

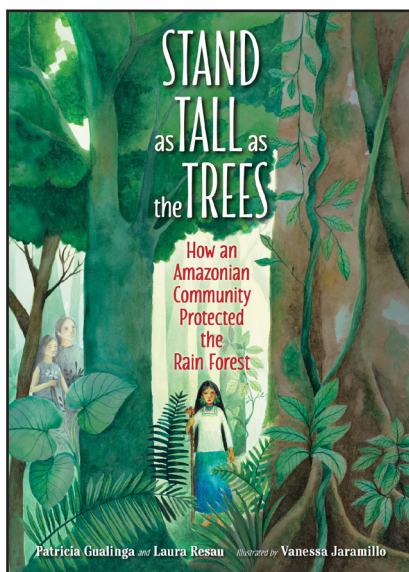
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STAND as TALL as the TREES

ACTIVITY KIT



Patricia Gualinga & Laura Resau
illustrated by Vanessa Jaramillo
978-1-62354-236-8 HC
Also available in Spanish
978-1-62354-237-5 HC

About the Book

Patricia (Paty) Gualinga grew up in her Kichwa village in the Amazon of Ecuador where mystical beings called Amazanga help protect the forest. Paty traveled away from home for school until she was called back—companies that said the government sold them property were destroying her people’s lands to look for oil. The Kichwa community worked with other Indigenous groups to bring the Ecuadorian government to the Court of Human Rights. Lyrically told and beautifully illustrated, this moving story will remind readers of the importance of nature conservation, perseverance, and standing up for your community.

About the Authors

Patricia Gualinga is a human rights and Indigenous rights defender of the Pueblo Kichwa de Sarayaku, an indigenous community in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Gualinga currently lives in Puyo, Ecuador.

Laura Resau is an award-winning author of young adult and children’s books, including *The Lightning Queen*, *Tree of Dreams*, *What the Moon Saw*, *Red Glass*, and *Star in the Forest*. Resau lives with her family in Colorado.

About the Illustrator

Vanessa Jaramillo is an illustrator living in Quito, Ecuador. She focuses on intercultural bilingual education projects and has been a consultant for UNICEF and the Ministry of Education.

Before Reading: Discussion

Pre-reading concept reviews help enrich students' learning experience!

For younger students (K-2nd):

- After sharing the cover of the book and reading the title and subtitle, ask students what they think *Stand as Tall as the Trees* is about. Write their responses on chart paper. Point out the names of the co-authors and illustrators and ask what their jobs are to make a book. Have the children guess why there might be two authors for this book.
- Looking at the cover illustration, ask the children where the girl might live. How do you think she feels about her home? Who do you think the two adults looking on might be?
- Explain what a rain forest is. As a group, discuss what makes a rain forest different from other kinds of forests and where rain forests are found. What kind of plants and animals live in a rain forest?

For older students (3rd-5th):

- Based on the title, subtitle, and cover, ask students to describe what they think the book is about. Write their responses on chart paper. Point out the names of the co-authors and illustrators and ask what their jobs are to make a book. Have the children guess why there might be two authors for this book.
- Have students discuss the following questions in small groups. Tape questions to a wall and ask students to tape their answers beneath the questions.
 - What is a rain forest?
 - Why might a rain forest need protection?
 - How can people protect rain forests (and other ecosystems)?
- Flip through the book, showing the children each spread, and asking them to make observations and predictions about the story. You might ask them:
 - Describe the setting of the girl's home, inside and outside.
 - How do you think she spends her days?
 - Why do you think she might look sad in the city pictures?
 - How do you think she feels about animals and plants?
 - Where are each of her feet and what do you think this means?
 - What big problem do you think happened in the forest?
 - How do you think she feels about this problem?
 - What do you think she'll do about it?
 - How do you think she works together with her community?
 - Do you think they solve the problem? How?
 - How do you think the girl and her community feel in the end?

Now return to the beginning of the book and read the story. Afterwards, ask the students to discuss which of their predictions matched the story, and what surprised them.

- On a map of the world (or with the help of Google Maps), locate the village of Sarayaku, Ecuador. Together with students, figure out how far away Sarayaku is from your school. If desired, use an airline service like Google Flights to figure out how long a journey from your school to Sarayaku would take.

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Before Reading: New Words

Familiarize students with new words in English and other languages to improve engagement during reading.

