



Benefits of

Trees

Objective

Students will understand the importance of trees in our environment through fun art activity.

Grade Levels

K – 3rd Grade

Duration

20 minutes

of Kids

20 kids

Setting

In Class Lesson	Outdoor Classroom	Professional Development
After School	Field Trip	Career Day
Recycling Team Training	Parent Meeting	Community Event

Supplies

- Paper
- Crayons
- Masking tape
- Paint
- Cups or bags for students to collect materials

Procedure

- Take a nature walk outside to find the trees in the walking area. Point out birds, squirrels, and insects that they might see on their walk. Explain how the trees are homes to several animals. Discuss habitats of animals. Tell students to remember that trees serve as a habitat for many animals in the wild. Trees also give us shade, fresh air and prevent floods by absorbing water through its roots.
- Ask student to think about their favorite tree. It may be in their yard, on a playground at a local park, in a nature area, or a tree they have seen in a book. Allow time students to share and ask why is it their favorite. Ask students to consider what benefits does their tree provide. Give examples of shade, place to climb or sit. Then imagine if that tree is gone, how would the area be different.
- With students make bark rubbings by taping large pieces of paper to the tree trunk with masking tape. Have students rub a crayon sideways back and forth across the paper. Use the rubbings in collages or frame them as artwork.
- Have students collect fallen leaves to make leaf rubbings, sticks or other natural materials to include in the follow up painting activity inside.
- On the return walk, stop by the school garden to discuss edible plants. Describe how trees are planted to harvest for making paper, or fruit. Describe the difference between the trees in the area and trees grown as a crop. Discuss the importance of trees to our environment.

Modifications

- Back in the class, discuss how they can reduce, reuse and recycle paper at home and school. By using both sides of the paper.
 - Then paint with tree-textured paint. Add sawdust, crumbled leaves, coffee grounds and cinnamon to tempura paint. Make a masterpiece.
 - Discuss options for planting trees to create a habitat in their neighborhood.
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- With younger kids you can collect materials and bring into classroom for them to use. If going outside make sure to go into an enclosed area like a playground.
 - When taking students outside be certain to have a headcount and another group leader for safety if possible. Make sure students stay together as you walk to find different types of trees.
 - When collecting materials to paint with inside make sure students do not collect living materials like green leaves or pick from live trees; instead collecting dead leaves and sticks.