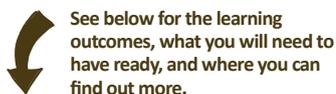


Once a tree trail



See below for the learning outcomes, what you will need to have ready, and where you can find out more.

Learners will have/be able to:

- Name a variety of different products made from wood in pre/historic times, today made from other materials
- Name a variety of different products that we use in our everyday lives that are made from wood, or other parts of trees.
- Explain the importance of using wood from well-managed sources, and the name of a quality mark denoting this.
- Suggest some object/s they might consider buying made from local wood, rather than other materials, in the future.
- Taken part as an individual, in pairs and in groups and expressed their own ideas and feelings

Outdoor space

A woodland with well-defined boundaries for a search exercise, or a pathway

Mats with card labels for sorting

2 – labels *once a tree* and *never a tree*

Tree related items or

items not made from trees

3 x number of groups – see below

Tree products (2 items per group)

Coffee, balloon, Bounty bar, hockey stick, model wooden furniture, tea-tree soap, aspirin carton, coir mat, paper bag, clothes peg, maple syrup, modal clothing, apple, charcoal, cork, chewing gum, wooden box, book, wooden bowl/plate

Non-tree products (1 item per group)

Metal spoon, plastic yo-yo, plastic recorder, plastic boat, model house made from Lego bricks, plastic clothes peg, a tin, leather belt, toothbrush, plastic plate, metal plate, hammer

Item with FSC Quality Kite Mark

Forestry Commission *Tree Trumps* cards

try RHET/FCS to borrow

Forest Education Initiative

Other ideas for outdoor activities introducing biodiversity as a concept – see Forest School Scotland Resources section – Activities
www.foresteducation.org

Forest Stewardship Council United Kingdom

Other ideas for outdoor/indoor activities
www.fsc-uk.org

The Centre for Timber Engineering

www.cte.napier.ac.uk/firrs

This game is designed to introduce the idea that wood is an incredibly versatile raw material, with many useful properties, as good as/ beyond many other common materials we use, and that the learners may be more familiar with e.g. plastic, pottery, metal.

In the past there was no choice, wood was the most important raw material in historic times for most household items, ships, houses and more – this explains the deforestation of Great Britain long ago. Great Britain is still the country with least forest cover in Europe (about 12% compared a European average of around 45%). Today, we have a choice and we can make a difference – we can choose items made from wood rather than plastic. With our concerns about climate change it may be that more people will look to wood more, and value it once again as a sustainable, renewable, raw material.

Depending on the items used for this activity, you may be able to make links with woodcraft skills used for generations, and still surviving – some undergoing a revival e.g. basket weaving, hurdle and besom production etc.

Preparatory activity

Start by asking what items do they have in the classroom/kitchen at home that are made from wood. In groups, children can make a mind map or large drawing of the room with these items labelled. What is the most strange/ amazing thing they have ever come across made from wood? Explain that wood can be called timber. It is a natural resource and it is renewable – check they know why. They may be quite interested in the different products they see every day that originally come from a tree – let's see if we can challenge them, by going on the *Once a tree trail!*



Activity 1

01 Prepare the trail in advance of the activity. Lay the objects out within a clearly defined area, which you can describe to participants. Use hollows, forks of low branches, cracks in bark etc. as places to hide/wedge the items. Know how many items you have set out! Otherwise use a section/ length of footpath through a wood, along which participants can walk.

02 Invite the students to walk quietly around the area/along the section of path silently counting how many objects they can spot. When they have finished they can whisper the number they have found in your ear – make a mental note who has seen most/ least. When everyone has finished or after a few minutes, gather the class together. If necessary, ask for 5 or 6 volunteers to tell the class one thing they spotted but not where it is, so they have more idea what to look for – send the students off again to see if they can find more this time; tell them how many items there are. After a few minutes, gather the class and see if anyone has had more success.

03 Within small groups, with a group leader, ask each group to gather up 3 items from the area and sort them – those that are made from part of a tree, those that are not. Take them to the two labelled (once a tree/never a tree) mats and place them on the relevant one. Stand in a circle (sticky knees/elbows) around the 2 mats, and discuss any items that they are unsure about.

04 For a selection of items made from parts of a tree, give relevant information about that object, such as which part of a tree it has been made from, where that tree naturally grows, whether it is in danger of being lost through deforestation, other human activity or climate change.

If you have enough packs, have a break and each group could play a game of Tree Trumps and tell you some of the things they have learned or been surprised about. Back at school ask them to write about at least one tree and its uses.

For those items not made from any part of a tree, ask them: “which could be made from wood?” and “which material would be best to make the object from?” Consider how the materials you choose need to be fit for purpose and they need to be aesthetically (feel, taste, look and/or sound) pleasing – not everything can be made from wood. Compare a wooden spoon with a metal/ plastic spoon/plate – which do they like best and why?

If wood is an appropriate material, why would it be good to use these days? Compare the carbon dioxide CO₂ released into atmosphere in producing the alternative raw materials – metals, plastic, clay – and reinforce that wood stores carbon throughout the lifetime of the object, it is then biodegradable – breaks down – no landfill!

You may also like to consider and hand around the log and the charcoal. “Tell me, why is wood a better fuel to burn than fossil fuels?” This can link back/through to Unit 4 on wood fuel. Which material will generate the most carbon dioxide CO₂ – wood fuel or fossil fuels? When fossil fuels and wood are burned, CO₂ that was once stored in the fuel is released into the air. When would burning wood be a good thing to do?

Finally hold up an item carrying the **FSC quality mark** for wood products. Do they know what this means? If not, ask does it matter where that wood material has come from? This mark tells the consumer that the wood from which the product is made comes from a sustainable/ renewable source – it is a quality mark...like the wool mark they may know. Otherwise, the wood may have come from a Primary forest/deforested forest source, a native source can do the same job. If it is a local FSC product, then this reduces the carbon dioxide CO₂ emissions even further because transporting/shipping heavy/bulky timber produces a lot of emissions.

In a sharing circle, ask each child to consider one thing they will research, try and look for, and choose to buy that was once a tree – to make a difference. Challenge the class to look out for certified items next time they are shopping in the supermarket. Report back to the class with what they have found and/or bought.

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