In English

These English words might be new to your students. Use picture clues and story context to help them deepen their understanding of the meanings.

mystical	invaded	barren
mistreat	wail	scorch
thrumming	sacred	elders

In Other Languages

There are also Spanish and Kichwa words and names that might be unfamiliar to your students. See if they can guess the meanings through context within the story. Then turn together to the glossary in the back of the book to see if they were on the right track. You can also hear their ideas on how to pronounce the Kichwa and Spanish words, using the phonetic guide.

Amazanga	Kichwa
batán	pueblo
chicha	Sarayaku
Ecuador	yachak

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Conversation Starters

Pre-reading and post-reading concept reviews help enrich students' learning experience!

Before Reading:

- Ask the children to talk about a time they were in a forest or a natural area. What did they see, hear, smell? How did they feel?
- Ask the children to talk about a time they used to be scared of something and then changed their minds about it. What made them brave? You might give an example from your own life first.
- Ask the children to talk about a time they felt something wasn't fair or maybe a time they or friends were bullied. How did they feel? What did they do about it? Did they speak up? If so, how did they feel after speaking up? How did their situation change?
- Ask the children to imagine living in nature, without electricity or sinks or stores. How might they get food? How might they get water? How would they have light in the evenings? Would they like to live this way of life? What would be advantages and disadvantages?
- Ask the children to describe a special food that they prepare with their family. What are some of the ingredients? Do they make this food often or just for special occasions? How do they feel when making and eating this food?
- Ask the children what makes them feel proud of their family, communities, school, or culture. Are there special rituals or celebrations they like doing together? Is there a part of their history or way of life that they feel proud of?

After Reading:

- Who are the Amazanga? How does Paty feel about them at the beginning of the story? How do her feelings about them change throughout the story?
- Paty says, "Knowing the world outside my forest / might give me power inside it." How did this idea help her protect her forest home?
- Why is Paty's community invaded? What do these men want? How is their view of the forest different from Paty's view? Why do these men think they have the right to invade the forest?
- Paty remembers the trees' song: "I will stand against mighty winds, and all will see my flowers." How does this song inspire her to act? Talk about a time you stood up for something you cared about.
- How do Paty and her community save their sacred forest? What cultural traditions do they draw upon? What legal actions do they take? How do their actions inspire other people?
- Paty says, "When the forest breathes deeply, / the whole Earth breathes." What do you think she means? Do you agree? Why?
- If the forest could talk, what do you think it would say to Paty and her community? To the invading oil company? To the court?

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Science: All About the Amazon

Use a guided research project to understand the ecological importance of the Amazon.

Materials for younger students (K-2nd):

- Letter size sheets of paper, cut in half lengthwise to create 5.5 x 8.5 pages
- Art supplies (markers, paints, crayons, colored pencils, etc)
- A photocopier
- Construction paper
- Staplers

Procedure for younger students (K-2nd):

1. Begin by asking students what they know about the rain forest and/or the Amazon. Write student responses on chart paper.
2. As a class, read *Stand as Tall as the Trees* and at least three other nonfiction picture books about the Amazon (see page 8 of this kit for a related reading list).
3. Distribute a half-page sheet to each student and invite students to create a sentence containing a fact they learned about rain forests or the Amazon. Encourage students to illustrate their sentence in the rest of the page space and sign their name at the top or bottom.
4. Photocopy the pages together into a booklet containing each student's illustrated sentence.
5. Distribute a copy of the booklet pages to each student and invite them to use construction paper to make a cover and a stapler to bind their booklet together.

For older students (3rd-5th):

1. Before reading *Stand as Tall as the Trees*, invite students to write down three questions they have about the Amazon in their journals. After reading, ask them to jot down any answers they learned and come up with at least two new questions.
2. Provide library research time for students to find the answers to their questions. Encourage them to discuss and share print and digital resources with each other. Students who are stuck may consult the back matter of *Stand as Tall as the Trees* and/or page 8 of this kit for more material.
3. Ask students to organize their questions and answers in a trifold poster or slideshow and present them to the class.
3. After presentations, ask: Now that you have heard what your classmates learned, do you have new questions about the Amazon?

