

Connecting Kids to Nature

Nature is a great teacher and getting kids outside to learn and play is good for their brains and their bodies. Try this outdoor activity from Project Learning Tree® - it's safe, fun, and educational!

Getting in Touch with Trees

By way of neighborhood trees and a mystery box, children will explore their sense of touch and discover different shapes and textures in nature.

Before venturing outdoors with children, take a walk yourself and find an area where a few different tree species grow. Collect one or more objects from the ground underneath the trees. Place the objects in a "mystery box" so they can be felt but not seen. Take the children to your collection spot, have them feel the items in the mystery box, and challenge them to search the collection area to find the matching objects. Ask:

- What is important about your sense of touch? How do you use it?
- What would life be like without your sense of touch?
- Can you identify objects by only feeling them?

You can also bring along a blindfold and have children examine trees using only their hands. Can similarities and differences be found?

To learn more about the unique characteristics of a few American trees, check out *Trees, Leaves, and Bark* by Diane Burns, 1998, ISBN: 1559716282.

Complete this word search puzzle to discover ten words that describe texture. Look below for the answers.

Z	Y	S	U	T	F	O	S
M	P	C	T	S	A	M	P
A	D	P	S	I	O	L	O
F	H	R	H	O	C	R	N
U	H	A	T	M	O	K	G
Z	B	H	B	U	M	P	Y
Z	H	S	G	Y	B	T	U
Y	O	H	A	R	D	G	R



Answers: bumpy, fuzzy, hard, moist, rough, sharp, smooth, soft, spongy, sticky

Make Learning Fun!

Encourage your child's school to incorporate learning outdoors.

For more activity ideas and materials:

- Attend a PLT workshop, www.plt.org/state-network/
- Visit shop.plt.org



Project Learning Tree®
(PLT) is an initiative
of the Sustainable
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