

## THE POPLAR TREE

But as years went by every small poplar was taught to grow as fearless, straight and open hearted as himself, and the whole poplar family became respected and loved for its uprightness and strength.

Since then the branches have always grown straight up; and every one knows that the poplar is an honest and upright tree.



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1. According to the story, Poplar trees used to (stretch out their branches wide/hold their branches up to the sky)
  2. The man had taken the pot of gold from
    - a. the giant
    - b. the foot of the rainbow
    - c. the wicked man
  3. The man hid the gold in the branches of the Poplar tree when it was \_\_\_\_\_.
  4. (True/False) The Poplar tree did not know the gold was hidden in its branches.
  5. (True/False) At first, the other trees made fun of the Poplar for holding its branches up.
  6. Does the Poplar family now enjoy a reputation for uprightness and strength?
    - a. yes
    - b. no
  7. Why did the Poplar decide to always hold its branches up? \_\_\_\_\_
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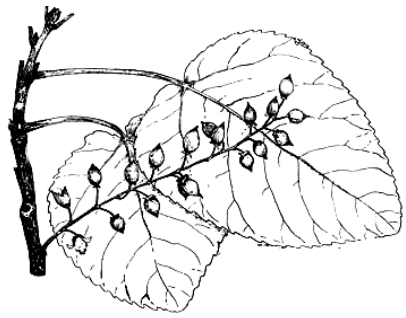
Long ago the poplar used to hold out its branches like other trees. It tried to see how far it could spread them.

Once at sunset an old man came through the forest where the poplar trees lived. The trees were going to sleep, and it was growing dark.

The man held something under his cloak. It was a pot of gold—the very pot of gold that lies at the foot of the rainbow. He had stolen it and was looking for some place to hide it. A poplar tree stood by the path.



"This is the very place to hide my treasure," the man said. "The branches spread out straight, and the leaves are large and thick. How lucky that the trees are all asleep!"



He placed the pot of gold in the thick branches, and then ran quickly away.

The gold belonged to Iris, the beautiful maiden who had a rainbow bridge to the earth. The next morning she missed her precious pot. It always lay at the foot of the rainbow, but it was not there now.

Iris hurried away to tell her father, the great Zeus, of her loss. He said that he would find the pot of gold for her.

He called a messenger, the swift-footed Mercury, and said, "Go quickly, and do not return until you have found the treasure."

Mercury went as fast as the wind down to the earth. He soon came to the forest and awakened the trees.

"Iris has lost her precious pot of gold that lies at the foot of the rainbow. Have any of you seen it?" he asked.

The trees were very sleepy, but all shook their heads.

"We have not seen it," they said.

"Hold up your branches," said Mercury. "I must see that the pot of gold is not hidden among them."

All of the trees held up their branches. The poplar that stood by the path was the first to hold up his. He was an honest tree and knew he had nothing to hide.

Down fell the pot of gold. How surprised the poplar tree was! He dropped his branches in shame. Then he held them high in the air.

"Forgive me," he said. "I do not know how it came to be there; but, hereafter, I shall always hold my branches up. Then every one can see that I have nothing hidden."

At first the poplar tree was much laughed at. He was often told that with his branches held up he looked like a great umbrella which a storm had turned inside out.

