

Tree Exploration : Standing Tall at Cheekwood

Gardens & Trail (60 minutes) | Pre-K and K | 60 student maximum

About

We will immerse the students in nature, and in doing so, we will review the parts of a tree and their important jobs. We will observe the trees at Cheekwood and investigate the animals that use our trees for shelter. Come explore with us!

Objectives

1. Identify parts of the tree and their important functions (roots, trunk, branches, leaves).
2. Search for Tennessee animals that shelter in trees.
3. Discuss which trees change throughout the season and why.

Pre-Visit

Prior to attending the field trip, it is beneficial to review the vocabulary listed and introduce the topics of discussion. We will be walking, using binoculars, and exploring using our senses. Please share with us additional topics that you are discussing in class, and we will incorporate them if we can.

Overview of the Day

1. Greetings and guidelines
2. Break into preassigned groups of 15-20 students
3. Stations
 - *Parts of a Tree (20 minutes)*
 - Guiding questions: What are the parts of a tree? What does each part do?
 - Observe trees, discuss their parts, investigate bark and cross sections.
 - *Trees as Homes (20 minutes)*
 - Guiding questions: Which animals live in trees? Which of those can we find at Cheekwood?
 - Use binoculars and listening to locate animals or evidence of them.
 - *Trees through the Seasons (20 minutes)*
 - Guiding questions: What season are we in right now? What major colors do you see in each season?
 - Nature activity

Vocabulary

Branch – natural division of a tree trunk, extending off the trunk, and supporting the leaves, fruits, and flowers

Crown – upper part of the tree that includes the branches, twigs, and leaves/needles

Dormant – active resting period

Flower – part of a plant that has petals, grows fruit

Fruit – part of a flowering plant that contains seeds

Habitat – natural home for plants and animals, where they can find everything needed to survive and grow

Leaf – part of a plant attached to the stem or branch that resembles a flat structure, is typically green, and absorbs the sunlight

Pinecone – the cone shaped woody part of a pine tree, with scales that protect the seeds

Root – part of a plant that holds it sturdy and upright, absorbs water and nutrients from the soil, and is typically hidden underground

Seed – contains the parts needed to grow a new plant

Trunk – the main stem of a tree that supports it and carries water/food to the rest of the tree

Twig – small shoot or branch from a tree or shrub, usually without leaves

Standards Covered

PK.AL.SR.5 – *Maintain focus appropriate to completing a task and/or learning activity.*

PK.AL.CO.11 – *Ask and respond to questions with peers and adults in individual and group activities.*

PK.ESS2.01B – *Observe and discuss changes in weather and seasons using common weather-related vocabulary.*

PK.ESS3.01A – *Observe, describe, and compare the habitats of plants and animals.*

PK.ETS1.01A – *Use senses to gather, explore, and interpret information.*

PK.ETS2.01 – *Recognize that tools have specific characteristics that determine their use. Explore familiar environments through the use of simple tools.*

PK.PD.1 – *Compare, contrast, and describe different sights, smells, sounds, tastes, and textures found in the environment.*

PK.PD.5 – *Experiment with handheld tools to develop strength, control, and dexterity of small muscles.*

K.LS1.1 – *Use information from observations to identify the differences between plants and animals and how they live and grow.*

K.ESS2.3 – *Develop and use models to predict weather and identify patterns in spring, summer, autumn, winter.*

K.ETS1.3 – *Ask and answer questions about the scientific world and gather information using the senses.*

K.ETS2.1 – *Use appropriate tools to make observations and answer testable scientific questions.*

Post Visit

Each student will receive a book about trees. This program also offers the option to have a native tree planted at the school. Consider bringing nature into the classroom by doing bark or leaf rubbings using crayons and paper.

Post-Visit Book Suggestions

Tree (Britta Teckentrup)

Tap the Magic Tree (Christie Matheson)

A Tree for All Seasons: Rise and Shine (Robin Bernard)

The Busy Tree (Jennifer Ward)

Be a Tree! (Maria Gianferrari)

Tree Full of Wonder (Anna Smithers)

A Tree is a Home (Pamela Hickman)

Abuela's Wishing Tree: El árbol de los deseos de Abuela (Mitzi Fernandez Spitzer)

Background on Cheekwood

Cheekwood is a 55-acre botanical garden and art museum located on the historic Cheek estate. Originally built as the home of Leslie and Mabel Cheek in 1929, Cheekwood is one of the finest examples of an American Country Place Era estate. Since being converted into a museum of art and botanical garden in 1960, Cheekwood has presented world-class art exhibitions, spectacular gardens, and a historic estate unlike anything else.