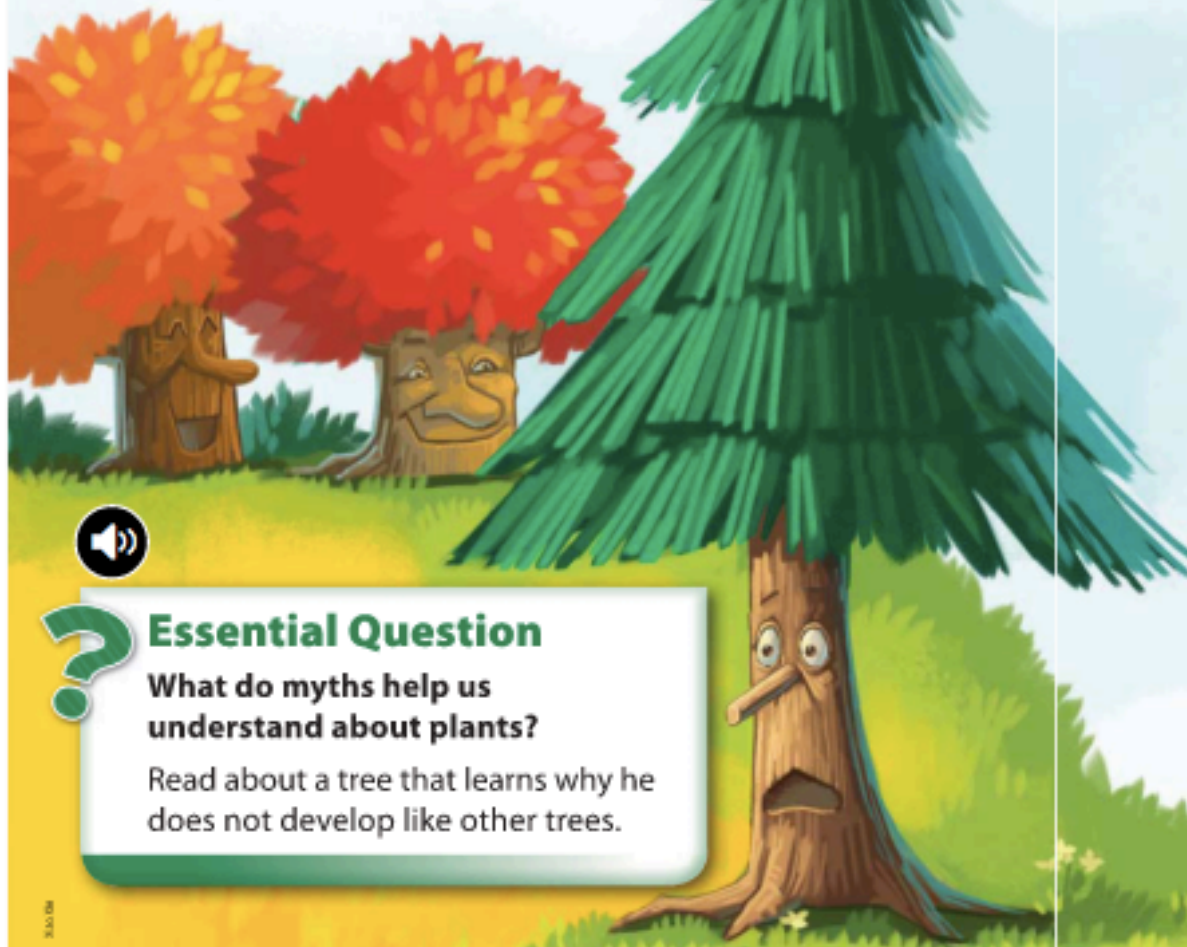


# Why Fir Tree Keeps His Leaves



## Essential Question

What do myths help us understand about plants?

Read about a tree that learns why he does not develop like other trees.



Long ago, in ancient times, Mother Nature gave each tree a different purpose. However, she did not share her reasons with the trees.

Fir Tree had three friends—Maple, Oak, and Elm. During the first summer, they saw Bird and Squirrel play in Farmer's corn and tomato **crops**. The breeze blew and **rustled** their leaves. The **shining** sun warmed them.

Then the first fall arrived. Farmer harvested what he had grown. Maple, Oak, and Elm's leaves turned beautiful shades of orange, red, and yellow. The leaves shone as **golden** as the Sun. Fir Tree's leaves stayed green.

Fir Tree complained to Mother Nature, "I don't like my leaves. I want them to change colors like my friends' leaves."

"Be patient," Mother Nature replied. "You will learn your purpose."



So Fir Tree waited. The temperature dropped even more. Bird flew south, and Squirrel was nowhere around. Maple, Oak, and Elm lost their leaves, but Fir Tree's green leaves remained. Soon snow blanketed the ground.

Again, Fir Tree protested to Mother Nature. "Why am I different? Why don't I have **stages** and change like my friends? I seem to be stuck in one period of life!"

"Be patient," Mother Nature replied. "Soon you will **develop** an understanding of your purpose."

Just then, Squirrel **appeared** on the **edge** of the forest. She was cold. When she went inside the forest, she saw Maple. She asked if she could build a warm nest in his branches.



Maple said he didn't have any leaves. She asked Oak and then Elm. Both said the same thing as Maple. She was still bitterly cold.

Squirrel approached Fir Tree. "Excuse me," she said. "May I build a nest in your branches?"

"Yes, that would be nice," said Fir Tree. Squirrel ran up Fir Tree's branches, and she made her nest. Soon, she was warm, comfortable, and asleep.

Fir Tree finally understood that his green leaves provided a warm shelter for animals in the winter. From that moment on, Fir Tree was happy to be different. Still today, he remains proud of his evergreen leaves.



### Make Connections



How did Fir Tree develop differently from his friends? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

When have you wanted to be like your friends? **TEXT TO SELF**

