



Josie & Doug: The Magic of Native Plants!

Reading Guide



Take your time and start with the Glossary. Go over the words with the children.



Point out that there are no insects, bees, or birds anywhere along the bike trail.

First, Doug showed Josie the Little Miami River's grace,
But something was not right at this beautiful place.
Invasive plants like honeysuckle have had their way
It's a nonnative plant, from far away.



Point out the nonnative invasive honeysuckle bushes and nonnative invasive Callery Pear Trees. Again, let them see there is no life along the river in this scene.

They walked through town, with shops so neat,
But Doug saw the problem on every street.
People's gardens and landscapes were overrun
Full of invasives and nonnatives.
A lot of damage was done.



Again, point out that even though the landscaping looks nice, there are no bees, butterflies, or birds--no life because there is no food for native insects, like suitable pollen for native pollinators or leaves for native caterpillars.

They were harmful because our insect friends could not eat
These nonnative plants growing all along our streets
And invasive plants would block the sun and start to take over,
Not allowing our native plants (their food), to grow and get older.



As Josie takes a closer look at this nonnative invasive plant, there are some insects and bees, but they are not happy- they are sad, because this plant doesn't give them all the nutrients they need AND other native insects are not present because the nonnative plant does not offer food they can consume.

Without the native plants for our caterpillars to eat,
Mother nature could collapse, right at our feet.
Doug told Josie of his group and its mission
Love Our Land helps people fix nature's condition.



Explain Love Our Land is the organization Doug created to tell people how they can change their yards so that life will come back to their community.

Doug said, "Josie, can you see what we must do
To bring life back, to start something new?"
He said "We need to plant **native plants**, and remove the **invasive**."
Doug was so serious, he was very persuasive.



Mention that Josie is able to imagine what things will look like if they get rid of the nonnative invasive plants and plant native plants. Point out the life- butterflies.

Josie wanted to see Loveland, full of life and bright,
Once native plants bloom, it will be a beautiful sight.
Doug and Josie planted **natives** everywhere they were needed
In their own yards and in parks, they were planted and seeded.



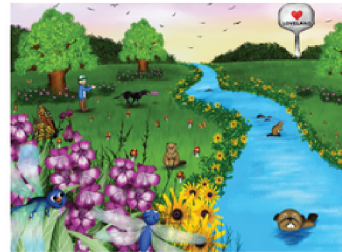
Notice the different flower packets- they will plant different types of native plants to bring back a great variety of organisms (a.k.a. biodiversity).

At Grainville, they removed the plants that caused the trouble
The nonnative and invasive were cut and thrown in the rubble.
Soon, the meadows at The Grail were buzzing and alive,
Full of hawks, bees, fox and insects, and others that thrive.



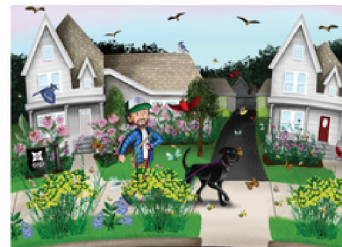
Point out that people of all ages can help this important change. That when people work together great things can be accomplished.

The riverbank with dragonflies, butterflies, and beaver once more,
As native plants and mushrooms grow by the shore,
The honeysuckle were gone and left some room
For plenty of native flowers to bloom.



You could go back to the previous page showing the river and allow the children to point out the differences. Now that the nonnative invasives are removed new flowers, mushrooms, and other life has returned!

Above the streets of Loveland, birds flew in the sky
The pretty new landscapes were noticed by the cars passing by
The town was now healthy, it's people had smiles
Thanks to Josie and Doug - the plants stretched for miles.



You could go back to the previous page showing the street scene and allow the kids to point out the differences. Now that the nonnative invasives are removed and new native plants are present, insects and birds have returned!

The bike trail with native plants filling the space,
A home for many creatures — they each have their own place.
Large flowered trillium and wild potato vines now grow,
Bringing life back to the forest that the bikers rode through.



Again, you could compare with the first page of the book showing the trail. Now they can see all the new life- allow them to point things out. Note- The white flowers are called Large Flowered Trillium and they used to grow everywhere! They are Ohio's state native flower, and we hope to see them everywhere again!

At the Loveland Castle the birds sang sweetly,
The bees hummed with glee.
The caterpillars danced on leaves of a tree.
Josie and Doug loved what they saw
They looked at the life all around, hand in paw.



Just point out the life all around. Ask 'wouldn't it be great to see all of this wherever we went? Right in our own neighborhoods!'

Josie and Doug's dream had come true,
With native plants, life had started to renew.
It took everyone's effort, both near and wide,
To restore all different types of life, side by side.



Josie and Doug love to just sit and watch the birds and other life.

Now, Loveland is thriving, a town so grand,
With native plants covering the land.
Josie wagged her tail, so proud and free,
For she helped bring back life for all to see.



Josie and Doug- with the help of their friends- were able to bring life back to their town. Do you think you and your friends can do that in your neighborhood and town?

So, remember the tale of Josie and Doug's quest,
To bring back life, to give mother nature her best.
Plant natives, remove invasives, and you'll see,
Your town filled with life, as it should be!



What 2 things do you need to do to bring back life to your yard?



For more information, check out www.LoveOurLand.org