

Tree Story

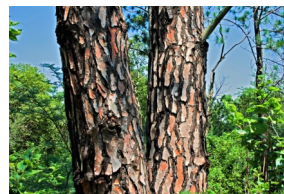


A tree is the largest of all plants and the oldest known living thing. Trees provide us with food, fiber, and medicine. Most importantly, they give us lumber for building things and for making different products. Wood pulp is used to make paper, plastics, and other products. Trees also provide fruit, nuts, chocolate, coffee, maple syrup, and cinnamon.

There are about 20,000 kinds of trees in the world. There are four main parts of a tree: the **trunk**, the branches, the leaves, and the roots.

The center of the tree trunk is called **Heartwood** and gives the tree support. Tubes called **xylem** carry water and minerals to the leaves from the roots. Heartwood is old xylem tubes that no longer carry water and minerals. The xylem tubes are surrounded by a layer of tissue called **Cambium**. The job of cambium is to make the trunk, branches, and roots grow thicker. Surrounding that layer of cambium comes a soft tissue called **Phloem**. Its job is to transport food made by the leaves to other parts of the tree.

The outer layer of the tree, or cork layer, is called the bark. **Bark** is hard, dead tissue that protects the living inner parts of the tree. The bark stretches to let the trunk and branches grow thicker, although, on most trees the bark does not easily stretch. As the bark is stretched, some of it will crack and dry to become rough.



Trees help the environment in many ways...

- Windbreakers for animals and homes.
- Add organic matter back into the soil through fallen leaves.
 - Help keep soil in one spot through the root system.
 - Take in Carbon Dioxide that we breathe out.
 - Add water into the air.

Leaves are like a tree's fingerprint. Each one is unique, but it is a good way to identify what kind of tree it is.



Try this at home...

Leaf Rubbings

You will need...

- Large crayon or colored
- chalk
- Thin paper
- Leaves
- Hair spray

Step 1: Collect interesting leaves, and lay them flat on a hard, smooth surface.

Step 2: Cover the leaves with paper, and rub the side of the crayon or chalk on the paper.

Step 3: Ask an adult to spray the pictures with hair spray to keep the chalk from smearing.





Career Corner

Forest Ranger - Forest Rangers act as the liaisons between the forest and the public. Rangers report on conditions in the forest such as fire dangers, inclement weather conditions, and forest health. They work directly in the forest with Mother Nature to keep the public safe.

How Forest Rangers Benefit Agriculture:

- Help protect conservation of natural resources.
- Help protect wildlife.

Forest Rangers Study:

- Wildlife Conservation
- Biology



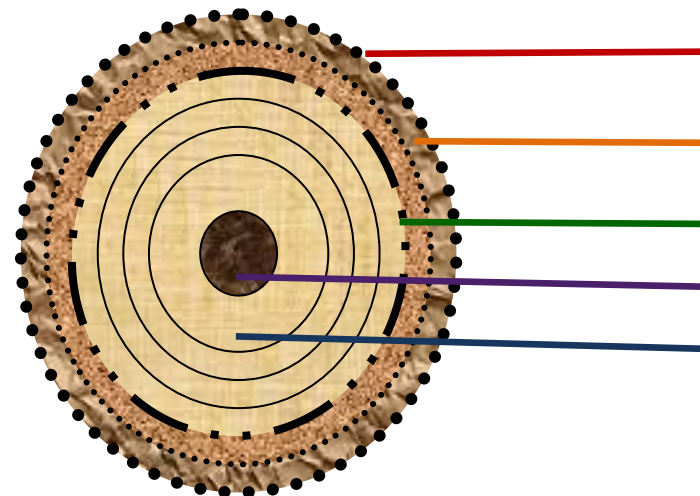
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Farm Facts

- Almost 1/3 of the US is covered by forests!
- Every year about 2.5 million acres of trees are planted in the US.
- In one year, an acre of trees can absorb as much carbon as is produced by a car driven up to 8700 miles.
- Alabama is reported to plant the most trees annually.

Can you Label the tree ring?



Outer bark

Inner bark (phloem)

Sapwood (Xylem)

Heartwood

Cambium

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