

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: FIND OUT MORE ABOUT TREES

Session Aims: To encourage pupils to think more closely about the types of trees they have been involved in planting and to find out additional information about them. It also develops understanding of a scientific approach to studying nature.

Activity: Pupils select one of the tree species planted during their field visit to build up a tree profile. Using scientific vocabulary they should write a description of their chosen tree. They can use any notes or sketches made of the tree(s) they planted, but also research more information about the distinctive features of each species. If possible, it would be helpful if digital photographs could be taken during the field visit to record the appearance of representative examples of the planted trees. Use the pupil worksheet to focus ideas and begin your tree description.

Background information: Sources of information about tree species.

The Woodland Trust poster or similar may be a helpful starting point. Useful websites include:

www.british-trees.com

Has information on all British tree species – follow the ‘native tree guide’ link

Equipment:

Worksheets, pencils, information books, access to the internet, display materials. Examples of branches, leaves etc if possible.

www.forestry.gov.uk

Forestry Commission website. Follow the links ‘Learning’, ‘Forest factfile’ to ‘Tree species information’. Has information on five tree species (larch, Scots pine, sessile oak, silver birch and sitka spruce).

www.saps.plantsci.cam.ac.uk/trees

Has a key for identifying trees and shrubs but it is also possible to look up information on individual species. Searches can be by common (as well as Latin) names.

National Curriculum for Wales: Science

Life Processes and Living Things

4. Living Things in their environments

Pupils should be taught:

adaptation

1. to find out about the variety of plants and animals found in different habitats including the local area, e.g. by fieldwork, reference books or software.
2. how animals and plants in two different habitats are suited to their environment.

Outcomes

Attainment Target 2: Life Processes and Living Things

Level 2

They recognise that different living things are found in different places.

Level 5

They explain that different organisms are found in different habitats because of differences in environmental factors, such as the availability of light or water.

Tree attributes to be considered could include the following:

Attribute	Examples
Leaf type	broadleaved, conifer
Leaf shape	round, oval, oblong, narrow, heart shaped, triangular, feather shaped, irregular
Leaf colour	pale green, dark green, green/grey etc.
Leaf texture	smooth, rough shiny, hairy, prickly, powdery
Leaf edge	smooth, toothed, lobed
Leaf arrangement	opposite, alternate
Buds	rounded, cylindrical, sticky
Trunk	broad, narrow
Bark texture	smooth, ridged, flaking
Bark colour	grey, red, brown
Flower, fruit or seeds	Small seeds inside a fleshy berry, hard nut inside, cluster of seeds,
Typical places found (habitat) and any special adaptations to its habitat.	e.g. dry or wet ground
Mature height (metres)/other typical measurements	
Tree shape	Could sketch this
Further information of interest	For example: supports a rich variety of wildlife (oak), one of the first trees to colonise bare ground (birch), timber used to make cricket bats (willow).

If there is easy access to a local park, woodland or established hedgerow, pupils could extend their observation skills through notes and sketches of a nearby tree. They could study one part of the tree in particular and bring back a sample of leaves, buds or twigs to identify. How many different colours and textures can they describe? Leaves are not only green, bark is not just brown. Pupils could describe what is found under and around the tree – are there any signs of wildlife?

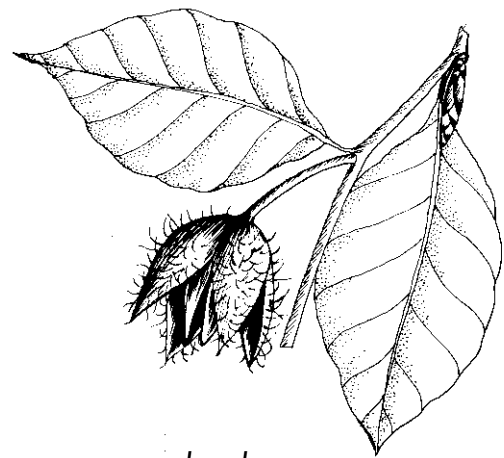
Pupils could present their collected information in a variety of ways – in the form of a table, with room for sketches or as an informative poster. Use the pupil worksheet as a basis for their finished work.