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Social Studies: Power Map

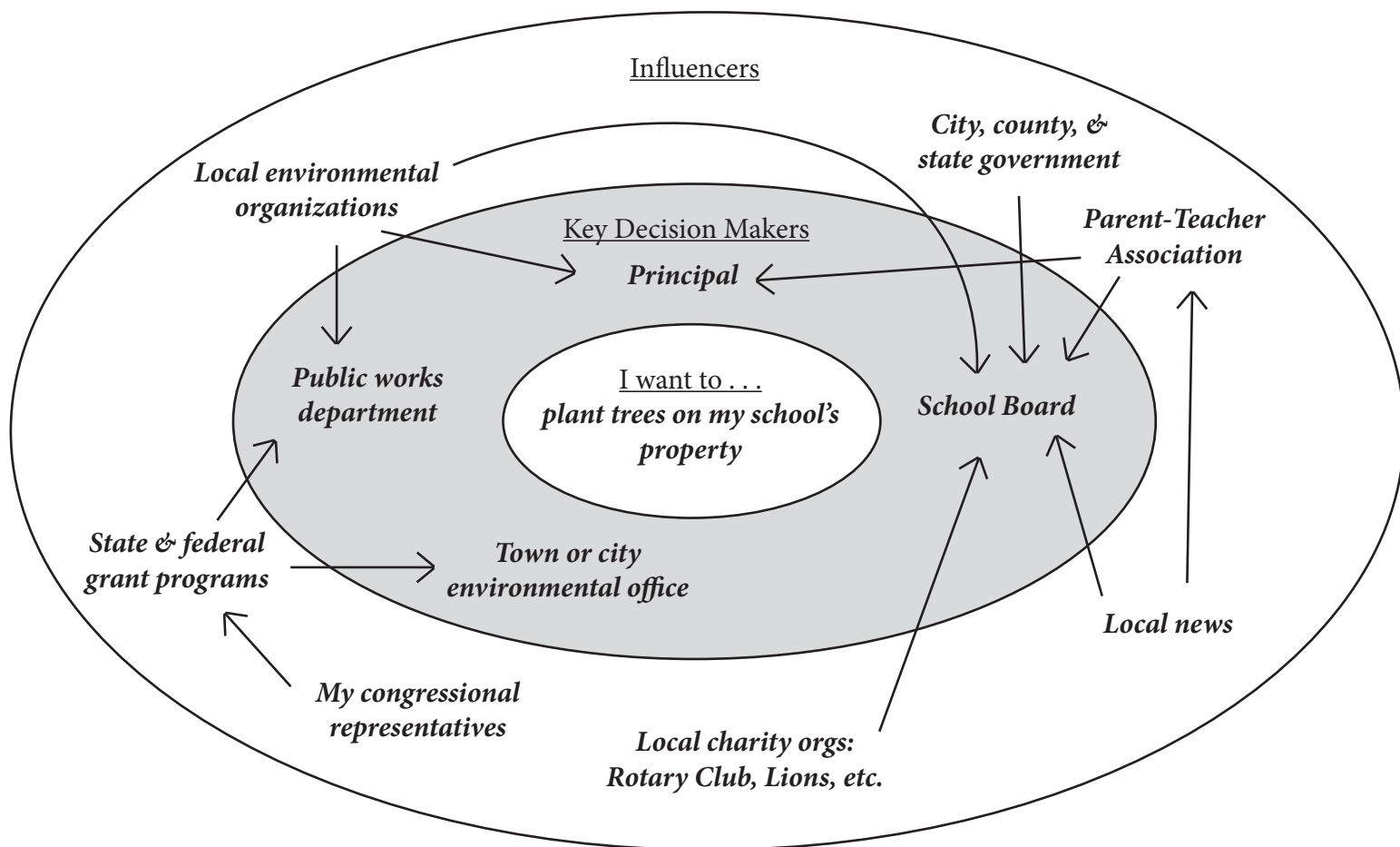
Use a power map activity to better understand the decision-making structure of your community, identify stakeholders and helpers, and make your voice heard.

What Is a Power Map?

As seen in *Stand as Tall as the Trees*, everyday people can stand up for their communities in many different ways. Kids and teens can make a difference, too. One important step of making a change happen is knowing who you need to persuade.

An example power map is provided below. On a separate sheet of paper, make your own power map. Work from the inside out (the more specific your “I want to . . .” statement is, the better!) and use arrows to indicate directions of influence. For example, local news can influence both the PTA and the school board.

Quick hint: “Influence” can mean many things—money, opinions & ideas, legal authority, access to a place or person. Think broadly and gather as much information as you can!



STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Language Arts: Story Retelling

This activity can be modified for younger or older students and explores the concepts of plot and point of view.

Materials for older students:

- A copy of page 8 of this kit, “Language Arts: Story Planner,” for each student

Materials for younger students:

- A copy of page 8 of this kit, “Language Arts: Story Planner”
- A projector or other display technology

Procedure:

- Discuss “point of view.” What point of view is *Stand as Tall as the Trees* told in? What other points of view could it be told in?
- Using the story planner on page 8 of this kit, have the students retell *Stand as Tall as the Trees* from the sacred forest’s point of view.
- Next have the students tell a story about a time they felt scared but found the courage to overcome a challenge.
- For younger children, this activity can be done as a class. For older children, they can write individually, with partners, or in small groups.

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Activity Kit

Language Arts: Story Planner

Name: _____

Date: _____

Main Character

Setting

**Life Before
the Problem**

The Problem

**How the Problem
Is Solved**

**Life After the
Problem Is Solved**

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Activity Kit

Language Arts: Radio Play

As a young person, activist Patricia Gualinga told Kichwa stories on the radio. Use the worksheet below to adapt one of your favorite stories to the radio! Older students may use this worksheet individually, or a class of younger students can fill out the sheet together.

My Story: _____

Story Events:

Once Upon a Time . . .		
		The End!

On a separate sheet of paper, write a script for your story! Consider: How many people are telling your story? If more than one, how are you going to split up the story events? Will your radio play include any music or sound effects? Will you use funny voices to distinguish what a character is saying from what a narrator is saying?

When your script is finished, write your name at the top and attach it to this worksheet.

Record your radio story on a smartphone or other device to share with family and friends.

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Activity Kit

Language Arts: Ode to a Tree

Begin by sitting under a tree with a notebook and pencil. Imagine that you are the tree. Talk to a buddy or think out loud about what the tree might be feeling, seeing, smelling, tasting, hearing. Write a tree-inspired poem either freely or using the model below.

Name: _____ Date: _____

I am a tree.

I feel _____

I see _____

I smell _____

I taste _____

I hear _____

I dream about _____

I remember _____

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Art: My Community

Illustrator Vanessa Jaramillo uses watercolors to portray the Sarayaku Kichwa community standing up for their land and people. Use the project below to help students explore the meaning of their own community.

Materials:

- Nontoxic watercolor sets (for more student exploration, try providing both palette and crayon watercolors)
- Watercolor paper
- Pencils

Procedure for younger students (K-2nd):

1. **Discussion and craft examples.** Begin by exploring the watercolor medium. Encourage students to examine Vanessa Jaramillo's illustrations closely and compare them with other watercolor illustrated books (such as *Little Pig Saves the Ship*, illustrated by David Hyde Costello; *Strega Nona*, illustrated by Tomie dePaola; and *Monet Paints a Day*, illustrated by Caitlin Heimerl). As a class, discuss what students see in these illustrations.
2. **Experimentation with new media.** Provide watercolor sets and paper and encourage students to experiment with the medium for ten or twenty minutes. If any students want a prompt at this stage, ask them to paint an object they see in the room.
3. **Brainstorm.** Call back student attention and ask the class to think about the word "community." Write it on the board. What people, places, animals, things, and activities make up their community? Jot down student answers.
4. **Create.** Invite students to make a watercolor painting depicting their community. Provide twenty to thirty minutes of work time and circulate to answer any questions one-on-one.

For older students (3rd-5th):

1. **Discussion and craft examples.** Ask students what they think of when they think of watercolors. Provide some examples of watercolor-illustrated picture books (see step 1 in the procedure for younger students) and discuss as a class or in small groups. Compare and contrast the illustrations and discuss how the artists produced very different styles in the same medium. Point out how the artists use line, shape, color, and texture differently.
2. **Warmup.** Provide watercolor sets, pencils, and paper and ask students to write the word "community" on one of their pages. Invite them to fill the rest of the page with doodles and sketches in pencil and/or watercolor exploring the idea of community. Encourage them to think about what people, places, animals, things, and activities make up their community. Give students twenty to thirty minutes of work time and circulate to answer questions.
3. **Create.** After students have warmed up, invite them to turn to a new page and compose a watercolor painting depicting their community. They may use images and symbols they jotted down during their warmup or come up with new imagery. Circulate to answer any questions one-on-one.

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Performing Arts: Storytime

Prepare for storytime with some expressive activities that help young listeners vent excess energy and explore rain forest related ideas.

