

PLT for Seedlings

Wisconsin Project Learning Tree (PLT) Early Childhood Program

DRAFT - Children's Literature Bibliography

Exploring nature is a complete sensory experience, inviting children to touch, hear, view, and taste their surroundings. These key sensory-motor experiences in the early childhood years lead to the development of imagination and curiosity—an important motivator for life-long learning. Early experiences in the out-of-doors also have the potential for shaping life-long attitudes, values, and patterns of behavior toward the physical world.



The recommended books in this bibliography focus on five themes for early childhood learning:

- ◆ The diversity of shapes in the natural and built world
- ◆ Tree parts and their functions
- ◆ Tree observations through the seasons
- ◆ Trees as homes for wildlife
- ◆ Sounds of the forest.

You can easily integrate the books into your existing curriculum, or use them in conjunction with the **Wisconsin Project Learning Tree Early Childhood Activity Guide and Music/Movement CD**. The materials integrate music and movement, nature exploration, literature, art, assessment opportunities, and a snack into over 25 nature-based learning experiences. The activity guide and compact disc are available through educator workshops. To locate a workshop in your area, go to the Teacher's Workshop Calendar on the DNR's EEK! Web site at:

www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eek/teacher/calendar.htm

The Shape of Things

We depend on all of our senses to gather impressions of our environment. The literature selections below draw on the sense of sight to explore the diversity of shapes in the natural and built world:

Animal Houses by Aileen Fisher.

Bowmar: 1973.

ISBN: 0837208599.

Discover the joys of nature observation and exploration through the eyes of a child in one of the many books by Aileen Fisher. Through rhyme, this book compares the square houses of people with the rounded dwellings of a variety of animals. For ages 3-6.

Autumn Leaves by Ken Robbins.

Scholastic Inc.: 1998.

ISBN: 0590298798

The author invites children to learn about the characteristics of thirteen different trees, focusing on the shapes of their leaves. For ages 4-7.

Eye Spy Shapes by Debbie MacKinnon.

Charlesbridge: 2000.

ISBN: 0881061352

Vivid, multicolored photographs invite the reader to look through the peepholes to discover five simple shapes: a square, triangle, circle, star, and rectangle. For ages 3 - 7.

Look What I Did With a Leaf! by Morteza E. Sohi.

Scholastic Inc.: 1993.

ISBN: 0802782159

The author offers creative ideas for making nature creatures out of a variety of differently shaped leaves. Includes a basic leaf field guide. For ages 3-6.

Nature Spy by Shelley Rotner and Ken Kreisler.

Macmillan: 1992.

ISBN: 0027778851

Photographs portray a young girl as she takes a close-up look at nature's wonders—examining an acorn on a branch, the lines on a leaf, and the golden eye of a frog. For ages 3-6.

Shapes, Shapes, Shapes by Tana Hoban.

Greenwillow Books: 1986.

ISBN: 0688147402

Photographs of familiar objects exhibiting round and angular shapes enliven this colorful picture book. For ages 2-5.

So Many Circles, So Many Squares by Tana Hoban.

Greenwillow Books: 1998.

ISBN: 0688151655

This brightly illustrated picture book reveals circles and squares in the natural and manmade world.

For ages 3-6.

The Shape of Me and Other Stuff by Dr. Seuss.

Random House: 1997.

ISBN: 0679886311

Rhyme and silhouette encourage children to consider the shape of bees, beans, flowers, and big machines.

For ages 2-5.

The Shape of Things by Dayle Ann Dodds.

Candlewick Press: 1994.

ISBN: 1564022242

An energetically illustrated introduction to shapes, bright paper-collage artwork reveals how six basic shapes come together to form houses, boats, and ferris wheels.

"A square is just a square, / Until you add a roof, / Two windows and a door, / Then it's much, much more!" Supply a flannel board with shapes to extend learning. For ages 3-5.

To Be a Tree

From a tree's roots to its crown, each part of a tree plays a role in helping it to function. Children will enjoy pretending to be a tree while gaining an awareness of a tree's structure and functions. Related literature selections include:

Are Trees Alive? by Debbie S. Miller.

