

## Day 1 Create a Tree Journal

Select a tree, preferably one close to your house. Pick a tree with branches low enough to touch and observe the end of the branches. Visit the tree once a month to learn how it changes throughout the year. Take a picture next to your tree. Record the date, the location, and why you selected your tree. You can use this [Tree Journal](#) to record some of your observations.

## Day 2 Bark Rubbing

Bring some paper and crayons to your tree. If the bark is fairly dry, place the paper on the bark of the tree. Using the side of an unwrapped crayon, rub back and forth over the paper with the bark underneath. The texture of the bark should appear on the paper. Use some adjectives to describe your trees' unique bark.

## Day 3 Buds

At the end of the branches, there are leaves or flowers hiding inside a bud waiting for spring. Examine the buds of your tree. Draw a picture of them in your journal. Examine the buds of a few other trees. How are the buds the same? How are they different? [Check out this information on tree buds.](#)

## Day 4 Life Cycle

Did you know that trees start off as babies too? Search to see if you can find the seed to your tree. Look at various trees to see if you can find any evidence of the seeds. Look along the ground. Can you find baby trees? How about saplings or kid-sized trees? Teenager trees? Mature trees or adult trees? Take a ruler to measure the height of the younger trees. Use a measuring tape to measure the circumference of the big trees (how big around are they?).

## Day 5 Wood Products Play-Store

During the spring, maple sap is collected from sugar maple trees to cook into maple syrup. People use trees in all different ways. Search your house for various products that come from trees. Make a "Pretend Store" filled with products from trees. Create a name for your store. Develop a price list. Make some pretend money and play store.

# Tree Conversation Starters by Grade Level

## Kindergarten

Discuss whether a tree is living or nonliving. What do living items need?

## 1st Grade

It's spring time. How many hours of daylight are we getting? Check the sunrise and sunset. Count how many hours are daylight. This is called the photo period. Compare this number of daylight hours to a day in December and a day in June.

## 2nd Grade

Look at where the tree is growing. How much sunlight does it get? If it was a dark environment, would the tree be able to grow here? Can you see examples where a tree is stretching to reach sunlight?

## 3rd Grade

Discuss with your student that all living things have a life cycle. Talk about how humans grow from babies into children and develop into adolescents who mature into adults. Compare a tree's life cycle to a human's life cycle.

## 4th Grade

Discuss how trees have different parts and those parts are unique to the type of tree. For example, pine needle leaves are different from maple leaves. Discuss what is different and how those differences might help that type of tree. Look at bark, leaves and seeds of different trees to discuss the trees' unique characteristics that help it survive.

## 5th Grade

Discuss how food helps provide energy for each organism to survive. Plants are unique because they make their own food. Talk about how in the summertime, the plants' leaves absorb sunshine and air. With the chlorophyll in the leaves, the plant makes its own food. It is a producer in the food chain.