

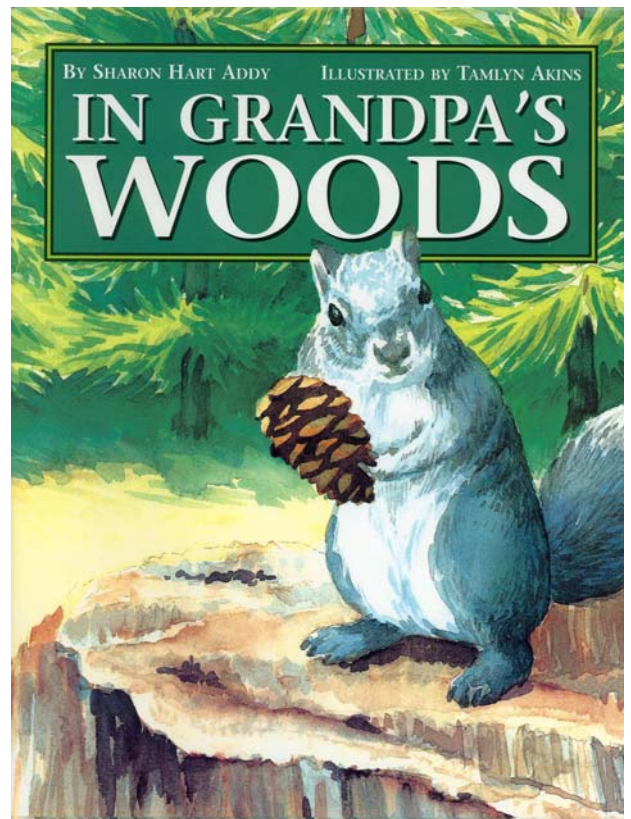
Book Review: In Grandpa's Woods

By Casey Nye, Kindergarten Teacher-Stevens Point Area School District

The forests of our state beckon us to come enjoy their colorful celebration of the changing seasons. September and October bring revelers eager to view the latest palette tints the woods have to offer. In working with young children this most visual of displays provides a beautiful catalyst for stimulating conversation about the woods they know so well, or have yet to discover.

As Wisconsinites many of us can recall youthful forays into some sort of woods we were fortunate enough to live or vacation in or near. The children's picture book In Grandpa's Woods allows us, as parents or educators, to take our children on an imagination invoking, thought-provoking hike through the forests of our memories...and the forests that we are still fortunate enough to have in existence today.

Sharon Hart Addy pens the story of a brother, Chad, and sister, Amy, visiting their grandparents. Chad and Amy accompany Grandpa on a walk through their backyard woods and see the forest unveiled for them as they have yet to have seen it. Grandpa skillfully enables the children to begin to appreciate all that the forest has to offer. Accompanied with Tamlyn Akins watercolor depictions of the trio's journey, In Grandpa's Woods provides an excellent way to introduce children to the benefits of a sustainable forestry practice.



Hmmm...how to follow up a reading of this story? Take a child to the woods! Let them witness firsthand some of the topics introduced by Chad, Amy and Grandpa's walk. Topics such as tree-planting, forest products, forest inhabitants, sustainable use, and aesthetic appreciation all are given voice through Grandpa's sage character. In Grandpa's Woods helps children to see the forest for its multiple purposes. Whether as habitat for animals, a resource for humans, or a place to find solace, peace, and fun we all benefit from healthy Wisconsin forests.

If we needed incentive to share in a connection to our state's forests the centennial of Wisconsin forestry gives us just that. There is something indescribable about the allure the woods hold for many of us. A walk in the woods puts tangible attributes to important concepts of environmental awareness. Facilitating experiences that promote connections between curious youngsters and the natural world is more important now than it has ever been. In our celebration of the centennial take time to remember the forests of our past, to enjoy the forests of our present, and to teach the next generation about the forests of the future.