Walker & Company: 2002.

ISBN: 0802788017

This delightful book poetically compares the similarities between trees and children. For ages 4-8.

Franklin Plants a Tree by Paulette

Bourgeois and Brenda Clark.

Scholastic Inc.: 2001.

ISBN: 0606211969

Franklin and his friends plant saplings on Earth Day. With water and lots of love, Franklin's tree begins to grow. For ages 4-8.

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert.

Scholastic Inc.: 1987.

ISBN: 0152325751

Vibrantly colored graphics follow a father and child as they plant, water, weed, and watch vegetable seeds grow in their garden. At harvest time, they prepare a

delicious homemade vegetable soup (the recipe is included). For ages 4-8.

How a Seed Grows by Helen J. Jordon.

Harper Collins Publishers: 1992.

ISBN: 0060201045

A how-to book that describes and illustrates the steps in growing a bean plant. For ages 4-8.

I Am a Leaf by Jean Marzollo.

Scholastic: 1998.

ISBN: 0590641204

A simple introduction to the life cycle and functions of a leaf. For ages 4-8.

Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf by Lois Ehlert.

Harcourt Brace Javanovich: 1991.

ISBN: 0152661972

A child describes the growth of a maple tree from seed to sapling. Bright, cutout collage illustrations enhance the story. Information is included on planting and caring for maple trees. For ages 4-8.

The Apple Pie Tree by Zoe Hall.

Scholastic Inc.: 1996.

ISBN: 0590623826

Two sisters share the changes that take place to their apple tree through the seasons. Fall is an especially exciting time of the year because they can pick the big, red apples.
For ages 4-7.

The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle.

Aladdin Library: 2001.

ISBN: 0689842449

Bursting with color and simple but dramatic text, Eric Carle's story follows the life cycle of a tiny seed as it grows into a giant flower. For ages 4-8.

Adopt a Tree



By adopting a tree, children can sharpen their observation skills and gain a greater awareness and appreciation of their local environment. Explore a special tree throughout the year and tie it into a discussion of seasonal changes. Suggested literature selections include:

A Tree Is Nice by Janice May Udry.

Harper & Row: 1956.

ISBN: 0064431479

An older book with a simple message, *A Tree Is Nice* describes the importance of trees to people and wildlife. Most children will be able to relate personal experiences to the story. For ages 3-7.

Have You Seen Trees? by Joanne Oppenheim.

Scholastic: 1995.

ISBN: 0590466917

The rhythmic language and lush paintings of this joyful poem celebrate the varied characteristics of trees--from young to old, short to tall, and throughout the seasons.

For ages 3-7.

Hello, Tree! by Joanne Ryder.

Lodestar Books: 1991.

ISBN: 0525673105

Through realistic illustrations and descriptive text, the author encourages children to use their senses to experience the unique properties of trees. For ages 5-9.

Mighty Tree by Dick Gackenbach.

Harcourt Brace: 1992.

ISBN: 0152005196

Mighty Tree follows the life cycle of three seeds as they grow into mature trees. Each of the trees is special to nature and people in different ways and for a variety of reasons. For ages 3-7.

My Favorite Tree; Terrific Trees of North America by Diane Iverson. Dawn

Publications: 1999.

ISBN: 1883220939

This book celebrates the joy children feel as they interact with their favorite tree in their own unique way. For older children, separate text is included that features an overview of each tree's traits, associated wildlife companions, and role in the web of life. For ages 4-12.

Old Elm Speaks by Kristine O'Connell George.

Clarion Books: 1998.

ISBN: 0395876117

Through enchanting paintings and imaginative, humorous language the author offers a delightfully original look at trees. This book captures trees in various circumstances and throughout the season in short poems, free verse, and haiku. For ages 5 and up.

The Tree in the Wood by Christopher Manson. North/South Books: 1993.

ISBN: 1558581928.

Based on a traditional folk song, the lyrics of this song explore the intertwining themes of growth, change, and the interrelationships in the natural world. Children will request that you read this book again so they can join in by repeating the green-grass refrain. For ages 4-9.

page explore a child's observations and feelings about nature. For ages 5-9.

