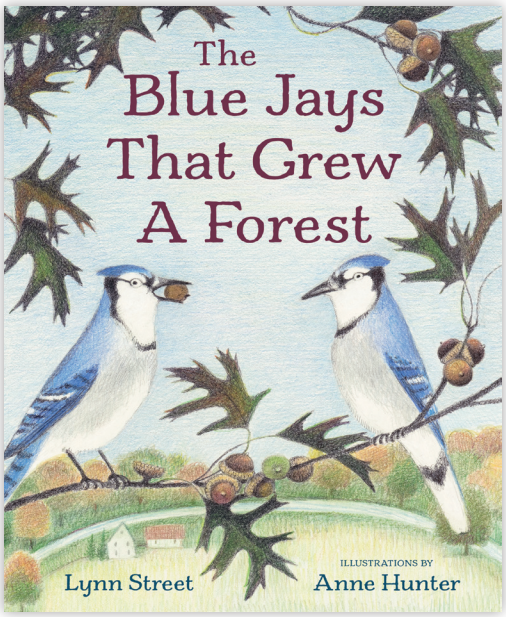

HC: 9781682636046 • Ebook: 9781682638088

The Blue Jays That Grew a Forest

Lynn Street
illustrated by **Anne Hunter**

Take a lyrical journey on the wings of blue jays as they bury thousands of acorns for next season's food and help Mother Nature extend the oak forests.

Use *The Blue Jays That Grew a Forest* in your classroom to learn more about oaks and jays and to teach about similes, metaphors, and collective nouns.

- Oak trees are a keystone species. Have students draw an oak and add some of the species that depend on the tree. Then have them pick three species and write a sentence for each about how each organism uses the tree. (For an extra challenge, include aboveground and belowground views of the tree.)
- The author uses similes and metaphors throughout the story to describe the blue jays' acorn gathering and hiding activities. As a class, search for examples in the text and discuss why the author may have used figurative language. Have students pick an animal of their choice and then write three sentences using a simile or metaphor to describe the animal's appearance or behaviors.
- The glossary notes that a *scold* is a collective noun for a group of blue jays. Two other collective nouns for jays are *band* and *party*. Discuss why those words might have been chosen. Then learn about other collective nouns.
- Using the text as a starting point, have students create a food web diagram that shows the interrelationships of animals in the oak tree's forest ecosystem. Draw arrows from predators to prey.

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