

THREE CHEERS FOR TREES

Trees and forests provide many benefits to people and communities all over the world. Use this activity with children to explore and celebrate the gifts we receive from trees.



No matter where we live, trees and forests are an important part of our lives. In both urban and rural areas, trees:

- Beautify our environment.
- Provide homes and food for wildlife.
- Capture air pollutants.
- Reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide by storing carbon.
- Prevent soil erosion by holding soil in place with their roots.
- Slow the fall of rain, reducing runoff and allowing the ground to absorb more water.
- Shade and cool streets and buildings.
- Muffle traffic noise.
- Provide places for children to climb and play.

It's surprising to learn how many different products we get from trees:

- **WOOD PRODUCTS** – lumber, baseball bats, toothpicks, wood blocks, wood furniture, etc.
- **FOOD PRODUCTS** – apples, cinnamon, chocolate, maple syrup, oranges, walnuts, etc.
- **PAPER PRODUCTS** – books, newspaper, paper towels, toilet paper, etc.
- **SAP PRODUCTS** – soap, rubber, crayons, adhesives, shoe polish, cosmetics, etc.
- **OTHER PRODUCTS** – rayon, cork, medicines, etc.



CELEBRATE TREES AND FORESTS

- **DISCUSS THE PRODUCTS** we get from trees. Show children a variety of objects we get from trees and ask them to name other services and products that trees provide.
- **LEARN HOW THE WORLD** and its many cultures and people celebrate trees and forests—and plan your own tree celebration. (see “Tree Holidays around the World”).
- **DECORATE A TREE** with small tree products (e.g., fruits, nuts, and pencils), drawings or photo cutouts of things we get from trees.
- **PLANT A TREE** seed or seedling. Use PLT’s family activity [“What Tree Should I Plant?”](#) or check with a local forester or nursery for an appropriate tree species that is native to your area.
- **ENJOY A SNACK** from trees, using tree fruit dipped in a tree topping (such as almond butter, coconut, or a cocoa and powdered sugar mixture). Safety: Be aware of any food allergies, dietary needs, or choking hazards.
- **WRITE A GROUP BOOK** titled “Trees are Terrific.” Each author might contribute a story or drawing on a favorite tree product, or tree benefit, or that describes their feelings about trees.
- **ADOPT THE STREET TREES** in your neighborhood. Street trees are part of the “urban forest.” During dry periods, you can help them by watering them thoroughly once a week.
- **RESEARCH FORESTS** around the world (such as the Redwood Forest in California, the Cloud Forest in Costa Rica, the Black Forest in Germany) and compare them to the forest in your area.

TREE HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD



- **CANADA:** National Forest Week, late September
- **CHINA:** Tree Planting Day, March 12
- **GREAT BRITAIN:** Tree Dressing Day, first full weekend in December
- **HEBREW HOLIDAY:** Tu B'Shvat (New Year for the Trees), 15th of the month Shevat
- **JAPAN:** Midori Noni (Greenery Day), late April
- **KOREA:** Tree-Loving Week, early April
- **MEXICO:** Dia del Arbol (Day of the Tree), July
- **UNITED STATES:** Arbor Day, last Friday in April
- **WORLDWIDE:** International Day of Forests, March 21

