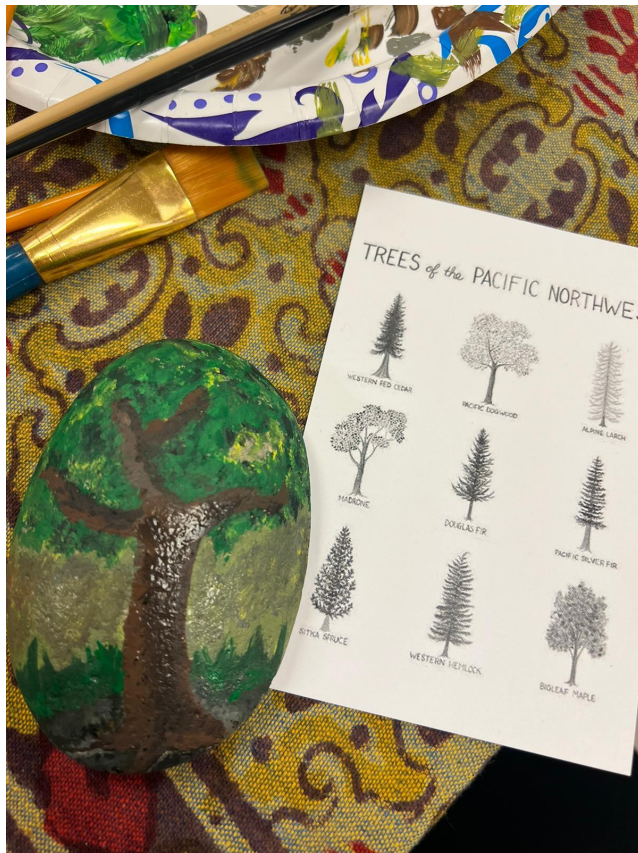


Connection Through a Multi-Lingual Tree Walk

By Betsy Ubiergo



“Today we'll be painting rocks. Here are images showing various trees on our campus. Please choose one variety of tree to paint and also include its name in either Latin, Spanish, English or one of the Native American languages printed on this list.”

“What?” asked a student. “There are different names for trees? I thought they were all just called trees.”

Wowza. This student’s question/comment made me realize what an important assignment this was.



Various World Languages colleagues and I from Clark College created this multi-lingual tree walk assignment in conjunction with the Department of Urban Forestry in Vancouver, Washington.



Spanish, American Sign Language (ASL), and Japanese language students learned about trees in various languages. Then we walked the campus with the Urban Forester and World Language professors while placing painted rocks under the

corresponding trees. We discussed facts about these trees and the variety of names for each tree. Hearing the tree names spoken aloud in different languages through student voices created a magical Saturday morning event for all.



I especially loved seeing my ASL colleague sign tree names with fluid hands while my Japanese colleague explained the generous gift of 100 Sakura trees to our campus from a Japanese businessman 35 years ago.



Treekeepers gave me the courage, knowledge and vision to create this tree walk. I owe them thanks for leading so many eye-opening tree walks throughout the years.

Now I see how trees have the power to connect all types of people in a celebratory, multilingual, educational, and memorable way.



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