

A Letter to Families

Send families a letter introducing the study. Use the letter to communicate with families and as an opportunity to invite their participation in the study.

Dear Families,

Our class is beginning to study trees. We'll be observing and comparing trees to learn about what lives in them, what they're made from, and who cares for them. We hope that this study will help children explore and appreciate nature. As we study trees, we will use literacy, math, the arts, and technology to explore the topic in depth. We will learn important social studies and scientific concepts through firsthand investigations. Please visit the classroom during the study to see how we do this.

If you are able to take a "tree walk" with your child, we would appreciate your help in collecting tree parts to investigate. If you can, please take a bag to a tree area and collect things that have fallen, such as leaves, bark, acorns, twigs, flowers, fruit, or cones. See below for suggestions of other tree parts to bring in.

a variety of leaves	evergreen sprigs or	tree "cookies" (cross
small limbs, branches,	small boughs	sections of trees that
twigs	a live, potted tree	show the rings)
food from trees	flower clippings (may	bark
(fruit, nuts)	be kept in water)	
pinecones	seeds	

We need your help to enrich the children's learning. If you work with trees, please let us know. Perhaps you're a gardener, forester, tree trimmer, tree farmer, or nursery worker. Even if your job is unrelated to trees, you can be involved in our study. Extra hands always help!

What You Can Do at Home

You can help your child explore and appreciate nature by learning about trees. Invite your child to talk about trees. Share stories about your favorite childhood memories involving trees and games you might have played around them. Wonder aloud with your child to encourage his or her thinking about trees.

"I wonder why leaves fall from trees."

"I wonder what makes some trees grow so big."

At home, collect parts of trees, and encourage your child to sort them. Your child might also enjoy making a collage by arranging and gluing tree items on paper.

At the end of our study, we'll have a special event to show you what we learned. Thank you for playing an important role in our learning.