

EPK 3 Focus Questions and Learning Goals for Trees

Children will explore many aspects of trees during this study and consider the various ways we use trees and their parts in our daily lives. Children will take nature walks to see the trees around school and note how they change throughout the fall. Teachers will help children build early math and science skills through opportunities to observe trees and sort tree-related items. Children will also enjoy hands-on time with pumpkins and apples and engage with seasonal art and music.

Study 2: Trees	Oct. 28	What do we know about trees? What do we want to find out? What are the characteristics of the trees in our community?
	Nov. 4	Who lives in trees?
	Nov. 11	What food comes from trees?
	Nov. 18	How do trees change?
	Nov. 25	What can we do with parts of trees? Celebrating Learning (<i>Thanksgiving Week</i>)

Language and Literacy: Name and Letter Recognition

Listening Skills

Become aware of the sounds of spoken language (e.g., sing simple and familiar songs with a group or individually, identify environmental sounds such as a doorbell, fire engine, or water running).

Rhyming

Develop phonological awareness by becoming aware of the sounds of spoken language (e.g., begin to supply rhyming words in a familiar poem or song).

Recognizing Own Name

Recognize that symbols have corresponding meaning (e.g., look for and identify familiar logos or signs, find own name card on a carpet square and sit there).

Listening to and Discussing Books

Develop comprehension by demonstrating understanding of text during and after reading (e.g., listen to and discuss a variety of books).

Making Predictions

Develop comprehension by demonstrating understanding of text during and after reading (e.g., make guesses about what a story is about).

Letter Recognition

Recognize some letters, especially those in the child's name.

Regular Plurals

Use more conventions of speech when speaking (e.g., use 's' at the end of plurals).

Mathematics: Counting, Making Sets, and Subitizing

Reciting the Number Sequence

Recites number words in sequence from 1 to 5.
Recites number words in sequence from 1 to 10.

Quantities

Identifies quantities of one, two, and more.

Counting

Show beginning interest in numerals and counting.
Counts two objects using one-to-one correspondence.
Counts five objects using one-to-one correspondence.

Social Foundations: Learning Through Play at Interest Centers

Rules

Follows classroom rules frequently.
Can learn to follow different rules in different contexts and can do so with reminders (e.g., use indoor voices indoors but not outdoors).

Center Time

Chooses where to play during center time.
Seeks experiences with new toys and materials (e.g., listens to stories, plays with friends at the water table, takes trips to the fire station).
Can put down a toy and remember its location for a brief period of time.

Using Materials with Modeling

Begins to understand how to use age-appropriate classroom materials with modeling and prompting.
Follows adult direction and modeling for an assigned task (e.g., turning pages of book with care, then puts book back onto shelf with prompting).

Cleaning Up the Classroom

Begins to recognize where materials belong.
Able to sort materials by two different characteristics (e.g., blocks go here, dolls go here).

Asking Questions

Begins to ask basic "wh" questions related to the environment (e.g., "Where is Sarah going?").

Enjoying Learning

Starts to demonstrate enthusiasm for new challenges and experiences.
Understands explanations when concrete objects and actions support the verbal explanation, and phenomena are directly observable (e.g., "When we mix colors, we get a new color. See what color you get when you mix yellow with blue").

Social Studies: Trees

Trees

Identify how trees can be used to make products.
Identify how trees can satisfy needs, such as for food and shelter.
Recognize trees as a feature of the local environment.

Exploring Jobs

Explore more complex situations and concepts, beginning to understand some people's jobs and care for the environment (e.g., pretend to be a firefighter and spray the dramatic play center with a play hose, telling everyone to get out).

Rules

Have beginning understanding of consequences when following routines and recreating familiar events (e.g., try to follow the rules of a simple board game and become frustrated when not understanding why something has changed, help to clean up, saying, "We are a team.").

Science: Trees

Sorting Fall Leaves

Observe and compare fall leaves.
Show interest in concepts such as matching and sorting according to a single criteria.
Sort fall leaves according to color or shape.

Exploring Apples and Pumpkins

Participate in classroom carving of pumpkin and observe seeds.
Participate in a cooking activity involving apples or pumpkins.
Compare pumpkin seeds with tree seeds, such as apple seeds.

Science Skills

Seek information through observation, exploration, and descriptive investigations with simple science tools (e.g., ask lots of "why" questions, use tools such as magnifying glass, balance scale and measuring cups for investigation, guess that a nut is inside an acorn, and confirm that prediction by breaking, with assistance, the acorn to find out).
Use scientific thinking and the senses to discover the world around him; make comparisons between objects.

Physical Well-Being: Taking Care of Myself and Motor Skill Development

Self-Help Skills

Feel more grown up as he accomplishes self-help and housekeeping tasks with reminders (e.g., take care of his own toileting needs and wash and dry his own hands.).

Fine Motor Skills

Develop fine-motor skills through manipulation of stringing beads, lacing cards, and using pegboards.
Try a variety of writing tools at writing center to experiment and create.

Gross Motor Skills

Develop gross-motor skills by throwing large playground balls.

Safety

Sort items under the headings "Mr. Yuk" and "Mr. Yum."
Identify firefighters and police officers as helpers.
Practice Stop, Drop, and Roll.
Participate in monthly fire drills.

Fine Arts: Exploring Art and Colors

Exploring Art and Colors

Create self-initiated open-ended art project.
Identify primary colors; create new colors using paint or dough.

Dance

Participate in music games that require coordinated full-body movement to the music.

Singing and Following Cues

Chant words to familiar songs with modeling.
Sing familiar songs independently.
Participate in fingerplays (e.g., "Itsy Bitsy Spider") led by adults.

Care for Art Materials

Demonstrate appropriate use and cleanup of art materials in art.

Spiritual Development: Thanksgiving and Advent

Thanksgiving

Listen to and discuss stories of Jesus' miracles, such as the feeding of the five thousand and the healing of ten lepers.
Discuss expressing gratitude for the good things God gives us.
Participate in collecting for the food bank and identify this act as a way to share what God has given us.

Advent

Listen to and discuss stories about God preparing the world for Jesus' birth, such as the angel Gabriel visiting Mary and Isaiah's prophecies.
Recognize Advent as a season of preparing to welcome Baby Jesus

Kindness: Thankfulness and Generosity

Generosity

Discuss the importance of sharing and generosity as part of participating in Halloween candy collection.
Read "Last Stop on Market Street" and discuss how soup kitchens and pantries serve the community.
Create collection bags to gather nonperishable food donations for Gaithersburg HELP.

Resolving Conflicts Peacefully

Get and use Peace Wands with teacher guidance.
"Speak from the Heart and be a Star Listener."
Use visual strategy cues to resolve conflicts.

Thankfulness

Read about and discuss the feeling of thankfulness.
Name things they are thankful for.

Feelings

Show different emotions in their faces and bodies.
Begin learning "Where Are My Feelings?"
Reflect and comment on feelings in the body.
Tell how feelings we like and don't like are helpful.

Mindful Breathing

Practice following the breath using belly buddies.

