

Connecting Kids to Nature

Nature is a great teacher! Try this outdoor activity - it's safe, fun, and educational. Project Learning Tree® activities build children's creative and critical thinking skills while they learn what the environment needs to remain healthy and sustainable.

Name that Tree

Download one of these free mobile apps to make identifying trees and the products they give us fun and educational for children and teens!

- LeafSnap - available only for iPhone
- vTree - available for Android and iPhone

Then, go outside and find an area with trees - it could be in your backyard, in a park, or along a street.

Ask "What characteristics can we use to identify trees?" Pick two different trees and have children observe the differences between the two. Here are some features of trees you could discuss: leaf type, tips and bottom shape, texture; twigs; fruits, flowers and seeds; bark and the overall tree shape.

Next, open the selected app and follow its instructions.

LeafSnap: Snap a picture of a leaf using your smartphone. The app will provide a list of possible tree species with accompanying photos to help you select the best match.

vTree: Provide your location and answer a few questions about the tree you want to identify. The app will provide a list of possible tree species and accompanying photos to help you identify the tree.

Write down the names and characteristics of the trees in the chart below.

Once back inside, search the internet for the tree name and the keyword "common uses" to find products or benefits provided by these trees, for example, fruits and nuts, medicinal products, and wood, and complete the last column of the chart.

Tree Identification Chart

Common Tree Name	Characteristics	Products and Benefits

Make Learning Fun!

Encourage your child's school to incorporate learning outdoors.

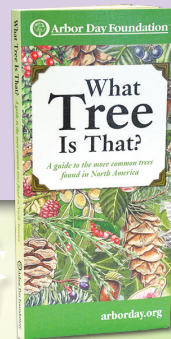
For more activity ideas and materials:

- Attend a PLT workshop, www.plt.org/state-network/
- Visit shop.plt.org

Literature Connection

If you don't have a smartphone, use a free online tree identification guide, such as the one provided by the Arbor Day Foundation. Or, use a printed tree identification guide, for example:

What Tree Is That?
A Guide to the More
Common Trees Found
in North America
ISBN: 9780963465757



Project Learning Tree® (PLT) is an initiative of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

www.plt.org