

SCHOOL TOUR: **TERRIFIC TREES**

TEACHER GUIDE:

Kindergarten-2nd

Program Length: **1.5 hours**

Focus Concept: *A forest is a place with many different trees. Many animals and other plants depend on trees for food and shelter.*

OBJECTIVES: Students will recognize that

1. Trees have different parts.
2. Tree parts perform different functions.
3. Tree parts have different shapes, sizes, colors, and textures.
4. Trees provide homes and food for animals.

Common Core Learning Standards Correlated: CC.K.SL.1, 2, & 6

Next Generation Science Standards Correlated: LS1.A, LS1.C

Illinois Learning Standards Correlated: 4.A.EC, 4.B.EC, 5.A.EC, 8.A.EC, 11.A.ECa, 12.A.ECa, 12.C.EC, 13.B.ECa, 19.A.ECa

BACKGROUND

Different kinds of trees vary in appearance (size, shape, color, etc.), texture, and odor. Trees have parts – bark, leaves, roots, twigs & buds, flowers, fruits, and seeds – that have different functions and that also vary between different trees. Each tree is special. During this program, children will use music, movement, and outdoor exploration to discover trees and their parts.

WORD BANK (words that will be used with the children during the program)

Tree	Roots	Flower
Trunk	Buds	Habitat
Branches	Twigs	Shape
Leaves	Seeds	Texture
Bark	Nuts	Season

SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

The following activities are intended to provide ideas to be used before or after the field trip. Some are more appropriate for older or younger students. Feel free to adapt the activities to match your students' ability level. Some activities are seasonally dependent, but can carry your study of trees through the entire year. In your explorations, please collect only items that have fallen off the trees; please do not pick from the trees.

Adopt a Tree: Have the children, either as a class or in small groups, choose a tree (or trees) to adopt and observe through the year. Keep a journal or scrapbook about the tree. What does it look like? What does the bark feel like? What color are the leaves in fall? What animals do they see using the tree? What kinds of seeds does it have? Take pictures of the tree in different seasons. Add bark rubbings to the journal. Press some of the leaves to include. Have the children draw pictures of the tree, and dictate stories to you about the tree.

Neighborhood Tree Walk: Take a walk around the school or nearby neighborhood, looking at trees. Are the trees all the same height? How does the bark differ between trees – color, texture, etc.? Do they all lose their leaves at the same time in the fall? When do buds appear in spring? Do they see flowers on any of the trees? In general, what do they notice about the trees?

Examine Textures: During the program the students will be examining the texture of bark, nuts, leaves, etc. Bring some textured items into the class. These can include natural items such as feathers and pine cones, or items such as bubble wrap, paper, carpet or fabric squares, sandpaper, etc. Give students the opportunity to touch the items. Discuss the words that the students would use to describe them.

Collect & Press Leaves: This can be done over a period of time in the fall as different trees lose their leaves at different times. Place the leaves between layers of newsprint or paper towels and press them between the pages of an old, heavy book, or between two books, or in a leaf press if you have one. The amount of time it takes to flatten and dry depends on the leaf. Blot off any raindrops or dew before pressing leaves; it is best not to press wet leaves. The pressed leaves can then be used for other activities.

Graph Leaves: Have the children collect fallen leaves in the fall. Have them sort them by shape, size, color, etc. Press the leaves, then make a graph of how many leaves of each color or shape they have collected.

Leaf Man Pictures: Read this book by Lois Ehlert to the class. Then let the students use the pressed leaves to create their own pictures for a class book.

Decorate Binoculars: Staple, glue, or tape two toilet paper tubes together to make binoculars. Punch holes at one end of the tubes to insert yarn to make a neck strap. Let children decorate the binoculars with crayons, paint, stickers, or other items you supply. Have them use the binoculars on walks looking at trees, and to look for animals that live in trees.

Who Lives in a Tree?: Trees provide survival needs for birds, squirrels, raccoons, insects, and a variety of other animals. Some animals live in or on the tree; others use parts of the tree for food. Take children out to look at trees, looking for signs of animals that use trees to help them survive. Such signs can include actual animals in trees, chewed leaves, holes in the bark, insects under the bark, chewed nuts and seeds, etc.

A Look at Twigs & Buds: Next year's leaves are contained on the buds on twigs on the tree. The bud contains tiny leaves, and is protected from winter cold by tough, waterproof scales. These will fall off when it is time for the leaves to grow. If you can collect fallen or pruned twigs with large buds, students can use plastic knives and adult assistance to take the buds apart and see what is inside. They can also compare the twigs and buds.

Useful Books

Leaf Man by Lois Ehlert

Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf by Lois Ehlert

My Mother Talks to Trees by Doris Gove

In a Nutshell by Joseph Anthony

A Log's Life by Wendy Pfeffer

The Growing-up Tree by Vera Rosenberry

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more ideas for learning about forests and trees, attend a ***PLT's Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood Workshop***. These are offered periodically at the Nature Center. They can also be offered as part of staff development. Call 217-384-4062 for more information.