



Tree ID

If you have trees and shrubs around the garden and school grounds, this is a great activity for discovering what you've got growing and observing seasonal changes.

Activity time: 50 mins.

Preparation time: 5 mins.

Resources: Per pair of children: 1 tree profile sheet, 1 clipboard, soft pencils and/or crayons. (Class iPad to photograph trees - optional)

Instructions:

1. Split the group into pairs.
2. Walk around the garden and school grounds as a group and look at the different shrubs and trees. Each pair must choose one tree or shrub to take a closer look at. They are going to observe this tree over time and build up a profile.
3. Give each pair a few minutes to choose their tree or shrub. They are to take turns writing and their partner must help through close observation and discussion when they are not writing. It is a good idea to have a rubber to hand!
4. Each pair must discuss characteristics, shape of leaves, texture of bark etc. If it is winter, take a close look at the buds and how they are arranged on the branch. In spring and summer, it is important to look at how the leaves grow along a branch as this is going to be part of the profile.
5. Let each pair complete their profile. Any pair that finishes early can turn their sheets over and note down anything else they think might be relevant. Can they see any invertebrates, nests etc.?
6. If you have an iPad, take photos of the trees to help confirm identification later.
7. Use Tree Leaf or Tree Bud spotter sheets to identify your tree, or when you are back in class let the children use the profiles they have created to identify their tree. We recommend <https://www.treeguideuk.co.uk/> - you can search by leaf; bark etc. so is great for cross-referencing. The Woodland Trust also has many ID sheets for trees and a good Tree App.
8. Keep the sheets until the next season or outing to the garden and report any changes.

Health and Safety:

Use general guidelines for working with natural materials.

If children are collecting remind them to be aware of what they are picking up and that they are only allowed to use natural materials that are on the ground. They must not take living plants or leaves without permission.

Rules for children:

Be mindful of others.

Everyone in the team must have a job.

Listen carefully to instructions.

Wash hands after activity.

TREE PROFILE SHEET

NAMES:

DATE:

Draw your leaves on the branch. Pay close attention to how they are spaced out on the branch. Do they alternate, are they opposite each other?



Draw one leaf and describe it. What colour is it? What does it feel like?

Using a soft pencil or crayon take a small bark rubbing here:

Draw a picture of your whole tree, draw the shape - is it round or tall, fat or thin? Does it have a thick trunk or a slim one?

Write down an additional characteristics that might help you to identify your tree when you get back to class.

When you have researched your tree in class write the name here: