that had been cut down.

In *One Million Trees*, Kristen reflects on the 40 days they spent living in a tent, covered in mud and bug bites, working hard every day to plant a new forest. Young readers will learn a little French, practice some math skills, and learn all about how to plant a tree the right way!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Take a close look at the title page. Point to the person telling the story. Read the first page. How do you know the author is remembering a summer when she was a child? At what point in the story is the last name of the family revealed?
- Dad gives the family a packing list. Take a look at the open luggage. Which items are for school? Which are for play? Which are necessities? Why does Kristen pack sprinkles? How does this illustration reveal which grade Kristen is in? How might she use the compass and binoculars?



- Take a close look at the double-page spread of the campsite. What do the shoes reveal about who lives in the tents? Describe the family's tent. Who sleeps on the bed with three pillows? What does the family use for light?
- How does the cook shack resemble a food truck found in towns and cities? Point to items in the illustration that indicate that Mom is cooking for a lot of people. Add the number of people in the Stolfo family to the number of people that greeted them when they arrived. How many people are living at the campsite?
- The family helps plant trees on Vancouver Island. In what country is Vancouver Island located? What different kinds of trees do they plant?
- Contrast the tree plugs for each type of tree. How are they alike? How are they different? What is the actual size of a tree plug? What is an obstacle? Point out the obstacles the bus encounters when going to the tree planting site.
- Nonfiction is a book that provides factual information. How does the title of the story indicate that it is nonfiction? Chart the facts about trees and tree planting as the story progresses. Explain the math in the story. What French words do you learn?
- The tree planting site is described as being "empty" and "lifeless." Define "lifeless." Describe the end pages. What do the tree stumps and the new trees represent? Draw a connection between the illustration on the end pages to the tree planting site. How is this book about the environment?

Guide created by Pat Scales, retired school librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina.



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ABOUT THE CREATOR



Kristen Balouch has illustrated picture books for other authors as well as written and illustrated her own, including *One Million Trees: A True Story*, *The Little Little Girl with the Big Big Voice*, and *Mystery Bottle*, which was the winner of the Ezra Jack Keats Book Award and Middle East Book Award, and a Bank Street Best Children's Book. She is also a fabric designer and a literary agent. She lives in Brooklyn, New York. You can visit her at KristenBalouch.com.

