



Schools Tree Day – People Trees – Early Learning

Background information:

Learning goals: Children connect to nature through sensory experiences and play-based learning. Children will begin to recognise trees as living things and will begin to consider why our environment (and humans) need trees.

Content information: Imagine a world without trees: no wood; no paper; no oxygen; no rustling of leaves; no shade on a hot day; no birds nesting in hollows and branches; no climbing to great heights on wobbly limbs; and no springtime blossoms to drag you out of the winter doldrums. Trees really do give us a lot. But how well do we really know the trees in our yard or garden? Spending time with trees and exploring them with all our senses can be one of the best ways to reconnect with nature.

See what other centres are doing by exploring a case study [here](#).

Activity: People trees

Ages - 0 to 2

What to do:

Introduction: Get students warmed up by dancing and moving to the dirtgirl 'Nature Walkabout' video (see Student Worksheet).

Take students outside to have a look at the trees and plants. Either on

the butchers paper or on the pavement using chalk, draw a simple tree that the children can see. Talk to children about the parts of the tree and see if they can relate it to their body parts: arms for branches, feet as roots, torso and legs as trunk, skin as bark, fingers as leaves.

The aim of this lesson is to help the children understand that trees are living things just like them! To help reinforce this idea use this [interactive nursery rhyme](#). Sing the song and accompany it with some “choreography” to help assist in the learning of the new words with associated body parts.

Next make “people trees” by drawing the outline of each child lying down on spread out butchers paper or outside on the ground using chalk. With their outlines, children can create people trees, colouring and decorating their trees. The legs together can be the trunk, and the feet out to the sides can act as roots. The arms can be arranged as branches and you can either leave the head off, or cover the head with leaves. Children could cut out and make leaves from paper to stick on their tree, or they could make leaf rubbings and stick them onto the tree. They could also decorate their drawing of a tree with flowers, gum-nuts or seed pods. They could also be encouraged to add some wildlife and other details to their tree, such birds, possums, squirrels and fallen leaves.

Provocations:

- I wonder where we can find trees?
- I wonder what the different parts of a tree are?
- I wonder if a tree has a head or a tummy?
- I wonder if a tree has arms or hands?
- I wonder if a tree has legs or feet?
- I wonder if a trees has eyes, a nose and a mouth?
- I wonder why trees are important?

Possible lines of development:

- Plant a seed and watch it grow (e.g. [Early Learning - Grow a](#)



Tree)

- Dig in the garden to find some roots. What else do you find when you dig in the garden?
- What colours do trees have? What other things in the garden have these colours?
- Is anything living in the trees in your yard? Can you see birds or insects (gently peel away the bark or look under fallen bark)?
- Find more games and activities at dirtgirlworld.com

Ages - 2 to 3

What to do:

Introduction: Get students warmed up by dancing and moving to the dirtgirl 'Nature Walkabout' video (see Student Worksheet).

Take your children outside to have a look at the trees and plants. Either on the butchers paper or on the pavement using chalk, draw a simple tree that the children can see. Talk to children about the parts of the tree and see if they can relate it to their body parts: arms for branches, feet as roots, torso and legs as trunk, skin as bark, fingers as leaves.

The aim of this lesson is to help the children understand that trees are living things just like them! To help reinforce this idea use this [interactive nursery rhyme](#). Sing the song and accompany it with some “choreography” to help assist in the learning of the new words with associated body parts.

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their tree, or they could make leaf rubbings and stick them onto the tree. They could also decorate their drawing of a tree with flowers, gum-nuts or seed pods. They could also be encouraged to add some wildlife and other details to their tree, such birds, possums, squirrels and fallen leaves.

Provocations:

- I wonder what features all trees have?
- I wonder if a tree has a head?
- I wonder if a tree has arms and hands?
- I wonder if a tree has a stomach?
- I wonder if a tree has legs and feet?
- I wonder if trees can see or speak?
- I wonder why we need trees?
- I wonder why it is important to look after trees?

Possible lines of development:

- Plant a seed and watch it grow (e.g. [Early Learning - Grow a Tree](#))
- Role play a a growing tree, from seed to seedling to tree.
- Dig in the garden to find some roots.
- Count the trees in your garden. Also consider counting other types of plants, such s shrubs and flowers.
- Discuss the image - [The whole tree](#).
- Find more games and activities at [dirtgirlworld.com](#)

Ages - 3 to 5

What to do:

Introduction: Get students warmed up by dancing and moving to the dirtgirl 'Nature Walkabout' video (see Student Worksheet).

Take your children outside to have a look at the trees and plants. Either on the butchers paper or on the pavement using chalk, draw a simple tree that the children can see. Talk to children about the parts of the tree and see if they can relate it to their body parts: arms for branches, feet as roots, torso and legs as trunk, skin as bark, fingers as leaves.

The aim of this lesson is to help the children understand that trees are living things just like them! To help reinforce this idea use this [interactive nursery rhyme](#). Sing the song and accompany it with some “choreography” to help assist in the learning of the new words with associated body parts.

Next make “people trees” by drawing the outline of each child lying down on spread out butchers paper or outside on the ground using chalk. With their outlines, children can create people trees, colouring and decorating their trees. The legs together can be the trunk, and the feet out to the sides can act as roots. The arms can be arranged as branches and you can either leave the head off, or cover the head with leaves. Children could cut out and make leaves from paper to stick on their tree, or they could make leaf rubbings and stick them onto the tree. They could also decorate their drawing of a tree with flowers, gum-nuts or seed pods. They could also be encouraged to add some wildlife and other details to their tree, such birds, possums, squirrels and fallen leaves.

Provocations:

- I wonder what features all trees have?
- I wonder if a tree has a head?
- I wonder if a tree has arms and hands, and legs and feet?
- I wonder if trees can see or speak?
- I wonder why we need trees?
- I wonder why it is important to look after trees?
- I wonder how we can look after trees?

Possible lines of development:



- Create a people tree out of modelling clay.
- Who needs a tree? How do plants and animals use trees?
- Role play a a growing tree, from seed to seedling to tree.
- Dig in the garden to find some roots.
- Plant a seed and watch it grow (e.g. [Early Learning - Grow a Tree](#))
- Can you relate human body parts to other plants, such as flowers, cacti, grasses or seaweed?
- Discuss the image - [The whole tree](#).
- Find more games and activities at [dirtgirlworld.com](#)

Evaluation

Complete an analysis of learning listing evidence about:

Belonging	Finding something of interest
Communication	Expressing an idea or feeling
Exploration	Engaging with challenge and persisting when difficulty arises
Well being	Being involved

Embedding into daily practice

- Encourage some colour in your garden by planting trees, shrubs and flowers that attract birds, butterflies and bees.
- Propagate seeds from suitable local endemic species, nurture them and then have the children plant them at your centre.
- Provide hollows, rocks, logs and leaf litter, which are used by many animals - large and small - for shelter and nesting.

Take part in Planet Ark's Tree Day

Following these activities is a great way for your children to take part in the largest nature-care event in Australian schools, Planet Ark's Schools Tree Day. You'll be joining thousands of amazing people in making a difference, fostering a child's love of nature and creating positive environmental change. So, get growing! It only takes a minute to register at treeday.planetark.org.



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