Trees by Harry Behn.

Henry Holt and Company: 1992.

ISBN: 080501926

With simple, rhythmic, melodic text, this picture book graced with beautiful illustrations encourages young children to look more closely at trees. For ages 3-7.

A Tree for All Seasons by Robin Bernard.

National Geographic Society: 2001.

ISBN: 0792294270

Photographs depict the seasonal changes of a sugar maple tree. For ages 4-8.

Fall Leaves Fall by Zoe Hall.

Scholastic Inc.: 2000.

ISBN: 0590100793

Two brothers enjoy catching falling leaves, jumping in them, and making pictures with their different shapes. The narration includes a description of seasonal changes. For ages 3-7.

Sky Tree: Seeing Science through Art by

Thomas Locker. HarperCollins: 1995.

ISBN: 0060248831

Magnificent paintings and lyrical text invite children to experience the life of a tree and its relationship to the sky. Reflection questions at the bottom of each

The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree by Gail

Gibbons. Harcourt Brace & Company: 1991.

ISBN: 0152712453

The story of an apple tree's seasonal changes. The tree provides supplies fruit and juice for Arnold and his family, and tickles Arnold's imagination. For ages 3-7.

When Winter Comes by Nancy Van Laan

Atheneum: 2000.

ISBN: 068981778

What happens to leaves, deer, songbirds, field mice, and other living things when "winter comes and the cold winds blow?" Winter may be chilly, but this cheerful book brings warmth and energy into the frigid landscape. Rhyming text and lively paintings follow a child, his parents, and dog as they take a walk during winter's first snowfall. For ages 3-7.

Trees as Habitats

From their leafy branches to their tangled roots, trees provide a habitat for a host of plants and animals. Related literature selections include:

A Chipmunk Song by Joanne Ryder.

Lodestar Books: 1989.

ISBN: 0525672842

Joanne Ryder's unique books offer numerous opportunities for simulation activities as children pretend to be snails, chipmunks, caterpillars, and butterflies. This book features a lyrical description of a chipmunk as it goes about its activities in summer, prepares for winter, and settles in for spring. For ages 4-7.

A Log's Life by Wendy Pfeffer.

Simon and Schuster: 1997.

ISBN: 0689806361

This realistically illustrated book for older children introduces the lifecycle of a tree. This book can easily be adapted as a picture book for younger children. For ages 5 and up.

A Tree for Me by Nancy Van Laan.

Random House: 2000.

ISBN: 0679893849

A child climbs five different trees, looking for a place to hide. Each tree reveals an increasing number of animals already in residence. The author uses repetition and counting to explore the inhabitants of a tree. Children ages 3-7 will enjoy reading along with this engaging text.

Good-Night Owl! by Pat Hutchins.

MacMillan: 1972.

ISBN: 0689713711

A humorous look at an owl's daytime attempt to sleep in a tree shared with a variety of noisy wildlife. A fun, imaginative story for a class simulation. For ages 3-8.

In a Tree by David M. Schwartz.

Gareth Stevens Publications: 1999.

ISBN: 0836822455

Children will delight in discovering the inhabitants of a tree in this colorful mystery book. Each organism's anatomy is revealed through up-close observations of one feature (What could it be?) and then a large-scale photograph of the entire

organism. The simple text and photographs reveal a caterpillar, raccoon, owl, squirrel, yellow warbler, white pine, and oak tree. For ages 4-8.

In the Woods, In the Meadow, In the Sky by Aileen Fisher. Scribner: 1965.

ISBN: 0684126524

Naturalist and author Aileen Fisher captures the sense of wonder children experience while discovering the diversity of nature's inhabitants. This book features a bright collection of nature poems offering abundant opportunities for creative movement activities and finger-plays. For ages 3-8.

Our Tree by Herbert H. Wong and Matthew F. Vessel. Addison-Wesley: 1969.

ISBN: 0201087235

The author of *Our Tree* uses observations in and around a tree to show the different ways animals and insects use trees. A good introductory book, useful for sharpening observation skills before a field trip. For ages 5-9.

The Gift of the Tree by Alvin Tresselt. Lothrop, Lee & Shephard Books: 1972, 1992.

