



Forest Ecosystem

Then God said: Let the earth bring forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it. And so it happened: the earth brought forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree that bears fruit with its seed in it. God saw that it was good. Evening came, and morning followed—the third day. – Genesis 1: 11-13

Introduction

Trees play a beautiful and intricate role in the order of God's creation. They provide shelter and protection for many plants, animals, and insects within the forest ecosystem. Trees also play a valuable role in our daily lives, from providing the wood used to construct our houses to making up key ingredients in household items such as diapers and toothpaste. In this pod, we will explore the beauty of the forest and discover the irreplaceable value of trees.

Student Performance Objectives

Through participation in this activity students will:

- Discuss the impact of trees on our daily life
- List five unexpected household items that are made from trees
- Describe the function of trees as habitats within the forest ecosystem
- Identify trees using multiple senses (touch, sound, etc.)
- List characteristics that distinguish one tree from another
- Describe the major parts of a tree and their functions
- Determine the age of a fallen tree
- Discuss ways to better care for trees
- List survival adaptations adopted by animals in the forest ecosystem
- Explain the food chain using vocabulary such as: herbivore, omnivore, carnivore, predator, prey

Archdiocesan Standards

- 4th Grade Life Science; From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes 1
- 4th Grade Earth and Space Science; Earth and Human Activity 1
- 5th Grade Physical Science; Matter and Its Interactions 3
- 5th Grade Life Science; From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes 1
- 5th Grade Life Science; Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics 1
- MS-LSI-5
- MS-LSI-6
- MS-PS1-3
- 4th Grade Religion 7

Activities

- Which of These are Made from Trees/ A day Without Trees
 - Students will be presented with various objects (pencils, toothpaste, balloons, etc.) and will guess which objects are made from trees. By the end of the activity, students will come to realize that all of the objects are made from trees and will discuss the impact of trees on daily life.
- Trees as Habitats
 - Through observation of various tree species and their inhabitants, students will explore the concept of habitats and examine how trees serve as habitats within the forest ecosystem.
- Find My Tree
 - While keeping their eyes closed, students will try to gain as much information as they can about a specific tree (bark texture, diameter, etc.) using senses other than sight. Students will then open their eyes and guess which tree they had explored. Through this activity, students will learn key concepts about tree identification.
- Tree Ring Dating

- By examining tree cookies, students will learn dendrochronology, or tree ring dating, and will practice this skill using their own tree cookies.
- Building a Tree
 - Through this interactive activity, students will visualize the inner workings of a tree and cement their understanding by acting out the function of each part of a tree.
- Predator-Prey
 - In this game, one student is designated to be the “prey” while the remaining students, the “predators,” hide where the prey cannot see them. The predators’ goal is to get close enough to tag the prey without being seen. The first predator to the food wins!