



Activity 3 Different trees and different leaves

Exploring the diversity of tree species through form, bark and leaves which vary in shape, colour and texture. This increases biodiversity awareness and encourages observation and quiet reflection.

Curriculum area(s)	Resources needed	Preparatory activity
<p>Expressive arts Art & design.</p> <p>Literacy and English Listening and talking.</p> <p>Science Planet Earth: biodiversity and interdependence.</p> <p>Technologies Craft, design, engineering and graphics.</p> <p>Mathematics Information handling.</p>	<p>Outdoor setting with trees</p> <p>Materials Sitting mats; water soluble felt pens; digital camera; plain soft fabric/calico; range of materials for natural dyes; string.</p>	<p>Hand drawing Provide time for quiet reflection for pupils to 'tune in' to the trees around them. Each pupil draws in 3 or 4 of the lines on their palm with a pen (or the teacher can draw these on), then searches the trees in the location to find this pattern. It might be on a large scale in the pattern of branches of a tree, or just in a few twigs. Ask them to sit down and spend some quiet moments looking at the variety of life around their tree. Encourage them to close their eyes and listen to the sounds around them. Reassemble the group after a specified time e.g. 5 minutes. Everyone can show their hands to make a forest!</p>

Main activity description

Collect leaves

Pupil pairs collect as many different shapes of leaves as possible. Ask them to take one leaf and with their back to the sun, hold the leaf up to the light and examine its structure. Look at the veins, tissues, different top and bottom surfaces, colour, shape, leaf margins etc. Now ask all the pairs to stand in a circle. Each pair must clear a space on the ground in front of them. They then take one leaf from their collection, describe it and then put it in the cleared space in front of them. If any of the remaining pairs have the same leaf they can place it in the cleared space to join the first leaf. Moving on

to subsequent pairs they choose a different leaf, describe it and put it in a new space and the group repeats the previous process. Count the number of different leaves you have found. Can pupils name the trees they come from?

Bark rubbings

Take bark rubbings from different species of trees. Try using plain, soft fabrics such as calico and natural plant and vegetable dyes, such as beetroot, flower petals, sweet peppers, grass, soil etc. Try taking rubbings of young and mature trees from the same species. Do they differ? Observe how parts of a tree and its bark may support a variety

of life – look at the roots, trunk, or branches. Each pupil can describe their bark rubbings to the rest of the class and hang them in twig picture frames outside to make a temporary outdoor gallery. Use these activities to extend the discussion on the variety of life.

See Nature Detectives downloadable resources which include leaf and twig identification sheets. Search the 'Index' under 'Downloads' www.naturedetectives.org.uk

Celebrating nature. Search under 'Gordon's books' in www.creepingtoad.org.uk

Extension activities

Collect materials that remind you of your tree and your special place to make a sticky picture on card. Ask pupils to write what they like about their tree, draw a picture, write a poem...Do some of the leaves look like hair, some like eyes? Make the shape of a face from a collection of different leaves.

Use the bark rubbings to identify trees. Make a woodland 'quilt' from a collection of bark rubbings.

Use a camera to record your creations.

Sources & further inspiration

Gordon MacLellan 2007 *Celebrating nature* www.capellbann.co.uk

FEI Learning Resources from www.foresteducation.org

