

Connecting Kids to Nature

Nature is a great teacher! Try this outdoor activity - it's safe, fun, and educational. Project Learning Tree® activities build children's creative and critical thinking skills while they learn what the environment needs to remain healthy and sustainable. Visit shop.plt.org for more.

We All Need Trees

Children are often surprised to learn how many different products we get from trees. Use this activity to help children learn just how much we depend on trees in our daily lives.

Take a walk with children, and bring along a daypack filled with a few tree products, for example, fruit (e.g., apple, orange, banana), a pencil and a journal or a book, sunblock, and chewing gum. Pick up a downed tree branch and ask where it came from (a tree). Eat the fruit, and ask children where it came from (a store? a tree?). Ask children to think of other items that come from trees. Discuss some unusual tree products, using the samples from your daypack. Ask critical questions, including:

- Have you used anything that comes from trees today?
- How are tree products alike and how are they different?
- What do you like most about trees?

In addition to giving us wood, paper, food, and other products, trees are invaluable assets to our communities. Take a neighborhood walk, and look for newly planted trees and shrubs. How are they protected? Find a place without trees, and compare it with a place with many. Which place do you like best? Why?

For a children's story about the gifts of trees and our responsibility to care for them, check out *The Tree Farmer* by Chuck Leavell and Nicholas Cravotta, 2005, ISBN: 1893622169.

Complete this word search puzzle to discover ten tree products. Look below for the answers.

A	U	R	A	T	I	U	G	I
T	P	E	T	O	S	B	E	L
T	O	P	A	C	H	O	N	I
E	T	A	L	O	C	O	H	C
P	E	P	U	E	H	K	D	N
P	O	S	T	C	A	R	D	E
U	E	W	E	N	I	W	I	P
T	E	E	R	S	R	O	T	H
C	I	N	N	A	M	O	N	C

Answers: apple, book, cinnamon, chair, chocolate, guitar, house, newspaper, pencil, postcard

PLT improves children's environmental awareness, critical thinking skills, and academic performance.

- Attend a workshop near you to receive PreK-12 PLT activities, ideas, and materials.
- Encourage your child's school to incorporate outdoor learning and PLT.
- Contact your Oklahoma PLT State Coordinator:
Jeri Irby, jeri.irby@ag.ok.gov or 405-249-9612

www.plt.org



Project Learning Tree® (PLT) is a program of the American Forest Foundation. In Oklahoma, PLT is sponsored by the Oklahoma Forestry Services.