

## HANDS ON!



### Plant a Tree

Planting a tree is a wonderful way to honor a new member of your family!

**Wait until the best time for planting.** Don't feel you have to plant the tree in winter just because your baby has a winter birthday, for example.

**Look for trees that work well in your growing zone.** Your favorite tree may not be the best fit for your climate.

**No yard? Consider a container sapling.** Some trees can grow for quite a while when they have a large container, and eventually you can transplant it into a permanent location.

**Sponsor a planting elsewhere.** Many families arrange to have a tree planted in someone's name in Israel, for example.

However you do it, the more trees there are in the world, the better off we all are.



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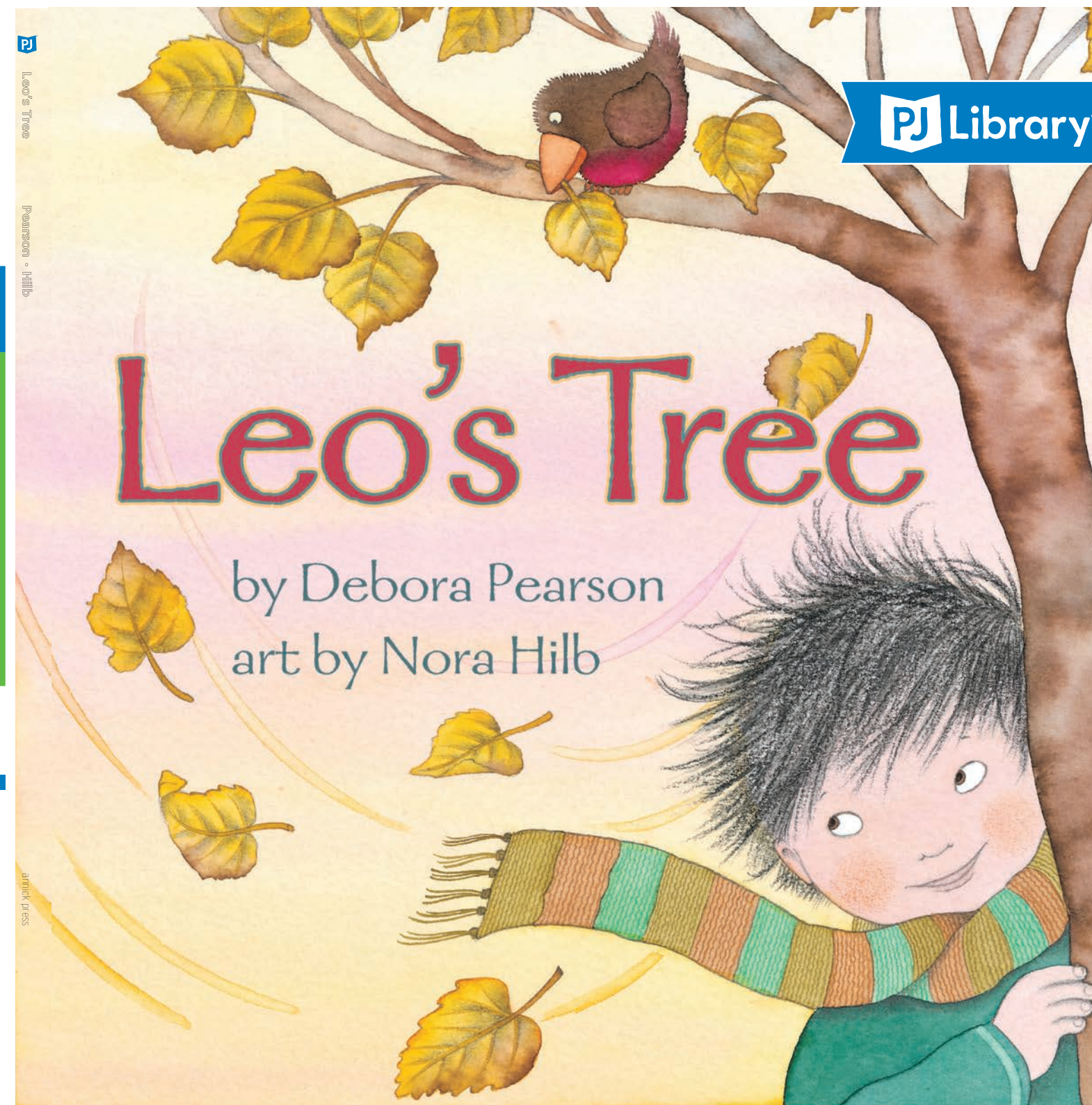
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## Leo's Tree

### { How do we grow? }

#### Green Day

Leo's family clearly has deep respect for trees. They're not alone. There's an entire Jewish holiday that celebrates trees: Tu B'Shevat, also known as the birthday of the trees. According to Jewish law, we are not supposed to pick fruit from trees when they're too young, so Tu B'Shevat helped farmers in ancient Israel keep track of how old their trees were. Today the holiday has become an opportunity to celebrate the planet — and a reminder to take care of it. Planting a tree is one of the surest ways to do both. To learn more, visit [pjlibrary.org/leostree](http://pjlibrary.org/leostree).

#### A Deep-Rooted Tradition

It's a common tradition in many cultures to plant a tree to mark the birth of a baby. In Judaism, that tradition has deep roots, as it were. The Talmud (the core collection of rabbinic writings) describes the custom of planting a tree when a child is born — and then, years later, using the branches

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from the same tree to make a *chuppah* (wedding canopy) for that child’s wedding! Just as Leo and Sophie will grow tall and blossom, their trees will, too, right alongside them, all through their days.

### Branching Out

Trees are not so different from us, really. Metaphorically speaking, our roots (generations) ground us and our branches (aspirations) reach high. This story makes the connection more literal: when Leo sprouts hair, his tree sprouts buds; when Leo stands and sways, so does his tree; when Leo’s cheeks turn color, so do the leaves on his tree. Is it any wonder that trees and human beings actually share a significant amount of the same DNA? As living, breathing, growing beings who share the same planet, our fates are interlinked.

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