

# 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!

## Adopt a Tree

In this activity, children “adopt” a tree, deepening their awareness of individual trees over time and encouraging a greater understanding and appreciation of their local environment.

The next time you are on a walk in a familiar area, invite children to choose a particular tree to observe. Suggest they become better acquainted with it by using their senses of sight, touch, hearing, and smell to describe the tree. Encourage critical thinking by asking:

- Is this tree alive? How do you know?
- How is this tree similar to and/or different from other trees around it?
- How does this tree help the environment around it?

Complete the Adopt a Tree Journal Entry below. Revisit this tree on a regular basis throughout the year and in a variety of weather conditions. Have children guess reasons for the changes they see and then predict changes for the future.

### Adopt a Tree Journal Entry

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

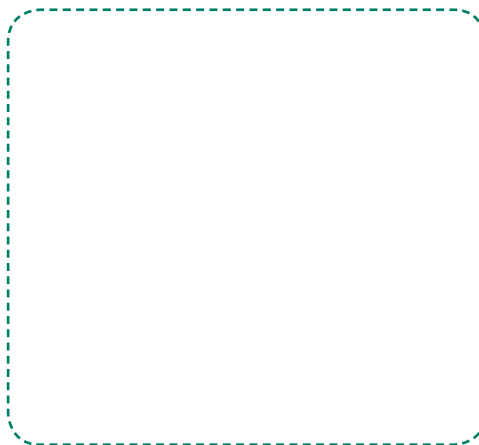
Describe the tree \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What color is the bark? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you choose this tree? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What type of tree is it? \_\_\_\_\_

### My Adopted Tree



In the box, draw a picture of your tree or use a crayon or pencil to complete a leaf or bark rubbing.

### 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/](http://www.plt.org/state-network/)
- Visit [shop.plt.org](http://shop.plt.org)

How many seasonal signs can you find?

Fall	Winter
• Leaf color change	• Bird migration
• Fallen leaves	• Increased precipitation
• Colder temperatures	• Bare branches



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

[www.plt.org](http://www.plt.org)