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 skyline, 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 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

The Story Book Of Science by Jean Henri Fabre

Non-Fiction

Be A Friend To Trees by Patricia Lauber

Tell Me, Tree. All About Trees For Kids by Gail Gibbons
ASIN: B00MXGDEE8

A Little Guide To Trees by Charlotte Voake

Trees, Leaves, And Bark by Diane Burns

Sky Tree: Seeing Science Through Art by Thomas Locker

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.