

Curative Shorts Questions
The Fir Tree
By Hans Christian Anderson (1844)

Notes About Answering The Story Questions: *These story questions are written to spark your recall, bring you into a curative experience with the story, and open you up to new possibilities in life. Open your imagination and be curious as you answer these questions. They can remain just for you or be shared. Consider reading the story more than once, perhaps even reading it aloud a second time and taking time to underline and make notes about the things that stand out FOR YOU.*

Describe the “place” where the Fir Tree stood in the woods.

Name some of the things in the natural world around the Fir Tree that could have given it pleasure but did not. Circle one or two that stand out and would give you pleasure.

The sparrows say this to the Fir Tree about what they have seen peeping through the windows in the town of where the young trees go when they are chopped down ... “It was incomparably beautiful.” Have you seen something through a window recently that has been “incomparably beautiful?” If so, write a line or two about that.

“Oh, how I long, how I suffer! I do not know, myself, what is the matter with me!” How could you respond to this comment from Fir Tree in a loving and supportive way if it was a friend of yours saying it to you or someone you cared about?

“The departure was not at all agreeable.” What was the Fir Tree feeling at the time of his departure from the woods?

“It was really splendid—beyond description, splendid. Write a line or two about something you have experienced lately that was/is *beyond description splendid*

What does the Fir Tree come to realize about his time in the woods from his time of loneliness in the attic and through his conversation with the mice?

The Fir Tree imagines his charming princess in the woods to be “a nice little birch tree.” If you were to imagine your prince or princess as a tree in the woods, what kind of tree would it be?

Name some of the elements of the natural world that the Fir Tree is finally able to see when he is taken out of the attic into the springtime.

Do you feel the Fir Tree’s inner life and sense of peacefulness and acceptance has changed in any way at the end of his life? If so, write a line or two about this.

Is there a question you might ask others (or yourself) about this story to help them to find something curative in it? If so, what would it be?