

TREES

Beth Gulley

Johnson County Community College

Back in sixth grade I learned
Trees are the Kindest Thing I Know
for Friday afternoon recitation
at Aunt Hazel's tiny Christian school
where twenty students sat in what
should have been a living room.

Little did I know what I was saying.
It just rolled like a chocolate drop
on my tongue.

Now after all the climate science
and well-being research,
I learn trees can capture carbon,
prevent erosion, cool the planet,
lower our heart rates,
reduce stress hormone production,
and improve creativity
all without lifting a finger.

I realize trees really are
the kindest things I know.

Author Biography

Beth Gulley is a Kansas City based poet who teaches writing at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas. She has a M.A. from the University of Missouri at Kansas City and a Ph.D. from the University of Kansas. She is a regular contributor to the Facebook Group 365 Poems in 365 Days. She has recently published in 105 Meadowlark Reader, Kansas Letters to a Young Poet, and The Thorny Locust. She likes to travel, trail run, and hang out with her cat, Milla. Beth Gulley (she/her) can be reached at bgulley@jccc.edu. She occasionally blogs at <https://timeeasesallthings.wordpress.com/> and <https://introteacher.wordpress.com/>.