Additional activity:

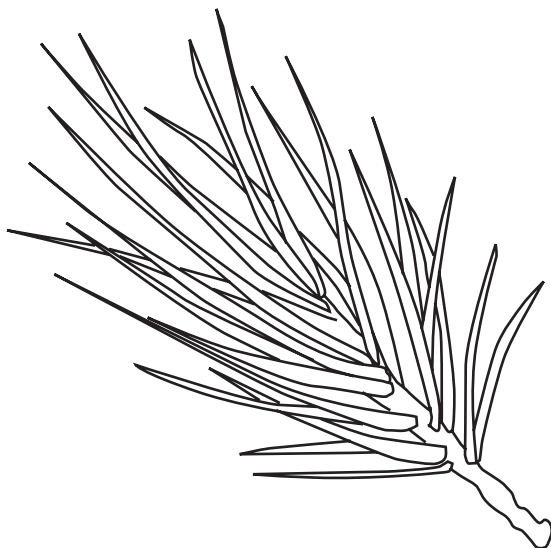
- Using the table of characteristics above, devise a 'compare and contrast' activity between two or three common tree species. This might also be a suitable exercise for discussions during literacy work.

Extension activities:

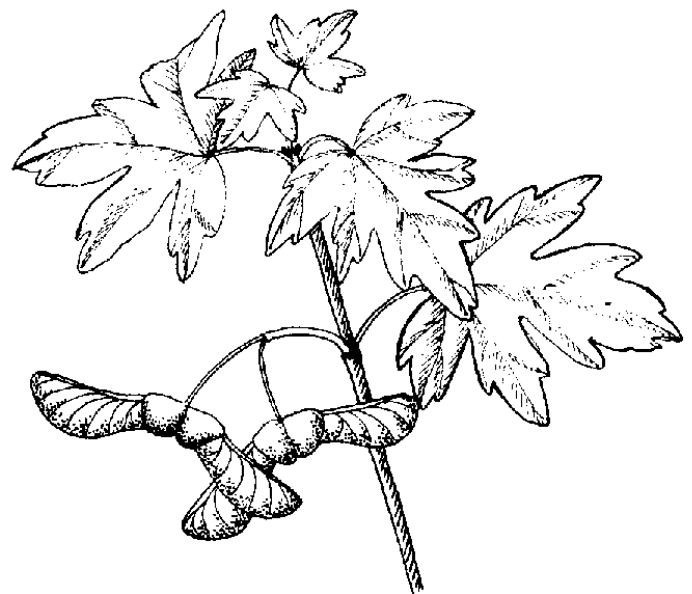
- Encourage the pupils to find out more interesting information about their chosen tree species. What kinds of use do humans and wildlife make of it?
- Pupils could also consider the following questions related to tree form and function: Why do some leaves change colour in the autumn? Why do some trees lose their leaves in winter? What are the benefits and disadvantages of having flat leaves? What are the benefits and disadvantages of needle-shaped leaves? Why are tree seeds different shapes and sizes?



beech



pine



field maple



KS2 Science

PUPIL WORKSHEET

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Use this sheet to start finding out about the species of tree that you have planted.

Name _____

Class _____

The species of my tree is

The leaves of my tree are this shape
(draw in the box below).

This is the bark of my tree when it
has grown bigger (draw in the box below).

A large, empty rectangular box intended for a child to draw the shape of the leaves of their tree.A large, empty rectangular box intended for a child to draw the bark of their tree when it has grown bigger.

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Write a description of your tree below. Write this for someone who has never seen your tree before.

1. What are the leaves like or will they look like?

2. What is the bark like?

3. What are the twigs and buds like?

4. Will your tree have any flowers or fruit?

5. The kinds of wildlife that might live in or around my tree are:

6. Why does my tree have no leaves at the moment?