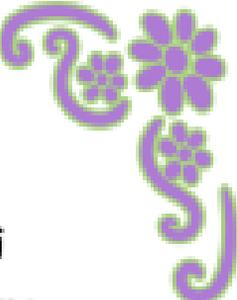
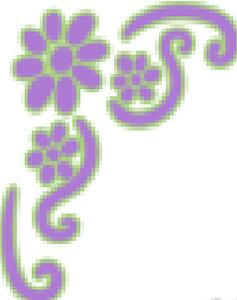


# KENJI PLANTS A TREE

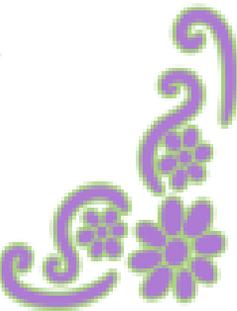


BY KAI NAKASHIMA

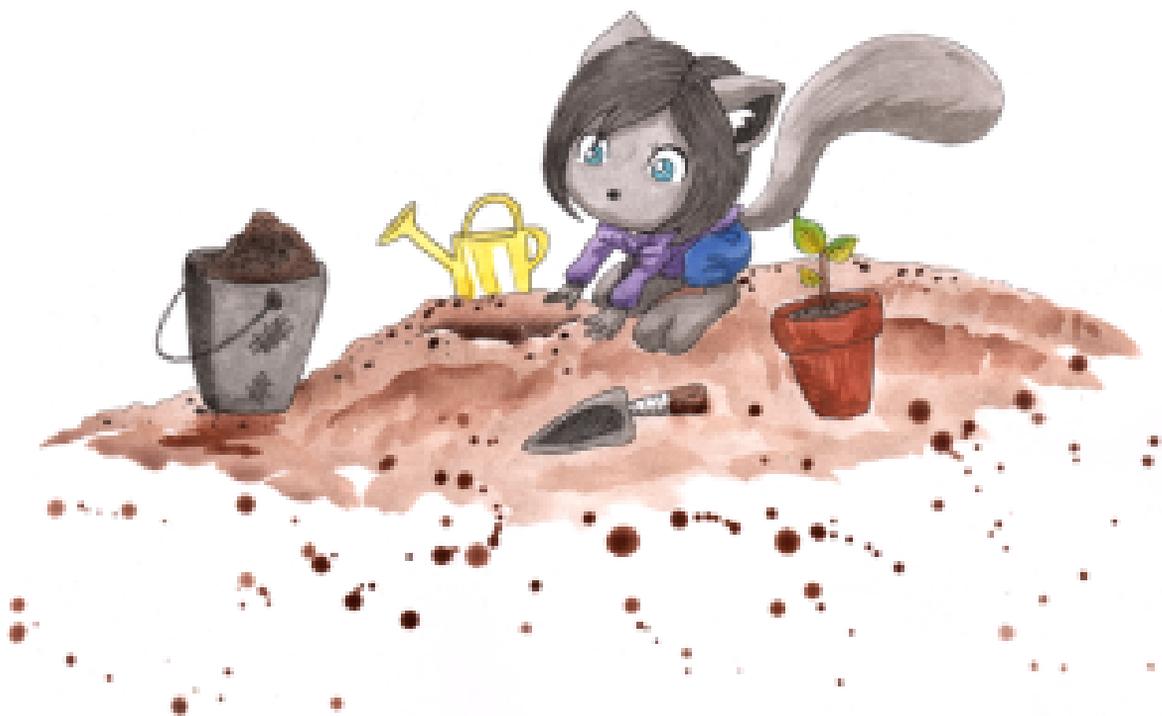


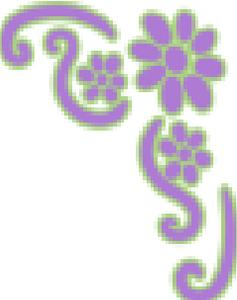


One morning on his way to school, Kenji saw an empty field with nothing in it. There were no plants, no trees, and no birds or animals. It made him sad.



Trees are an essential part of a healthy ecosystem. They provide food, shelter, water, and materials for many animals, insects, and fungi.





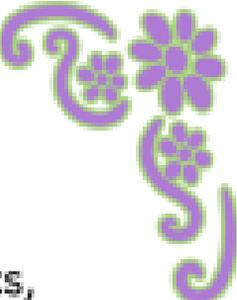
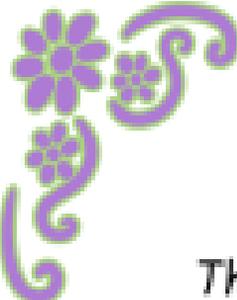
Kenji decided to do something about it.  
He would plant a tree!

The next day he came back with a  
sapling, some soil, a trowel, a watering  
can, and some determination!

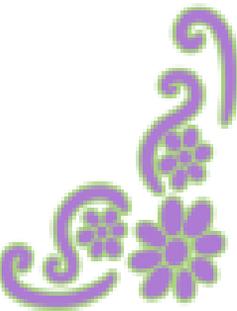
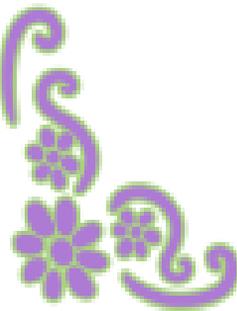


Trees promote health by taking carbon dioxide out of  
the air. They hold moisture in the ground, and give nutrients  
back to the soil. They provide environments for creatures  
that live underground, above ground, and even in  
the trees bark.



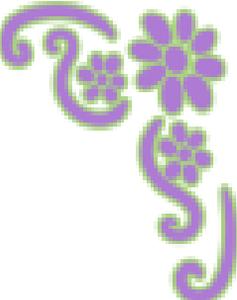


Kenji came back to water it everyday.  
The tree drank up water through it's roots,  
took in nutrients from the soil and the Sun.  
Slowly, but steadily, it grew. Leaves, and then  
buds, and then...



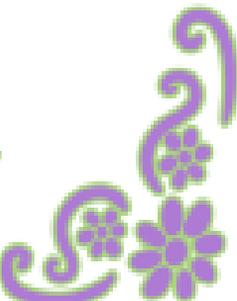
Trees need water, sun, fertile soil, and a lot  
of biodiversity to thrive. A tree's needs will vary  
depending on it's natural habitat.



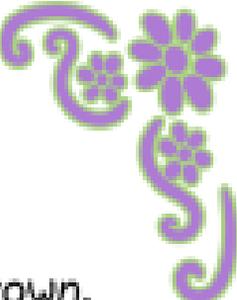


# Flowers!

Trees grow flowers to attract animals and insects that help to spread pollen. Pollinators are attracted to the colors and the smells of blossoms, just like we are!







All of the pollinators found what Kenji had grown. Hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, moths, and many other insects came flocking to drink the delicious nectar. They were very happy to find some food.



When animals drink nectar, they are also spreading pollen, which fertilizes the tree's flowers, causing it to bear fruit.



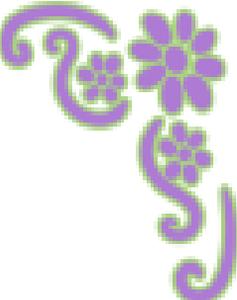
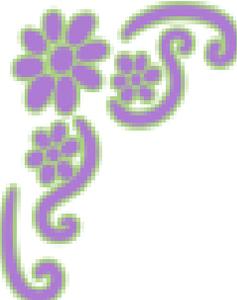


Thanks to the pollinators, the tree grew bunches and bunches of berries! The wild life came back to enjoy the sweet fruits. Kenji picked the berries too, and shared them with his friends.

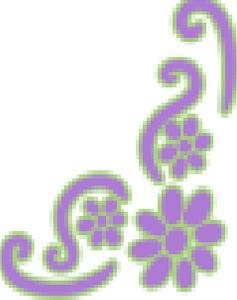
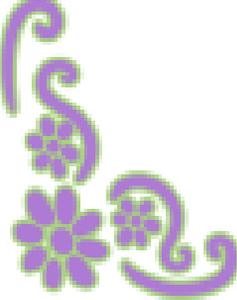


When food is present, wildlife is usually near, doing their own part in keeping the ecosystem healthy.

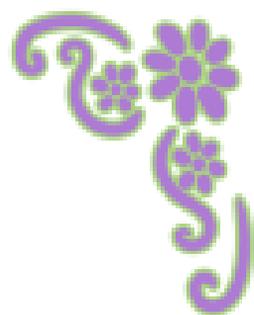
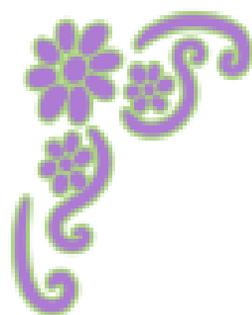




Kenji was so pleased with what he had done,  
he wondered what would happen if he planted  
more trees...

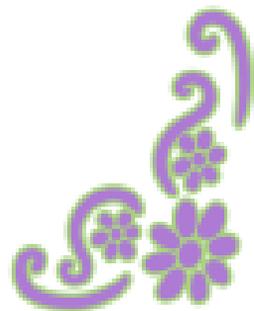
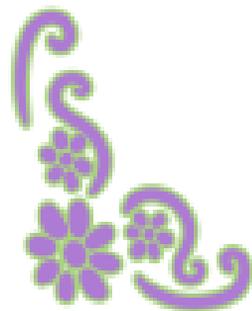


~THE END~



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by Kai Nakashima**

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