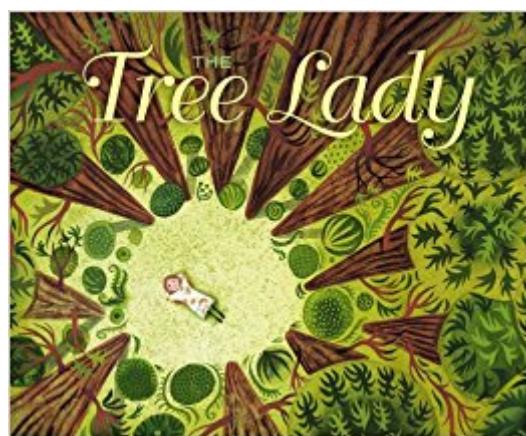


The book was found

# The Tree Lady: The True Story Of How One Tree-Loving Woman Changed A City Forever



## **Synopsis**

Unearth the true story of green-thumbed pioneer and activist Kate Sessions, who helped San Diego grow from a dry desert town into a lush, leafy city known for its gorgeous parks and gardens. Katherine Olivia Sessions never thought she'd live in a place without trees. After all, Kate grew up among the towering pines and redwoods of Northern California. But after becoming the first woman to graduate from the University of California with a degree in science, she took a job as a teacher far south in the dry desert town of San Diego. Where there were almost no trees. Kate decided that San Diego needed trees more than anything else. So this trailblazing young woman singlehandedly started a massive movement that transformed the town into the green, garden-filled oasis it is today. Now, more than 100 years after Kate first arrived in San Diego, her gorgeous gardens and parks can be found all over the city. Part fascinating biography, part inspirational story, this moving picture book about following your dreams, using your talents, and staying strong in the face of adversity is sure to resonate with readers young and old.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 760L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 44 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #50,172 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #12 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Gardening #19 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Forests & Trees #80 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Women

Age Range: 5 - 10 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 5

## **Customer Reviews**

K-Gr 2-Katherine Olivia Sessions was a real go-getter, becoming the first woman to graduate from the University of California with a science degree (1881) and transforming San Diego's City Park

from a dry, ugly hillside into a lush garden flourishing beneath a beautiful canopy of trees. Motivated by the love she'd felt for trees since her childhood, Sessions researched species that would grow in arid weather and hilly terrain, and she asked gardeners around the world to send her seeds. She had left teaching to establish a nursery, and by the turn of the century, trees from that nursery were growing not only in City Park but all over San Diego. The park would be the site of the Panama-California Exposition in 1909, and Sessions wanted thousands of additional trees in place to make it even more spectacular. Multitudes volunteered, and the result was so lovely that the fair stayed open for two years instead of one. Hopkins writes in a light narrative style that makes this picture-book biography a great selection for a storytime with a nature-based theme, but it also contains good information for early report writers. The author utilizes variations of a positive, upbeat refrain—"but she did"—that kids will enjoy repeating. McElmurry's artwork undergirds Hopkins's writing with stylized beauty and a sense of joy. This is a wonderful tribute to a true champion of nature.-Alyson Low, Fayetteville Public Library, AR (c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

**\*Starred Review\*** A terrific jacket image shows a tiny girl in a towering forest as seen from above. Who is this girl? And why is she the tree lady? Well, turns out Katherine Olivia Sessions, who grew up in Northern California in the 1860s, always loved trees—"she used to weave their leaves into necklaces and bracelets. Girls back then weren't supposed to get their hands dirty, but Kate did. Girls were also discouraged from studying science, but Kate sure did, graduating from the University of California with a degree in science in 1881. Postgraduation, Kate moved to San Diego, a desert town with little greenery. She wrote to gardeners far and wide, seeking out seeds that would thrive in a harsh desert climate, and by the turn of the century, oaks, eucalypti, and palms sprung up throughout the city. But Kate's biggest planting project would come in 1915 with the Panama-California Exposition, to be held in Balboa Park. Nobody thought that it would be possible to create a lush garden for the event . . . but guess who did? A little-known, can-do woman shines in this handsome picture book from Hopkins and McElmurry. Hopkins ably brings a woman's passion—"and some science"—to a story that's accessible for young children. And, oh the pictures! Both old-timey and lush, they evoke Kate's vision perfectly, and individually labeled illustrations of trees add to the educational value. A lovely tribute to the pioneering (and environmentalist) spirit, topped off by an author's note. Grades 1-3. --Ann Kelley

Do you know how San Diego got its trees? In the story "The Tree Lady," which is a biography

written by H. Joseph Hopkins, we learn that we can do anything. Katherine Olivia Sessions lived in the woods in Northern California. Girls from Kate's side of town didn't get their hands dirty, but Kate did. She was the only girl in science. Kate felt that trees were her friends. She also was the only girl to get her science degree. She left her hometown because she got a job in San Diego. She became a teacher for 2 years. Then she became a gardener. Kate started planting trees in the park. Will she plant enough trees? My favorite part of the book is how on Kate's side of town girls weren't supposed to get their hands dirty, but Kate did. The author wrote this to tell us that we can do anything. I recommend this book to others because it seems that if Kate can do it we can do it too. I like this book because it shows me that I can do anything. "The Tree Lady" is a good fit book for people who like plants. By: Lillie

Loved this book! The illustrations were delightful! The text is crisp and held the attention of my children ages 3 to 8. My oldest two children then went on to read it a few more times by themselves. We used this as a text for a unit on...yes, trees. There is SO much to pull from the book: science, history, geography, gardening, use of public spaces, as well as themes of determination and vision, goal setting, etc. After reading it, I pulled up photos of the garden in San Diego, as well as some before and after photos of the garden. We all found this part, the actual transformation displayed in historical photos, fascinating. This is a sweetly researched, planned, written and designed book. Kudos to the author and illustrator! Definitely a book to have in one's library.

Full-disclosure: I bought this book mostly because \*I\* love children's picture books...and the main character, Kate Sessions happens to share her name with \*my\* daughter who is also a tree-loving little girl, although my hubby so kindly pointed out, she may be outgrowing picture books. I disagree. Anyone and everyone can love picture books; they are truly a wonderful foray into the world of literature. And so my love for children's literature never dies. And neither does San Francisco, which was once dry and desert-like and has been transformed in a lush green garden by Kate Sessions who was quite visionary for a time in which women--and girls especially--were seen and not heard (and often, not educated). Part environmentalism, history, biography, and girls-can-do-anything motto, THE TREE LADY will change not just a city forever, but you too.

The story of the tree lady is a true, motivational tale about how one person can make a positive difference. It presents a lesson to demonstrate how a good idea, coupled with hard work and determination, can be transforming. This book is beautifully illustrated!

Was the perfect gift for a 4 year old neighbor and it is a good historic story about the importance of trees for each clean breath of air, our psychological well being and cooling off a hot community without electricity. Hoped the whole family enjoyed the read, because they need a bit of coaching about the environment and what they could do be great stewards

As a San Diegan, I was interested in the subject matter. As a grandmother, I was happy to see the excitement my grandchildren, ages 6 and 9, had when reading the book.

My nephew and niece love this book, and their parents love it, too. It weaves history and science with such a positive message, and I appreciate that the story focuses on a public figure that deserves more recognition for making such a lasting impact in society. The children love the detail in the art, pointing to all the trees, and the story is one that is important to pass on. I would highly recommend this as a gift (and have) to friends and family.

A simply glorious book. Very rare to find a children's picturebook so dedicated to nature. A must have for those who love the natural world and want to impart that love in our children.

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