

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!

EVERY TREE FOR ITSELF

This active simulation explores the conditions that trees need to live and grow.

Have children think about the things they need to live and grow. Then ask about the things trees need to survive. Ask:

- What are a tree's needs, and how does a tree get them?
- What happens to a tree when it does not get what it needs?

Explain how trees use leaves to capture sunlight and roots to access water and nutrients. Have children pretend they are trees and draw a circle around each child to show their root spread diameter. See the Tree Height and Root Spread diagram for how to determine the diameter of the circle.

Have children stand in the middle on their circle. Remind them that trees are rooted to the ground and cannot move or talk in order to get what they need.

Ask children to demonstrate how a tree might act if sunlight only reached one side. What might a tree look like if it is hungry, thirsty, or cold? What might happen if a tree's root spread overlapped with those of other trees? How do trees compete for survival?

MAKE LEARNING FUN!

Encourage your child's school to incorporate outdoor learning by connecting with your local PLT program.

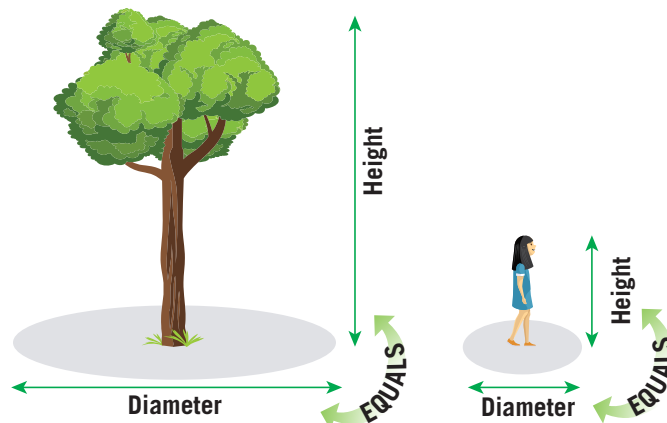
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FOREST FACT

For many species, a tree's height is roughly equal to the diameter of its root spread. This concept is illustrated in the diagrams to the right.



TREE HEIGHT AND ROOT SPREAD



Tree height = diameter of roots!

