

Table Of Contents

Getting started and how to use Exploring Nature With Children **6**

Autumn: A list of materials you may need **12**

September

- Week One ~ Seeds **18**
- Week Two ~ Minibeast Hunt **22**
- Week Three ~ The Harvest Moon **26**
- Week Four ~ The Autumnal Equinox **29**

October

- Week One ~ Autumn Leaves **34**
- Week Two ~ Autumn Pond Study **38**
- Week Three ~ Autumn Tree Study **41**
- Week Four ~ Pumpkins **45**

November

- Week One ~ Fungus **48**
- Week Two ~ Moss **52**
- Week Three ~ Lichen **56**
- Week Four ~ Weather **59**

Winter: A list of materials you may need **64**

December

- Week One ~ Christmas Plants **69**
- Week Two ~ Birds **74**
- Week Three ~ The Winter Solstice **79**
- Week Four ~ The Twelve Days Of Christmas **83**

January

- Week One ~ The Winter Sky **88**
- Week Two ~ The Moon **92**
- Week Three ~ Winter Tree Study **97**
- Week Four ~ Pond Study **100**

February

- Week One ~ Candlemas **103**
- Week Two ~ Earthworms **106**
- Week Three ~ Evergreens **111**
- Week Four ~ A Field Trip **114**

Spring: A list of materials you may need **119**

March

- Week One ~ Nesting Birds **125**
- Week Two ~ Spring Pond Study **130**
- Week Three ~ Vernal Equinox **136**
- Week Four ~ Garden Snails **140**

April

- Week One ~ Spring Tree Study **144**
- Week Two ~ Plant Life Cycle **148**
- Week Three ~ Wild Flowers **153**
- Week Four ~ Grasses **158**

May

- Week One ~ Caterpillars **162**
- Week Two ~ Caterpillars **167**
- Week Three ~ Black Garden Ants **172**
- Week Four ~ Butterflies **177**

Summer: A list of materials you may need **181**

June

- Week One ~ A museum Visit **187**
- Week Two ~ Honeybees **191**
- Week Three ~ Blossoms **196**
- Week Four ~ The Summer Solstice **200**

July

- Week One ~ Summer Tree Study **204**
- Week Two ~ St Swithin's Day **208**
- Week Three ~ Moths **212**
- Week Four ~ A Field Trip **218**

August

- Week One ~ Night-Time Sky **223**
- Week Two ~ A Senses Walk **227**
- Week Three ~ Summer Pond Study **233**
- Week Four ~ Discussion **238**

January - Week Three

Winter Tree Study

Winter can be a very interesting time to observe trees. Their beautiful silhouettes stretch across the winter sky line, revealing their shapes more clearly in the absence of leaves.

This Week's Nature Walk Activity

This week return with your child to your regular nature spot to study the tree that you adopted back in October.

Look carefully; your tree may appear to be bare, but take a closer look and you should see buds that have formed, containing baby leaves and flowers, just waiting for the right time to grow.

Look how the buds are arranged on the twigs of your tree. The ones along the sides of the twig are called *axillary* or *lateral* buds. The bud at the tip of the branch is called a *terminal* bud. Explore the arrangement of the axillary buds along the twig.

- *Opposite* buds are just that; they grow opposite each other from the main twig in pairs.
- *Alternate* buds take turns, growing from the twig one at a time.
- *Whorled* buds grow in sets of three or more, in a circle, or *whorl* around the twig.

The places where the buds attach to the twig are called *nodes*. Below the nodes, you may see *leaf scars*. When a leaf drops, a scar is left just under the bud and some trees are easily identified by their leaf scars.

As you investigate, consider the size, shape and colour of the buds. What about their texture? Are they smooth? Furry? Sticky?

Sketch your observations in your nature journals and include any notes that may be helpful, such as those about the texture and size of the twigs or buds.

Handbook Of Nature Study:

Trees - pages 618,

Tree study - pages 622-23

Winter tree study - 624-25

Tree types - pages 628 - 692

Book List

Fiction

Once There Was a Tree by Natalia Romanova

ISBN-13: 978-0140546774

The Story Book Of Science by Jean Henri Fabre

ISBN-13: 978-1451501230

Non-Fiction

Be A Friend To Trees by Patricia Lauber

ISBN-13: 978-0439328630

Tell Me, Tree. All About Trees For Kids by Gail Gibbons

ASIN: B00MXGDEE8

A Little Guide To Trees by Charlotte Voake

ISBN-13: 978-1903919828

Trees, Leaves, And Bark by Diane Burns

ISBN-13: 978-1559716284

Sky Tree: Seeing Science Through Art by Thomas Locker

ISBN-13: 978-0064437509

A poem to enjoy this week:

Trees by Sara Coleridge

The Oak is called the king of trees,
The Aspen quivers in the breeze,
The Poplar grows up straight and tall,
The Peach tree spreads along the wall,
The Sycamore gives pleasant shade,
The Willow droops in watery glade,
The Fir tree useful in timber gives,
The Beech amid the forest lives.

A piece of art to enjoy this week

Winter Morning by Igor Grabar (1871-1960)

Oil on canvas. 1907

Extension activities for your child this week:

- Bring home a few budding twigs from your special tree. Place the freshly cut twigs into a vase of fresh water and wait patiently for your buds to open!

Which buds contain leaves and which buds the flowers?

Which buds open first, the axillary, or the terminal?

- Nature Weaving
 1. Look for a forked branch that has fallen from a tree.
 2. Take some string or yarn and tie to the top of one of the forks of the branch.
 3. Take the yarn to the other fork, wrap around a couple of times, then take the yarn back to the first fork.
 4. Repeat this process until you run out of space.
 5. Tie the yarn off tightly and cut off the remainder.
 6. Use the yarn to tuck in any nature treasures you may find, such as fallen leaves, seed heads, dried grasses, and other such items.
 7. Enjoy your handwork!
- Create a winter tree collage, using just black and white papers and recycled newspapers.
- Carefully dissect some buds from different trees. What do you find inside? Sketch your findings in your nature journal.