

Unit 6



Week 4

Outdoor Learning Opportunities:

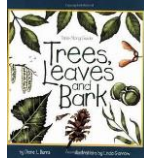
Tree Lifecycle

Standards:

S.LS.PS.1-2

PHD.GM.PS.1

CA.DE.PS.3



Materials:

- Forest where there are several trees in various stages of growth (saplings, mature trees, dead trees, and fallen logs).

Vocabulary:

- Seed
- Sprout
- Sapling
- Branch
- Bud
- Leaf
- Roots
- Rootlets

The children have been exploring trees all year. Ideas presented in previous units include adopting a tree to observe throughout the year, in all seasons. Using journals to capture what is happening each month, collecting colored leaves in the fall, identifying trees from twigs and bark in the winter, and forcing buds to flower in the spring. They have looked at the differences between deciduous trees and conifers.

As a culmination to understanding trees, this lesson looks at the lifecycle of a tree, from seed to fallen log. Take children outside to an area where there are trees in various stages of development. Have them try and identify a sapling, young tree, mature tree, dead tree, and fallen tree or log. Ask the children if trees are alive and if so, how they know that. Have the children act out the growth of a tree from a seed to a rotting log. Begin by having the students imitate your movements as you enact the life of a tree.

*Curl up in a tight ball – you're a seed

Uncurl and kneel – you've sprouted

Stick up one arm (fist clenched) – you've grown a branch

Stick up the other arm – you've grown another branch

Wiggle your fingers – you grow lots of leaves

Stand up (feet together) – you grow tall

Spread feet apart – you spread out lots of roots

Wiggle your toes – you grow lots of little roots (rootlets)

Start scratching all over – you're attacked by insects and fungi

Make a loud noise (kchhhh!) – you get hit by lightning and lose a limb

Smile and sigh (ahhhhhh!) – you become a home for wildlife in your old age

Make a hammering noise (knock, knock, knock) and vibrate – woodpeckers peck into your dead wood

Make a creaking sound and fall down – you blow down in a storm

Stick up one arm – a new seed sprouts from your rotting wood

Shake your hand – seeds are released from the young, growing tree*

Guiding Questions:

- Are trees alive? How do you know?
- How are trees born? Do they die?
- What is the lifecycle of a tree?

**Taken from PLT Pre-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide "Tree Lifecycle" activity, p. 342-343.*