

Tired of being cooped up inside? Take school outdoors!

Studying God's creation helps us get to know Him better as we discover His careful attention to every extraordinary detail.

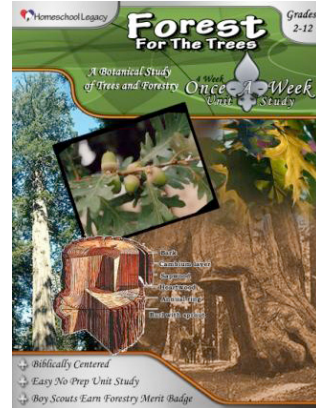
Forest for the Trees is broken up into four weeks:

Week 1 - Tree Identification

Week 2 - Tree Anatomy

Week 3 - What Trees Give Us

Week 4 - Forests and Forestry



The following is a sample of what you will be doing in Week 1 as you begin Forest for the Trees. Red lettering is added here for further explanation.

Week 1 Library Reading/Video Choices

Focus: Tree Identification

An * denotes it or an equivalent of same subject matter is necessary in order to complete an assignment.

J GEO My Side of the Mountain/ Jean Craighead George*

J 574.526 T The Gift of a Tree/ Alvin Tresselt

J 574.526 W Close Looks in a Spring Woods/ Martha McKeen Welch

J 574.5264 P A Log's Life/ Wendy Pfeffer

J 582.16 A Crinkleroot's Guide to Knowing Trees/ Jim Arnosky - love this book!

J 582.16 B Tree (Eyewitness Book) - Excellent!*

J 582.16 G Tell me Tree/ Gail Gibbons

J 582.16 G Trees (Eye Witness Explorers)

J 582.16 L Trees/ Andres Llamas Ruiz

J 582.16 P Trees

635.9772 A Bonsai with Japanese Maples/ Peter Adams

J 743.7 A Draw 50 Flowers, Trees, and Other Plants/ Lee J. Ames*

Tree Identification Guides *

(You will only need one of these field guides.)

582.16 L The National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees

J 582.16 C National Audubon Society First Field Guide/ Brian Cassie

J 582.16 R National Geographic Guide

J 582.1609 P Peterson First Guide to Trees/ George A. Petrides

J 582.16 Z Trees, a Golden Guide - great pocket size! Easy to use identification book!

Each Once-a-Week Unit Study provides a weekly library list that includes a variety of books for that week's focus.

As you can see, I have alphabetically and numerically arranged each call letter in order for you to quickly and easily gather your library books.

I include books of different reading levels, have chosen books of superior quality, and have carefully screened books for objectionable material.

Your children are not meant to read all of the books listed. They pick and choose books to read throughout the week which most interest them. Reading is the only activity they will continue daily throughout the week.

Only books noted with an asterisk (or an equivalent of same subject matter) are necessary in order to complete a specific assignment.

What if you cannot find the exact book? No problem. Just pick another from that same library section and focus.

In addition to books, your list will also include documentaries/movies for you to pick up at the library or get from Netflix.

Supplies:

1 blank journal or a 3-ring binder with a plastic-sleeved cover
Craft and loose-leaf paper
Glue
Zip-lock bags for collecting specimens
Measuring tape
Magnifying glass
Camera

Each Once-a-Week Unit Study provides you with a supply list for that week's assignments. Most will be items you already have in your home. Others will be inexpensive items you can pick up at a discount, craft, or hardware store.

Daily Activities



Independent Reading: Week 1 Library choices
Also read Tree Eyewitness Book throughout the month.

This week's main reading focus will be about getting to know trees.

Family Read-Aloud: My Side of the Mountain

Each week's family read-aloud introduces your family to great literature while staying focused on that week's topic. It will most often be a classic, Caldecott or Newbery Award winner, or other noteworthy literary piece. This week's quality read-aloud is Jean Craighead George's novel, My Side of the Mountain.

Once-a-Week Activities



Family Bible Devotional:

Read Genesis 1:11-13.

Remember to take the time to notice and reflect on God's amazing, intricate, and thoughtful attention to detail, while learning about trees over the next four weeks.

Memorize Romans 1:20.

Some Once-a-Week Unit Study devotionals are brief, as with this week's devotional. Most go delightfully deeper, however.



Science/Language:



- Keep a Nature Journal!

Throughout this unit study you will be studying the science of botany which encompasses dendrology, the study of trees.



All scientists, including botanists, observe and keep careful records of the science they study. Today you will begin your botanical study of trees by creating a nature journal in which to record your observations.

Fill a 3-ring binder with paper. Plan to devote at least one page to each type of tree you identify.

