Forests are More than Trees
Activity Packet

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Grade Levels: K-2

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  • Observation Skills Building: The Parts of a Tree https://youtu.be/DavIMYcmgto
  • Story-time: The Busy Tree by Jennifer Ward https://youtu.be/Nw_LDdwpjsA
• Download our illustrated trail map of the Rapids Lake Forest Loop Trail for a guided exploration of the forest at the Rapids Lake Education and Visitor Center in Carver, MN 15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver, MN 55315
Make your own Leaf Rubbings

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**Gather these materials:**
- Leaves - fallen leaves work well
- Paper - paper bound for the recycle bin works well
- Crayons with paper removed (pencils can work too)
- Hard surface such as a clip board or piece of cardboard

**Making your leaf rubbings:**
1. Find a leaf
2. Put your leaf on a hard surface, under a piece of paper
3. Color over where the leaf lies and watch as its bumps and ridges appear
4. Take a new piece of paper (or add to the one you’re using) and repeat with a different leaf
5. Gather leaves from different trees to see how your rubbings compare
6. To create other textures, try the same technique with twigs or bark.
Gather these materials:

- Fallen twigs, leaves, seeds
- Paper or cardboard to mount your creation (recycled items work well)
- Glue or clear tape
- Crayons/colored pencils/markers

Making your tree:

1. Use twigs to make a tree shape on your paper
2. Add leaves, buds, flowers, seeds or fruit to your tree out of twigs or other natural materials
3. Glue or tape twigs to your paper and allow time for drying.
4. Color a forest scene around your new tree! You can add leaves and other details now too.
5. Coloring the scene before gluing, or not gluing at all and just creating a temporary scene are options too.
Gather these materials:

- Nature Journal or blank paper
- A tree - out your window, in your yard, on the street, at a local park
- Pencil/crayons/colored pencils/markers

Adopting your tree:

1. Choose your tree
2. Get to know your tree by observing it quietly for 10 minutes—use your senses and naturalist skills!
3. Name your tree—think about something that makes it stand out (e.g. bumpy bark, two trunks)
4. If you/your student want to identify your tree. Try this online guide: [https://www.arborday.org/trees/whattree/whatTree.cfm?ItemID=E6A](https://www.arborday.org/trees/whattree/whatTree.cfm?ItemID=E6A)
5. Sketch your tree in your nature journal in these different ways:
   - From your point of view
   - From the point of view of a bald eagle flying above
   - From the point of view of an ant crawling below
   - How you think it would look in winter, summer, spring, and fall
6. Get to know the parts of your tree by drawing and observing each part, below are some questions to guide those observations
   - Roots—sit on these!
     - Can you see any of your tree’s roots? How many?
   - Trunk—hug your tree!
     - Can you reach all the way around your tree?
     - How many trunks does it have?
     - Are there any holes in the trunk?
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My Tree’s Knick name: Bumpy Bur Oak
Type of tree: Bur oak
Location: City park

The snow is gone. There are no leaves yet.

I found acorns on the ground
The leaves are very rounded and not pointy
I saw a woodpecker on my tree
Squirrels eat the acorns at my tree

Bark- create a bark rubbing in your journal!
  • What color is it?
  • How does it feel?
  • How does it smell?
  • What does it remind you of?
Branches- count how many big branches you see!
  • Do you see any animals in the branches?
  • Are there any nests?
  • Can you reach the first branch?
Leaves- create a leaf rubbing in your journal!
  • What color is it?
  • What shape is it?
  • How many lobes or fingers does it have?
  • Are its edges smooth?
Forest Scavenger Hunt

Date: ________________________

Check the box when you find an item below

- Tree with smooth bark
- Tree with rough bark
- Tree bud
- Nest
- Squirrel
- Flower
- Ant
- Insect under a log
- Hole in a tree
- Tree stump
- Acorn
- Leaf with lobes
- Bird
- Tree with two trunks
- Tree bigger than your arms can reach around
- Tree with needles

Some images provided by Vecteezy.com

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Sing Along: Parts of a Tree

Lyrics to Parts of a Tree Song
(Sung to the tune of Wheels on the Bus)
Video available online: https://youtu.be/cSiKe5-hyAk

Verse 1:
The roots on the tree go slurp, slurp, slurp
The roots on the tree go slurp, slurp, slurp.
All through the forest.

Verse 2:
The trunk on the tree grows strong and straight,
The trunk on the tree grows strong and straight.
All through the forest.

Verse 3:
The bark on the trunk protects the tree,
The bark on the trunk protects the tree.

Verse 4:
The branches on the tree reach for the sky,
The branches on the tree reach for the sky.
All through the forest.

Verse 5:
The leaves on the tree make food, food, food,
The leaves on the tree make food, food, food,
All through the forest.