Forest Charades

- Help the children brainstorm a list of animals that live in the rain forest.
- Without speaking, act out an animal and invite the children to guess the animal.
- Let each child have a turn to act out a different animal as the others guess.

Dance to Honor the Living Forest

- Play rain forest background sounds, which can be easily found online.
- Ask each child to choose a plant or animal to be during the song.
- The children can express their plant or animal through abstract, rhythmic movements, which will create an entire rain forest dance.

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Activity Kit

Word Search

Name: _____

Date: _____

L A L C H I C H A
G M H K S E H G M
B A T Á N D P T L
E Z X Y B O U Í A
T A C A M R E R Z
A N Á C S C B V D
Ó G W H V U L É S
I A R A R T O Z D
N U M K I C H W A

AMAZANGA

KICHWA

BATÁN

PUEBLO

CHICHA

YACHAK

Timeline of Patricia Gualinga's Life and Work

September 21, 1969: Patricia Gualinga Montalvo is born in Sarayaku, Ecuador—the fourth of six children in her family.

1984: Patricia leaves Sarayaku to study at a high school in Quito.

1991: Patricia graduates from a high school in Puyo.

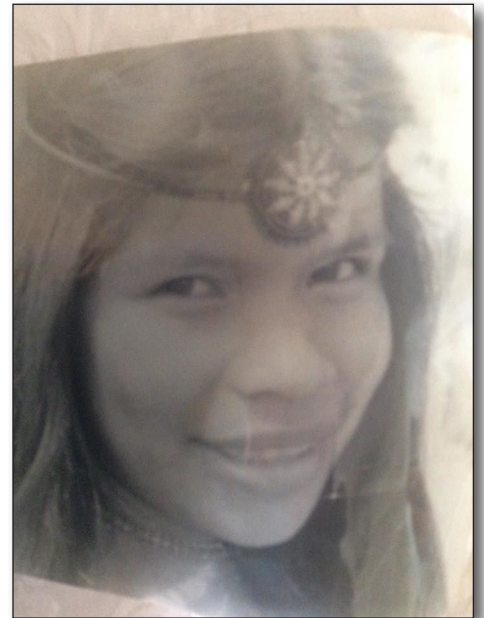
1992: Patricia starts working in Puyo on her own radio show and as a tourism representative.

1992: Patricia marches with her family and other Indigenous Amazonian groups to Quito, the capital of Ecuador, to demand that the government legally recognize the ancestral territories of the Kichwa, the Shiwiar, the Sapara, and the Achuar Nations.

1996: The Ecuadorian government grants Block 23 of the Amazon rain forest to the Argentinian oil company CGC (Compañía General de Combustibles) without consulting the communities in the area.

2002: CBC begins seismic oil exploration in Block 23, violently entering the territory with armed forces. They plant 1.5 tons of explosives in the area to locate petroleum. Patricia returns to Sarayaku to protect their territory. The village of Sarayaku rallies together to protect the sacred forest.

2003: Sarayaku, with the support of international organizations, presents their case to the IACHR (Inter-American Court for Human Rights), thereby starting an eight-year legal process.



Patricia as a teenager



Patricia as a young woman

Timeline of Patricia Gualinga's Life and Work (continued)

- 2010-2012:** Patricia and others from Sarayaku testify before IACHR in Costa Rica. They win. The Ecuadorian government is found guilty of rights violations by authorizing oil exploration on Sarayaku's lands without community consent.
- 2013:** Patricia is a leader in the Indigenous Women's March to Quito. She asks the Ecuadorian government to develop alternative energy plans instead of harming the forests and people of the Amazon through oil exploration and drilling.
- 2017:** Patricia speaks about Indigenous-led solutions to climate change at the United Nations climate summit in Germany.
- 2018:** Patricia receives death threats and her home in Puyo is attacked. Rocks are thrown through her window in the middle of the night as she and her family sleep inside. This is a serious concern since over a hundred Indigenous and environmental rights activists were killed in Latin America the previous year.
- 2020:** Ecuador ratifies the Escazú Agreement, a treaty among several Latin American and Caribbean nations concerning environmental justice, which includes provisions for the protection of environment and land defenders. Indigenous rights collective Mujeres Amazónicas (of which Patricia is a leader) calls for investigations into the intimidation of its members, delivering more than 250,000 signatures to the Attorney General of Ecuador.
- 2022:** Patricia is awarded the Olof Palme Prize to recognize her courageous leadership in campaigning for the rights of Indigenous people and the protection of the Amazon.



STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Interview with Laura Resau

What inspired you to co-author this book?



I took a trip to the Amazon Rain Forest in Ecuador in 2015. I stayed in an ecolodge run by an Indigenous Waorani community. We became friends and they asked if I could help them with book ideas they had. I said I'd love to, and I planned to return in a year or so to focus on their book projects.

I was heartbroken when I found out that an oil company had invaded their community and planted dynamite around their sacred forest. Their home became a danger zone and they were forced to move away. Sadly, since they were displaced and focused on survival, we couldn't continue with their book ideas.

I started reading about other communities in the Amazon who had faced similar problems. I learned about the victories of the Kichwa community of

Sarayaku, and how they inspired other Indigenous peoples. I felt especially connected to the speeches, articles, and interviews with Paty. I loved how she emphasized both the spiritual and ecological aspects of protecting the sacred forest, and how the health of the Amazon rain forest affects the health of our entire planet.

I gathered my courage and reached out to her about authoring a picture book together . . . and I was over the moon when she said yes!



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Activity Kit

Interview with Laura Resau
(continued)

Tell us about the process of creating this book.

Since our collaboration happened during the pandemic, we communicated by videochat, email, and other internet platforms. Before reaching out to Paty, I had already done some research by watching videos and reading everything I could find online about Paty's and her community's work. Paty told me her life story, starting from childhood, and then we followed up with more details.

We structured and shaped the story in a way that children of any culture could relate to, with universal themes of overcoming fears and working together to solve problems. For a year or so, we did several revisions based on our agent's and editor's feedback.

Paty recommended her Ecuadorian artist friend Vanessa Jaramillo to be the illustrator. Over the next year or two, Vanessa did beautiful watercolor paintings to complement the story. She has spent time in the Amazon since her husband is part of the Shuar Indigenous group and they have done educational work in communities there. She was committed to making the art authentic and accurate.

Next the art director worked on the design of the book, integrating the words with the illustrations. Then the book went through more steps, like copyediting and proofreading, to fine-tune and polish it. The entire process, from start to finish, took four years!



Patricia Gualinga, photo credit: Zoë Tryon

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Interview with Laura Resau (continued)

What writing advice do you have for young people?

First, read a lot! When you're reading something you love, think about what exactly you love about it. What techniques did the author use to make it awesome? See if you can use these techniques in your writing.

Write a lot! Maybe you love writing in your journal, or writing short stories, or song lyrics, or poetry. Whatever kind of writing makes you feel excited and in the flow, keep writing it. In your early drafts, write for fun, not for perfection. Don't worry whether it's good or not, especially at the early stages. Just keep writing!

When you feel ready to share your writing, find some people you trust and ask them to tell you some specific things they love about it. Ask if they have any questions or constructive feedback. It's great if you can connect with another young writer to exchange feedback on each other's work, or maybe even form a writing group! In my writing group, we always keep things very positive and offer each other heaps of encouragement on our writing journeys.

What do you do for fun?



I love being in nature! I take walks every day along the Poudre River near my home in Colorado. The forest there is full of my tree friends, and we really enjoy each other's company. My husband, teen son, and our beagle and Siberian husky puppy have fun in the Rocky Mountains, where we are caretakers of land we call "Beagle Holler." It's mostly surrounded by national forest, so we can walk for miles, meeting moose, marmots, chipmunks, deer, and elk. We spend cozy, starry, firelit nights in the tiny cabin we built. There's no electricity, plumbing, internet, or cell service, which means we can bond with nature without distractions. Being there always fills my soul!

STAND as TALL as the TREES

Activity Kit

Related Reading & Other Resources

More Activities

English and Spanish resources:

<https://www.lauraresau.com/standastallasthetrees>

Rainforest-related arts and crafts:

<https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/rainforest-activities>

Children of the Jaguar, a short film created by Patricia Gualinga's brother Eriberto Gualinga:
<https://youtu.be/Ma1QSmtuiLQ>

The Amazon and Other Rainforests

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Lapid, Yossi, and Joanna Pasek. *Yara's Tawari Tree*. Yossi Lapid, 2019.

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Indigenous Activism

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Robertson, Joanne. *The Water Walker*. Second Story Press, 2017.

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