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Unit Objectives

1. **Concepts.** Students will understand the following environmental concepts:
 - a. The natural environment is made up of sunlight, air, water, land, plants, and animals.
 - b. We need each of these elements to be able to live.
 - c. Living trees provide many benefits to us and other living things.
 - d. We cut trees down to make many wood and paper products.
 - e. Wasting paper uses up trees, which are important in our environment and which are slow to replace.
 - f. Littering the environment with paper and other wastes looks bad, harms animals, is unhealthy, and is not fair to others.
 - g. Recycling paper instead of putting it in the trash will help save trees.
 - h. Everyone needs to help save paper and trees and keep our environment beautiful and clean.

2. **Skills.** Students will:
 - a. identify products made from trees (newspapers, wood toys and furniture, tissue, books, cardboard, boxes, plates, cups, napkins, etc.)
 - b. identify behaviors that help conserve paper and keep the environment clean and litter-free.

3. **Behaviors.** Students will practice the following behaviors to help the environment:
 - a. Take only what you really need when using paper towels, napkins, tissues, and other things made from paper.
 - b. Use washable towels, napkins, plates, and cups instead of throw-away paper ones when you have a choice.
 - c. Recycle paper.
 - d. Put trash in trash cans; do not litter.
 - e. Use only as much water as needed.

Planning

Instruction on the unit's objectives is organized into **five lessons** with detailed instructional procedures for each lesson, including a listing of the objectives addressed, the materials required, and the preparation needed. The vocabulary introduced in each lesson is listed prior to the procedures and is highlighted within the lesson with pop-up definitions.

At the end of each lesson are **additional activities**, which can help students not only accomplish the lesson objectives but also apply environmental concepts and behaviors to other disciplines and to everyday living. Each of the five lessons can be completed in one or more days, depending on your class and the activities that you do.

Following Lesson 5 are **Unit Follow-Up Activities** that can be used periodically throughout the remainder of the year to reinforce the unit's objectives and to help students further develop strong environmental attitudes and habits.



Learning About Trees

Objectives

Concepts: Students will understand the following environmental concepts:

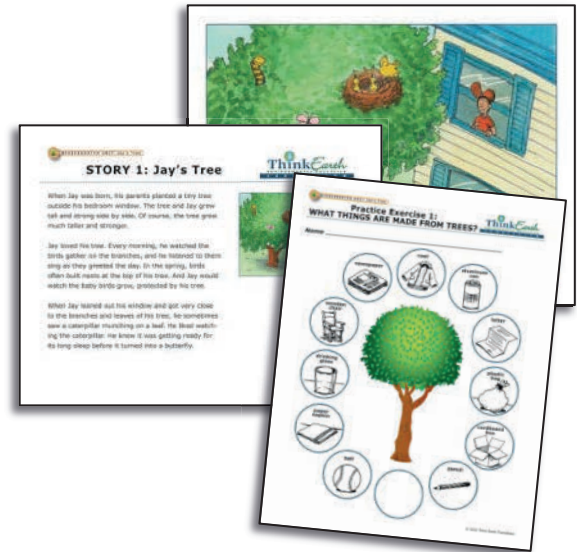
- c. Living trees provide many benefits to us and other living things.
- d. We cut trees down to make many wood and paper products.

Skills: Students will:

- a. Identify products made from trees.

Materials

- Story 1, *Jay's Tree* (video or PDF)
- Large drawing or cutout of tree for bulletin board
- Various wood-based and nonwood-based products (or pictures)
- Practice Exercise 1



Preparation

- Prepare to present Story 1, *Jay's Tree*. You can show students the video or show the PDF pictures and read the story aloud or print the PDF and create a book to read to students.
- Draw or cut out a large tree for the bulletin board. (Use Practice Exercise 1 as a sample.)
- Gather several wood-based products or pictures of the products (e.g., book, pencil, writing paper, wrapping paper, newspaper, magazine, napkin, tissue, paper cup, paper plate, ice cream stick, cardboard box, wooden toy, wooden chair, wooden wagon).
- Gather several nonwood-based products or pictures of the products (e.g., ball, drinking glass, shirt, plastic bag, plastic doll, aluminum can, shoe, eraser, chalk, china plate, cloth towel, stuffed toy).
- Prepare to present Practice Exercise 1. Make copies to hand out to each student and/or project on a screen or smartboard to use with the entire class.

Vocabulary

- **lumber** – wood from trees that is cut to use in building and in making wooden products

Procedures

A. Show or read Story 1, *Jay's Tree*

- Tell students that they are going to listen to a story about living in the environment.
- Present the story *Jay's Tree* to students in one of the following ways:
 - Show the [video of Jay's Tree](#).
 - Project the pictures from the [PDF](#) and read the text from the script (included in the PDF and at the end of this lesson).
 - Print the [PDF](#) and create a book to read to students.
- Use the questions below to discuss the story.

