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Perched high on a swaying branch, in a massive mulberry tree, a boy was just about to jump down when a friendly voice rippled up through the tree's leaves.

"Excuse me. Have you asked yourself, 'What if?'"

"What? Who?" the boy looked around, confused.





“Since you’re standing on my head, I think I should point out that jumping from that height might not be a great idea,” said the tree.

Peering down to the grass below, the boy said, “Now that I think about it, I am pretty high up.”



Hearing the unfamiliar voice, the boy's sister jumped up and looked around, but she saw only her brother.

"Who were you talking to?" she asked.

"I think... I was talking to the tree," the boy said.

"Really." The girl asked, with her eyebrows raised high on her forehead. "What'd it say?"

"She said I should ask myself, 'What if?'" he shrugged.

"So it not only talks, the tree is giving you advice?" the girl sassed.



"Oh sure. I've given advice to lots of children," chuckled the tree.

"Acorn sandwiches!" cried the girl. "She's really talking!"

"Oh now, I don't drop acorns. But I do hand out these helpful 'What if' seeds.

"You see, your brother isn't the first to notice my branches are great for climbing. But when those lovely children leaped without thinking first, broken arms and twisted ankles spoiled all their fun.

"I felt sick inside watching them hurt themselves. So now I hand out these special 'What if' seeds.

"You just tuck that in your pocket for later," winked the tree.



"A 'What if' seed?" the boy asked. "Do I plant it, or eat it?"

"You feel it," the tree answered. "Before you say or do something, feel that seed and remember to ask yourself, **'what if I Do this, what COULD happen?'**

"It'll save you from all sorts of trouble," the tree explained.

"What kind of trouble?" wondered the boy.

"Like when you were in the tree," the girl said. "She told you to ask 'What if' right before you jumped, so you climbed down a little. Your arms and ankles aren't broken, right?"

"Now you get it!" encouraged the tree. "It works in lots of other situations too."

"Really? Like what?" asked the boy.

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What would you Do?

What would you do? In each of these situations, ask yourself "What if" to see how you can keep having fun, without the trouble.

Your ball rolls into the street. You want to run out and grab it before it rolls down the street.

Your classmate makes a mistake writing on the whiteboard, and you think of something really funny to say about it.

You are supposed to finish your homework before you go out and play. You only have a few math problems left to do, but your friend is ready to play now.

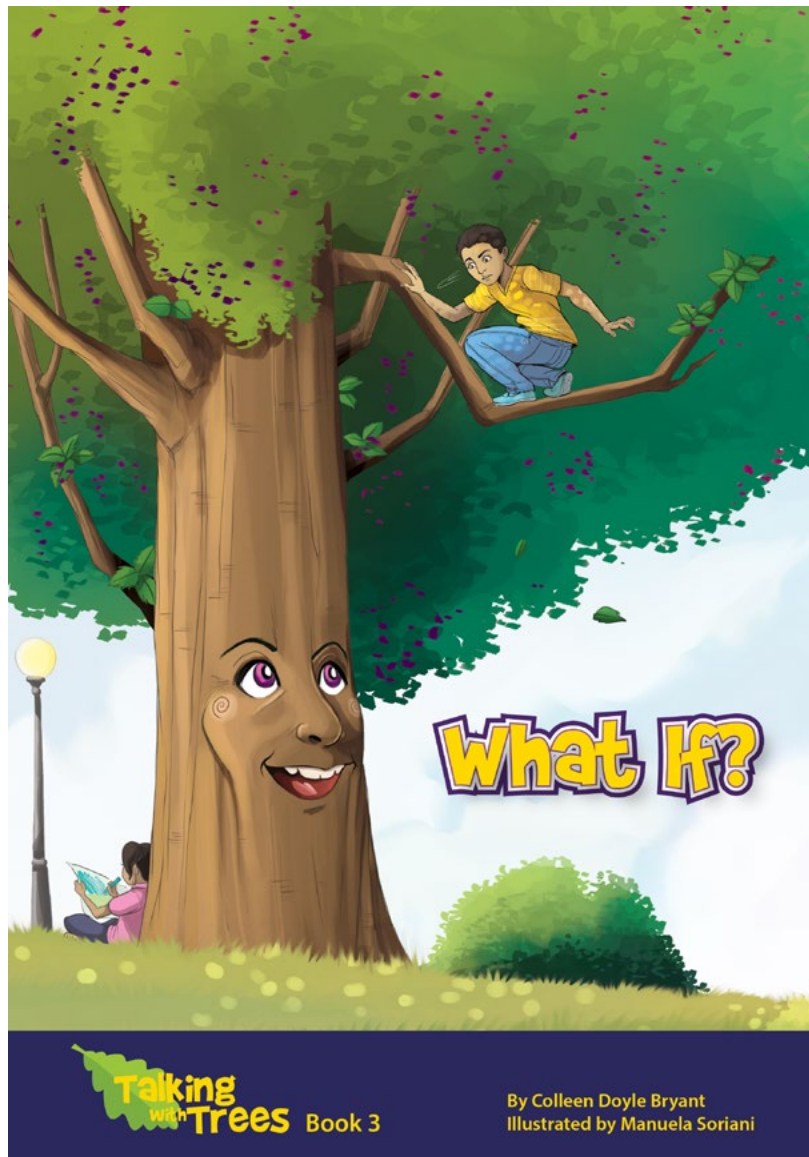
You are waiting in line at the grocery store with your parents and it's so boring. You look at your brother and think it would be fun to poke him in the stomach.

Make your own "What If" Seed

A "What if" Seed can help you remember to think about what could happen if you do or say something. Cut out the seed and place it in your pocket, hang it up, slip it in your backpack... or put it wherever it can help you remember to ask "What if?".

Ask for permission before cutting this book, or ask to go to TalkingTreeBooks.com for free "What if" seed printables and lots of other great activities.





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