



# DREAMING TREES 2024: THE ELEMENTS

Activities for Early Years / 3 - 5 years

# INTRODUCTION



Dreaming Trees aims to encourage people of all ages outside to enjoy and rediscover the beauty of our parks and to think about the wonder of trees.

This pack includes a selection of our favourite activities for young children.

The activities can be used by practitioners and families to support learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (3 - 5 years of age).

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# AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

This pack and our activities help to support the following areas of learning and development for the early years foundation stage curriculum.

We hope they are also fun to try at home!

## **Communication and literacy development:**

- Use the names of different parts of trees to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write
- Practice saying the names of different parts of trees and use different words to describe the natural materials that you find and how they look and feel

## **Physical development:**

- Explore the outside world, develop motor skills and practice coordination and control

## **Understanding the world:**

- Explore, observe and find out about the natural environment

## **Expressive arts and design:**

- Explore and play with natural materials
- Share thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities

# WHAT CAN WE FIND?

A scavenger hunt is a great way to explore the outdoors, learn about the natural environment and engage the senses.

We like using an egg box to collect different natural treasures. You can make up your own or use the template from The Woodland Trust which challenges you to find something soft, smooth, sticky, fluffy, tickly and flaky.

Alternatively, play colour bingo and look for how many different colours you can spot outside.

The Woodland Trust Egg Box Scavenger Hunt:

[https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf\\_egg\\_box\\_scavenger\\_hunt.pdf](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_egg_box_scavenger_hunt.pdf)

The Woodland Trust Colour Bingo:

[https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf\\_colour\\_bingo.pdf](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_colour_bingo.pdf)



# WHAT CAN WE FIND?

Making your own nature collection bottle is a wonderful way to explore the outdoors and collect some of nature's treasure.

All you need is a plastic bottle. We suggest children put some small stones into their bottle first - finding stones that fit in the bottle is great for **problem solving and developing motor skills**.

Children can collect natural materials such as leaves and sticks and fill their bottles. If you are carrying out this activity in a group, you can compare the bottles, look for different materials and different colours and talk about what you have found.

More photos are available at [playlearneveryday.com](https://www.playlearneveryday.com):

<https://www.playlearneveryday.com/2015/09/nature-collection-bottles.html>



# WHAT CAN WE HEAR?

Nature is filled with different noises if we take the time to listen.

Go outside, stand in a circle and listen carefully. What can you hear? How many different noises can you hear? Can you make the noises? Draw pictures to represent the sounds you heard.

Learning through landscapes has provided a Sound Walk resource:

<https://ltl.org.uk/resources/a-sound-walk/>

Nature is also filled with lots of things that we can use to make noise.

Collect things to make your own **musical instrument**. You can fill a plastic bottle with small stones, sticks or acorns and find some sticks to bang on the ground or against a tree. Create simple rhythms and ask a partner to repeat them. Try using different materials to see if the sounds change.



# PLAYDOUGH NATURE WALK

Taking playdough out on a nature walk helps you to **explore textures** by taking imprints of tree bark, sticks and leaves and investigating sticking the dough to smooth and rough surfaces like tree bark.

In addition to helping to **develop motor skills**, this is a great activity for **developing vocabulary** as you describe the imprints and natural textures.

You can also collect natural materials to make faces (try a portrait!) or patterns in the playdough.

**Please remember to take all playdough back home/to school with you.**

More information is available at How Wee Learn:

<https://www.howweelearn.com/a-playdough-nature-walk/>

**Be a nature detective and see if you can find faces when you look at trees.** Can you see a face here?

Look at the Tree-mendous tree faces resource from Trees for Schools:  
[https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf\\_tree\\_faces.pdf](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_tree_faces.pdf)



## *Make your own play dough*

*Mix together: 8 tbsp plain flour, 2 tbsp table salt, 60ml warm water and 1 tbsp vegetable oil.*

*See this BBC video for more information:*

*<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/homemade-playdough/z4tdd6f>*



# ALL ABOUT TREES

## Different parts of a tree

Talk about the different parts of a tree. Practice saying the words out loud. Go outside and find the different parts for yourself or look at pictures of trees in books and find the different parts.

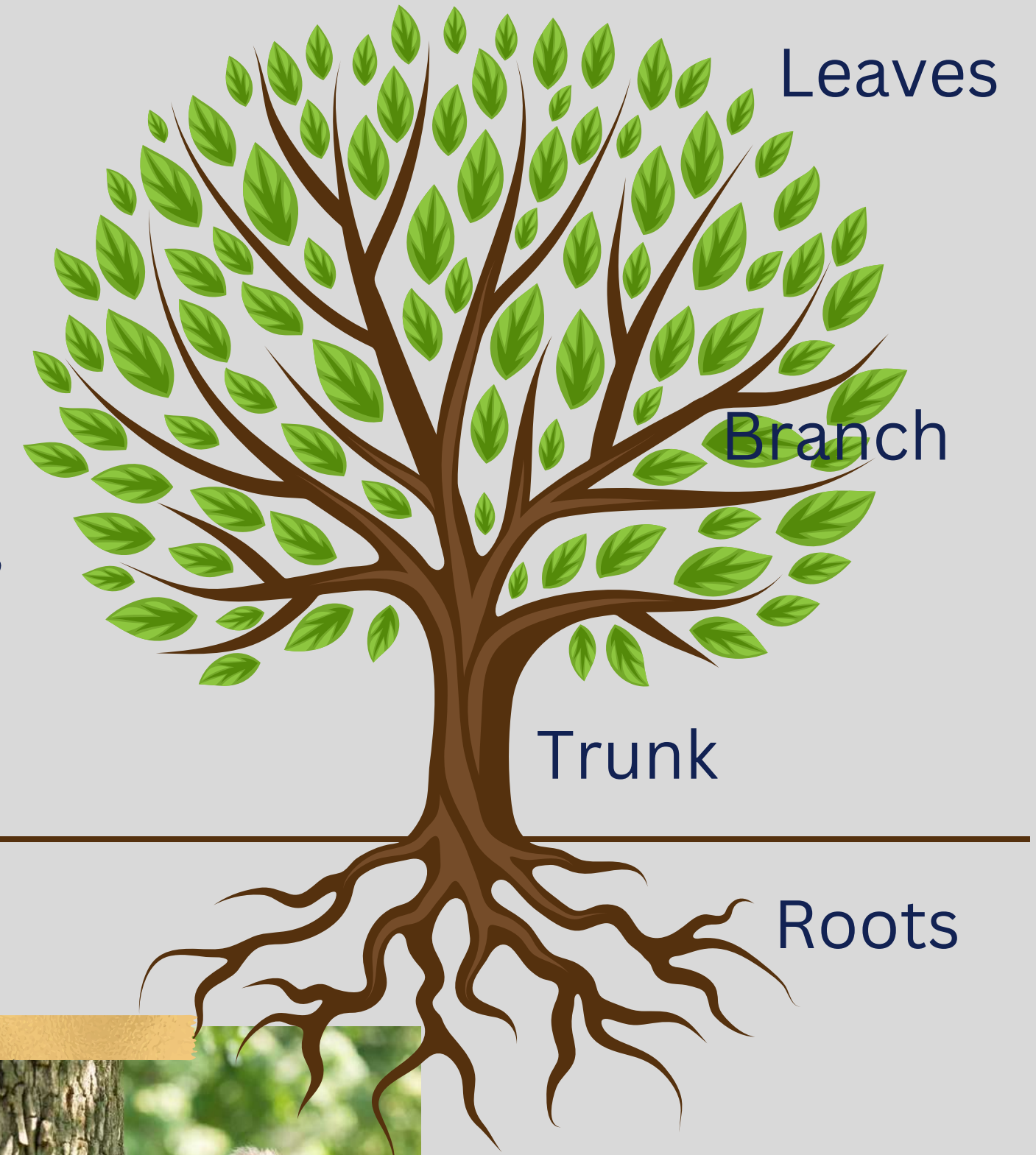
## Measure a tree (and give it a hug!)

In a group, stand with your arms outstretched. Guess how many people are needed to measure how big the tree is all the way around (the tree's girth) if you stand around the tree with outstretched arms, touching one another's fingertips.

Try this with some different trees. Can you guess which is the smallest and which is the biggest?

## Mother Trees

Research has found that there are 'Mother Trees'. These are the biggest and oldest trees that are connected with the other trees and help them survive. Can you find one?



# ALL ABOUT STICKS

## Twig spotter

Download the twig identifier from Trees for Schools and see how many you can find.

[https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf\\_twig\\_spotter\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_twig_spotter_sheet.pdf)

## Stick craft

- Who can build the tallest stick tower?
- Can you make arrow shapes from sticks for your friends to follow?
- Find the perfect stick for a magic wand (try wrapping different colours of wool around the stick to make it extra special)
- Create a stick mobile and use wool or string to make shapes from the sticks and natural materials that you find
- Make a stick raft by tying sticks together with long grass or string. Does it float?

Visit Trees for Schools for more ideas:

[https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=outdoor\\_makes](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=outdoor_makes)



# ALL ABOUT LEAVES

## Leaf detectives

Using the poster from Trees for Schools, how many different types can you find?

[https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf\\_leaf\\_spotter\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_leaf_spotter_sheet.pdf)

Get creative with the leaves you find. Some of our favourite things to make are:

- Leaf people: can you make a picture of yourself or draw a friend?
- Leaf creatures: what creatures can you make?
- Leaf letters: can you make the first letter of your name by using twigs as an outline and filling it with leaves?
- Make a nature bracelet with a piece of double sided sticky tape on a piece of card

Lots more ideas are available from Trees for Schools:

[https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=outdoor\\_makes](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=outdoor_makes)



# WHAT ARE TREES DREAMING OF?



Over the winter, we can think of trees as sleeping as they save their energy and wait for spring.

If trees are sleeping, perhaps they dream.

What do you think trees dream of?

**Please share your ideas with us. Your ideas can be written down or shared as pictures.**

**Send an email with the title 'Dreaming Trees' to [dfi@gov.je](mailto:dfi@gov.je)**

We may share your ideas at the Dreaming Trees illuminations and in our communications. All ideas we share will be anonymous.

Thank you and enjoy Dreaming Trees 2024!

# DREAMING TREES 2024

[gov.je/dreamingtrees](https://gov.je/dreamingtrees)

[dfi@gov.je](mailto:dfi@gov.je)