1. What did Jay's tree need to grow?

(water, air, sunlight, and soil)

2. What animals lived and played in Jay's tree?

(birds, caterpillars, his cat)

3. What did Jay like to do with his tree?

(He liked to sit in the shade under it; he liked to hide behind it; and he liked to just look at it.)

4. How do you think Jay felt about his tree?

(Answers will vary.)

5. Where did all the wood in the lumberyard come from?

(It all came from trees.)

6. What are some things we see every day that **lumber is used to make?**

(Examples might include tables, chairs, pencils, fences, houses.)

7. Where does paper come from?

(Wood from trees is used to make paper.)

8. What are some things made out of paper that we use every day?

(Examples might include books, writing paper, newspaper, napkins, cups, bags, boxes, tissues, towels, toilet paper, cardboard.)

9. Why are living trees important?

(Animals live and play in trees. Trees provide food for animals and for people. Trees provide shade. And trees are pretty.)

10. Why are trees important after they are cut down?

(Trees provide wood to build things and to make paper.)



B. Conduct group practice

- Point out the tree you have drawn or cut out for the bulletin board. Tell students that this tree is a tree much like Jay's tree.
- Tell students that you are going to hold up some items and/or pictures of items and that for each one, they are to decide if the item is made from a tree or not. If the item is a wood-based product, made from a tree, attach it to a branch of the tree on the bulletin board; place larger items at the base of the tree. Put aside the items that are not wood-based, perhaps explaining that other natural resources were used to make these products.
- Have students draw or cut out magazine pictures of other things that are made from trees. Place the items or pictures on the bulletin board, or give students their own copies of a tree and have them paste the pictures they cut out on their trees. For homework, have students find more items or pictures of items made from trees.

C. Have students complete Practice Exercise 1, *What Things are Made from Trees?*

- Complete Practice Exercise 1 with students in one of the following ways:
 - Give each student a copy along with a pencil or crayon.
 - Project the exercise on a screen or smartboard.
 - Give each student a copy AND project the page.
- Ask students to describe what they see on the exercise. Explain to students that some of the items shown around the tree are made from trees and some are not. Tell students that they are to decide which of the items are made from trees.
- Work through the exercise one picture at a time, reading the name of each object. If students have their own copies, have them draw a line connecting the picture to the tree if the item is made from a tree, and put an X over the picture if it is not made from a tree. If working on a smartboard, ask various students to draw the lines and Xs on the projected image.
- Have students draw in the empty circle another item they can think of that is made from a tree.



Additional Activities

- **Use a flannel board.** Create a flannel tree and objects that are both wood-based and nonwood-based. Use the flannel board to help individual students practice identifying what comes from trees or place it in a learning center.
- **Make up stories.** Have children dictate and illustrate their own stories about a tree. Put together a class book in the shape of a tree, or display the stories on the tree bulletin board.
- **Construct a tree.** Have students construct a tree on the floor using colored blocks and put wood-based objects into the tree.
- **Collect leaves.** Have children collect fallen leaves and discuss the different shapes and sizes. Do leaf rubbings, transferring the leaf patterns onto paper. Have students put their leaves on the bulletin board tree.
- **Plant a tree.** Have students participate in planting a tree, preferably on the schoolyard, and help in taking care of the tree. Keep a class journal, having students describe how they care for the tree and what they observe about its growth.
- **Adopt a tree.** Find a tree on the school grounds or one nearby and have the class “adopt” it. Have children visit the tree periodically, draw pictures of the tree, and tell stories about the tree. Discuss what the tree needs to survive and thrive and how the tree affects and is affected by its environment.
- **Act out *Jay’s Tree*.** Show the PDF pictures from the story *Jay’s Tree* and have students act out or retell the story.
- **Learn a song.** Teach students the following song. If desired, have students listen and sing along to the audio of either the **vocal** or **instrumental** recording. (**Note:** A new verse is added to this song at every grade level.)

(to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”)

Think Earth, Think Earth
Is our song.
Everyone should sing along.

Don’t waste paper,
Save a tree.
It is good for you and me.

Think Earth, Think Earth
Is our song.
Everyone should sing along.







STORY 1: Jay's Tree

"Gee," Jay sighed, sitting down on a stack of wood. "I never knew we used so much wood. It must take a lot of trees."

"Yes, it does," answered Mr. Stevens. "And wood from trees is used for something else, too—to make paper."

"Paper!" said Jay surprised. "We make paper out of trees?"

"That's right," replied Mr. Stevens. "Wood is chopped up into tiny pieces and made into paper."

"Like the paper I write and draw on in school?" Jay wanted to know.

"Yes," said Mr. Stevens. "Wood is made into all kinds of paper. Just look around." Mr. Stevens pointed here and there while saying, "See the bag the popcorn is in, see the newspaper that man is reading, see the cardboard boxes against the wall, see the tissue that woman is using, and see the book that girl is looking at? All of these are made from wood from trees."

"Boy," said Jay. "I knew I liked trees, but I never knew how many things trees were used for."

"Trees are very important," said Mr. Stevens, "both when they are alive and growing and when they are cut down. We'll always need trees."