Using craft paper, make a decorative cover for your nature journal. Decorate it to your liking. Slide it into the plastic sleeve of your notebook cover.

- What to include in your journal throughout the course of your study:



Glued specimens or drawings of the trees, their identities, their habitat, and the date you collected the samples (BSA Req. 1b)

The identification of fifteen kinds of trees. Include a labeled photo or drawing of each (BSA Req. 1) along with a description (or drawing) of its characteristics: leaves, twigs, cones, or fruit.(BSA Req. 1a)

Brief notes as to how these trees are used by humans or wildlife (BSA Req. 1c)

Identify and record two types of animal or insect damage you find on a tree. If damaged, identify what caused it and determine the effects you think any of them might have on the health and life of the tree. Photograph or sketch each example. (BSA Req. 2)

Record whether the tree is “native” or was “introduced” to your area. (BSA Req. 1c)

Investigate the meaning of the term invasive when it comes to plants. If a tree you identify is not native, explain whether it is considered invasive or potentially invasive. (BSA Req. 1c)

Once-a-Week Unit Studies are written for ALL homeschool families to enjoy, but Boy Scouts and American Heritage Girls receive the added benefit of earning merit badge requirements while completing the same unit study assignments as the rest of their non-scout siblings.

*While completing Forest for the Trees with the rest of their family, Boy Scouts will earn the majority of their Forestry merit badge.**

Boys Scouts will be able to easily identify those assignments by the above fleur-de-lis icon.

The requirements fulfilled will be noted in parentheses at the end of the assignment.

**At this time, American Heritage Girls do not earn badge requirements while completing Forest for the Trees.*



Vocabulary/Language:

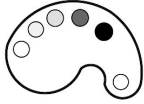
- Look up the definitions of the terms deciduous and coniferous.
- Write the definitions in your own words, and add them to your nature journal.
- Collect at least one leaf, fruit, nut, cone, or twig specimen from both a deciduous and a coniferous tree. Look at them with the aid of a magnifying glass.
- Label and glue the leaves into your journal. Photograph (or sketch) and label other specimens such as fruit, twigs, nuts, or cones. Add them to your journal.



Research/Language:

- Find out what your state tree is. Write a short passage telling your reader what it is and why you think it was chosen as your state tree.
- Go outside and find an example of your state tree. Take a picture. Add your passage and labeled photo to your nature journal.





Art:

Sketch a tree free-hand, or use the book Draw 50 Flowers, Trees, and Other Plants to help you. Add your drawing to your nature journal.

You will find the above book is on your library list.



Physical:

- Go climb a tree!

As homeschoolers, we can get so caught up in academics and scheduling every hour of every day that we sometimes forget to let our kids just enjoy childhood. This P.E. activity lets them do exactly that.



Physical/Science/Field Trip:

- Take a nature hike!



Using your field guide, identify a variety of trees. Record them in your journal.

Collect leaves and seeds in zip lock bags to take home to add to your nature journal.

Photograph some trees. Label and add those photos to your nature journal.

Using a measuring tape, measure the girth of some trees to estimate their ages. Begin measuring them 3' up the trunk. Every inch around is essentially the equivalent of one year.

If you find a tree that has been cut down, you can determine its age more accurately by counting its growth or tree rings. Every ring equals one year's worth of growth. Why does the width of each ring vary?

Yearly rainfall determines how much a tree grows in a year.
 Each growth ring indicates whether there was much or little rainfall in a particular year.

If you have collected leaf specimens, you will want to press them for a week between the pages of a heavy book (with a paper towel to help absorb moisture). Place more heavy books on top.



Photograph (or draw) and label the bulkier seeds for your nature journal.



If you have collected autumn leaves, you can immediately dry-iron them between two pieces of waxed paper (cover the waxed paper with a plain sheet of paper before ironing).

Label and tape them to a sunny window pane to enjoy throughout the season.

Take another to someone who is home bound for them to enjoy in their window.

Add yours to your nature journal whenever you take it down from the window.

! Stump Your Dad Trivia:

Q: What is the name of the oldest known, living tree in the world?

A: *Methuselah*

(Named for the oldest man to have ever lived (Genesis 5:27), this Great Basin Bristlecone Pine tree is growing in the White Mountains of California, and is estimated to be about 4800 years old.)

Kids just love to discover they know something Dad doesn't...because Dad knows everything, right? We include Stump Your Dad Trivia as a fun way to involve Dad and alert him to what your children are learning in their studies. It also makes for great dinner conversation...if the kids can wait that long to stump him, that is!