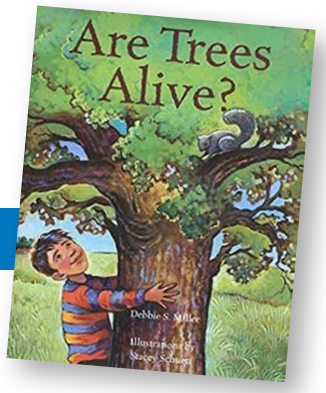
Are Trees Alive?



RIF EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR EDUCATORS

INTERDISCIPLINARY THEMES: ART, COMMUNITY SERVICE, ENGINEERING, MATH, SOCIAL STUDIES, TECHNOLOGY, WRITING

ART, WRITING

PAINTING WITH NATURE

Materials: natural objects (e.g., leaves, acorns, rocks), paint, paper

Take your students on a nature walk to collect natural objects (*note: can also be done on the playground/outside*). Have your students use their items as paint brushes on their paper. Have students share their artwork and describe the different types of paint strokes that were created with the items from nature.

COMMUNITY SERVICE, ENGINEERING

SENSORY GARDEN

Materials: paper, pencil, computer for research (optional)

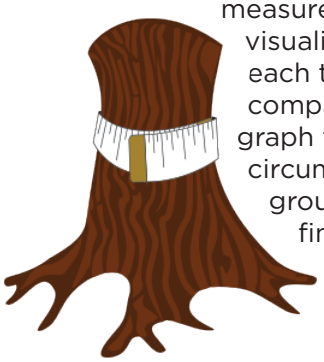
Work with students to design their own sensory garden for their community. The items in the garden need to include an item for each of the five senses. Brainstorm a list of items that can be included in a garden to appeal to each sense. Next, have your students work together in pairs to design a blueprint for their garden. What shape will it be? Where will it be in your community? What will it have to help keep it alive?

MATH

ESTIMATING THE AGE OF A TREE

Materials: measuring tape (can also use string and a yard stick), paper, pencil

Begin this activity by investigating the connection between a tree's circumference and its age. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKc-m7S0AcQ. Then, take your students outside to locate trees surrounding the school. Assign pairs to a tree and have them measure the **circumference** (around the trunk) of the tree and write down the number. When all trees are measured, as a class, create a graph visualizing the circumference of each tree. Then, have students compare their data on the graph to identify the largest circumference. Have a whole group discussion about your findings. The tree with the largest circumference is the oldest!



ART, SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES

PSA: SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT!

There are many ways that people can help protect the environment! In pairs, have your students research threats to the environment. Each pair should select one threat that stands out to them the most. Then, have them create a poster or brochure to highlight the threat and ways people can help. Encourage your students to hang their posters or pass out their brochures around their community to advocate for their environmental issue.

TECHNOLOGY LINK

Author Debbie Miller encourages children to read her book and then find a special place to plant their own tree with their family. Visit her website at www.debbiemilleralaska.com for more information. A picture of your tree may even end up on her website!