ISBN: 0688106846

Exquisite paintings capture the beauty and power of a 100-year-old oak tree in this life cycle story. The accompanying text follows the life and death of the tree as

birds, squirrels, termites, raccoons, and woodpeckers make the tree their home. Suitable for ages 5-9, and as a picture book for young children.

The Mitten by Jan Brett.

G.P. Putnam's Sons: 1989.

ISBN: 039921920X

When a young boy drops his mitten in the snow a variety of woodland animals find it and crawl inside. A warm, visually appealing, and humorous picture book. For ages 4-8.

Tree Trunk Traffic by Bianco Lavies.

Dutton: 1989.

ISBN: 0525444955

Text and photographs portray the animal life present on a 70-year-old maple tree. Suitable for ages 3-8, and as a picture book for younger children.

Wild Birds by Joanne Ryder.

Published in China: 2003.

ISBN: 0060277386

A simple lesson in observing nature, this briefly worded book invites children to watch wild birds. Twelve varieties of birds are accurately depicted in physical characteristics and behavior. Extend learning by supplying simple bird identification field guides for the children. Ages 4-7.

taste, and touch in the middle of the night. For ages 2-5.

Sounds Around

Related literature selections include:

A Walk in the Woods by Caroline Arnold.
Silver Burdett Press: 1995.
ISBN: 067168661
Colorful illustrations and text describe some of the animals and plants that live in the forest. For ages 4-8.

Counting on the Woods by George Ella Lyon.
DK Publishing, New York: 1998.
ISBN: 0789424800
A fun book that uses rhyme to describe and count nature objects observed while taking a walk in the woods.
For ages 4-8.

My Night Forest by Roy Owen.
Simon & Schuster: 1994.
ISBN: 0027690059
This story takes children on a nighttime journey deep into the forest and into the lives of five animals: an owl, wolf, bear, deer, and mouse. The story explores what these night creatures hear, see, smell,

Nature Walk by Douglas Florian.
Greenwillow Books: 1989.
ISBN: 068808266
Young children will enjoy this colorful "walk" describing the plants and animals that are natural inhabitants of the woods. In this simple book the author uses a word or short phrase of description for each two-page spread. For ages 2-5.

The Listening Walk by Paul Showers.
HarperCollins Publishers, New York: 1999.
ISBN: 069049663
A young girl takes a quiet walk with her father and identifies the different sounds they hear—such as shoes on a dirt path and crickets in the grass. For ages 2-5.

Life in the Forest by Eileen Curran.
Troll Associates: 1985.
ISBN: 0816704473
Children can find the forest inhabitants in this colorfully illustrated book for young readers. For ages 2-5.

The Other Way to Listen by Bryd Baylor.
Charles Scribner's Sons: 1978.

ISBN: 0684156512

A mystical story to encourage quiet reflection and a kinship with nature. A young man is eager to learn how to hear the hills sing and the seeds grow. The elderly man in the story is happy to share his wisdom. It takes a lot of practice and you can't be in a rush! Discussions of this story will spark the children's imaginations while encouraging them to relate their own nature experiences. Good as a read-aloud book for ages 5-9 (the illustrations are abstract).

The Quiet Way Home by Bonny Becker.

Henry Holt & Company, New York: 1995.

ISBN: 0805035303

A little girl and her grandfather take the "quiet" way home from school, walking along a path. They hear all kinds of noises, taking time to enjoy the sounds of the honeybee "buzzing," the black bird "scolding," and the grasshopper "whirring." For ages 2-5.

The Way to Wyatt's House by Nancy White

Carlstrom. Walker & Company, New York: 2000.

ISBN: 0802787401

Two children discover an array of sounds and sights as they walk to their friend Wyatt's house. Clear and colorful pictures enhance the script as the children "crunch" through autumn leaves and "swish" through the long grass.

For ages 2-5.



Compiled 2004 by Cindy Bertalan

WDNR - PLT/WILD/WET

101 S. Webster, CE/6

Madison, WI 53707-7921

608-267-2463

cindy.bertalan@dnr.state.wi.us