



Branching Out (2nd-4th Grade) and Fantastic Foliage (K-2nd Grade)

The following POST-VISIT activities are great for both the Branching Out field trip and the Fantastic Foliage trip offered at the Huntsville Botanical Garden.

Branching Out: Trees are what it's all about in this program that gets your students investigating these important resources. We'll teach your children how to classify different trees, explain the parts of a tree and how they all work together, discuss the interdependence of trees and animals, and look for the different ways that trees can be damaged.

Fantastic Foliage: Discover the beauty of fall as a guide takes you through an autumn adventure. Your students will investigate why leaves don't absorb water, discover why leaves change color, find out how boring food would be without herbs. Each student gets to make a colorful leaf rubbing to take home.

Post-Activity—Tree Journal

After studying trees and developing an understanding of the many different purposes they serve, students will get to do an in-depth study of a single tree and the roles it plays in an environment.

Objective: To apply what they have learned about trees and ecosystems and use the scientific process to observe an actual tree.

Materials:

- Small notebook or pad of paper
- Pencils
- Crayons or color pencils
- Trees (at home or at school)

Activity:

Have the students decorate their journal with leaves from the tree they are observing. Make sure they can identify the tree and have them include that information in their journal.

You can extend this as far out into the year as you would like. Follow the tree through a few seasons if possible and have students document what changes take place to the tree itself and its surroundings.

You can have the students observe their tree each day or once a week.

Using what they learned about on the trip, have them write about what animals use the tree and also what other plants are dependent on the tree. They can also explore what other effects the tree has on people and our environment.

One great option is to have students focus on one particular aspect of the tree with each journal entry and also to make notes of anything they find interesting about the tree.

The observations can include drawings, photographs, physical examples and also writings.

Post-Activity—Uses for Trees Collage

Trees and leaves are used in so many ways by people, animals and even other plants. This activity will give the students a chance to explore the many uses of trees and get a better understanding the role they play in our world.

Objective: To explore what trees and leaves are used for

Materials:

- Old magazines (nature related, or catalogs will work too)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Blank paper

Activity:

- Start by reviewing what trees are used for. This can include what things are made from trees and also how nature uses trees.
- Have the students go through old magazines and cut out examples. They will create a collage of all the ways they find.
- You can extend this further by having them write a sentence or a paragraph summarizing what they put in their collage and why.
- If you wanted you could also have them find “good” ways trees are used. (shelter for animals, shade, give us oxygen) Then have them find “bad” ways trees are used. (deforestation, excessive use of paper and wood products)

Additional Resources:

Books:

The Book of Leaves: A Leaf-by-Leaf Guide to Six Hundred of the World’s Great Trees by Allen J. Coombes
I Wonder Why Trees Have Leaves (and other questions about plants) by Andrew Charman

Websites:

Three excellent lesson plans on trees with experiments and writing involved can be used as both pre- and post-activities.

<http://www.wesselmannaturesociety.org/PDF/TreemendousTrees.pdf>

This website offers a variety of tree related activities for Kindergarten. These can be used as both pre- and post-activities as well.

http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/education_safety/education/arbormonth/teachersguide_kindergarten.pdf