

# Cut and Restored Palm Tree



**Magic Effect:** A paper palm tree placed inside an envelope and visibly cut in half miraculously stays intact.

**Character Message:** Believe in the magic of kindness and show kindness often. Putting down others by saying negative things about them is hurtful.

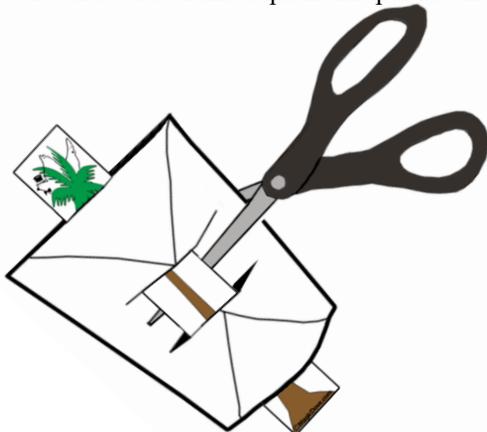
**Environmental Magic Message:** This can also be used to illustrate the importance of unnecessarily cutting down trees. As you show the palm tree unharmed and uncut say, “Be a responsible citizen of Earth. Don’t cut down trees unnecessarily, and if you do, plant another tree.”

**Materials Needed:** Laminated paper palm tree, scissors, and an envelope.

**Secret Method/Setup:** Cut two vertical slits in the back of the envelope that will allow the paper palm tree to slide through (see illustration). You are now ready to begin. When displaying the envelope, be sure to keep the slits concealed—never show the back of the envelope.

## Presentation:

The ends of the envelope are cut off to allow the paper palm tree to slide through the envelope. After you cut the ends off the envelope, you will stick the paper palm tree through one end and then weave the palm tree in and out of the two slits in the back of the envelope and then out the opposite end. The volunteer can now observe the tree top and the roots of the paper palm tree sticking out each end of the envelope. When cutting the envelope, stick the blades of the scissors on top of the paper palm tree and cut only the envelope (in between the two slits where the paper palm tree exits out of the envelope). After the magician cuts through the center of the envelope, the paper palm tree is shown to be completely restored without even a scratch. As you are cutting the envelope relate the cutting action as a put down/cut down and explain that put downs are hurtful.



After you cut the envelope, pull the palm tree out to show it is completely intact. Recite the character message. Emphasize the importance of lifting people up and not putting them down. It isn’t necessary to “cut someone down to size,” when you can lend a helping hand of kindness to positively impact change. Show the palm tree whole and relate the unharmed palm tree as an act of kindness.

## Discussion:

**“The level of our success is limited only by our imagination and no act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.” - Aesop**

Show kindness every day. When you show kindness it makes others feel good and it also makes you feel good as well. Acts of kindness are helpful and insults and put downs are harmful. It is important to understand that even small acts of kindness can make a big difference. A small smile of kindness can make a huge impact.

## What are idioms?

Idioms are words grouped together having meaning different from their individual meaning.

Examples of common idioms you may already know.

“Keep me in the loop.” -- Keep me informed or included.

“It’s raining cats and dogs.” – It’s raining a lot.

## Cutting someone down to size.

For this lesson we are going to address the idiom of “cutting someone down to size.” It is sometimes shortened to “cut downs.” When you “cut someone down to size,” you are putting this person down by saying something negative that belittles or discredits the person. This is usually done in front of other people with the goal of making someone feel less confident or less proud. Cut downs focus on making someone look small or putting someone in their place.

## Examples of “cutting someone down to size:”

The new kid on the football team thought he was better than us, but we “cut him down to size.”

The student in class thought he knew everything, but my friends and I “cut him down to size.”

While it is true that someone who is arrogant or rude needs to be encouraged to positively change his/her mindset, it is not necessary to be negative and hurtful.

Follow the old saying, “You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.” If you spill honey, it will attract more flies than if you spill vinegar. Similarly, you will attract more favorable attention and have a better chance of getting what you want with kindness (honey), than with unkindness (bitter vinegar).

## There are some things that you can “cut down” and “cut away.”

If you are eating too much sugar, cut down the amount of sugar.

If you have negative self-doubting thoughts, cut away the negative thoughts.

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