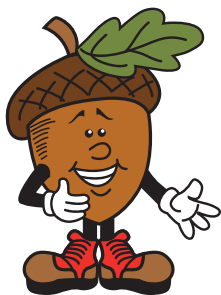


# TRUTH ABOUT TREES

Presented By The Hardwood Forest Foundation  
A Lesson for Grades 3-5

Lesson Title: Truth About Trees



Truth About  
**TREES**



**HARDWOOD**  
Forest Foundation

## LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson will introduce students to the many uses of trees. The materials provided are intended for use during the lesson to help demonstrate the importance of trees in our everyday lives. A DVD entitled “Friends of the Forest” is included as well as a song named “I’m a Tree.” Students will also play a game and perform a skit helping them to discover the importance of trees in people’s lives.

## STANDARDS

- Evaluate how some earth materials can be used to solve human problems and enhance the quality of life.
- Distinguish the difference between a natural resource and finished product.
- Give examples of how natural resources in the home, school, and community are limited and how people must make choices about how to use these resources.

## OBJECTIVE

- The students will discuss how cutting trees and using the products of trees can make our lives better.
- The students will be able to name common items that come from a tree.
- The students will discuss natural resources and examples of how their products are used in our everyday lives.

## ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

- Teacher observation during the lesson.
- Students will participate in a game where they must identify items around the room that were made from a tree. They will be provided sticky notes that say “It comes from a tree!” for labeling items around the room.
- Students will perform the skit, “Forest for a Day”. (See enclosed procedures for skit)

## MATERIALS

The following items are included in the *Truth About Trees* box:

- Toilet paper
- Ping-Pong balls
- Chewing gum
- Acorns
- Cookies
- Pine cones
- Aspirin package
- Cross cut section of a log
- “It comes from a tree” sticky note pad and activity
- “Friends of the Forest” DVD
- “I’m a Tree” CD
- “Forest for a Day” skit activity
- Rulers, pencils, coloring books and crayons for each student

## ACTIVATING STRATEGY

Ask students, “How many of you think that cutting trees is always a bad thing?” When most of the class raises their hands, the teacher will tell the students that she/he will soon change their minds.

The teacher will ask the students how many of them used a paper product today. Some students will raise their hands, but most will not. Before most of the students raise their hands, the teacher will hold up a roll of toilet paper and say, “Really? Yuck!” This will get their attention because most kids will see the humor in this, while suddenly realizing that a tree provided the necessary toilet paper that they all use.



## INSTRUCTION

The teacher will ask students to name some things that come from trees by looking around the room. The teacher may have the students to shout their responses, write their responses, or to share them quietly with a friend. As the responses are shared, the teacher will write these on the board to be discussed later.

After everyone has had a chance to respond, the teacher will begin to discuss some of the things the students listed, except the items in the *Truth About Trees* box.

The teacher then takes the *Truth About Trees* box and tells the students that they will be playing a game to help them identify items that come from trees. The teacher then takes items out of the box and has the students sort the items into two piles of “made from a tree” and “not made from a tree.” Once the piles are complete, the teacher will go through the “yes” pile, discussing what each item is made up of. The “no” pile is next. The teacher will discuss the make-up of each item and explain why they should be moved to the “yes” pile.

The teacher will discuss the differences in deciduous (hardwood) and coniferous (softwood) trees by showing them the pine cone and the tree cutting.

Deciduous trees lose their leaves in the winter, coniferous do not.

The teacher will then discuss that trees are a renewable natural resource. The students will say aloud in unison, “Trees are a renewable, natural resource” several times. The teacher will explain that if we didn’t cut down trees, then we would not have all of the products that were discussed earlier. The teacher will discuss that trees need to be harvested just like other crops. When

trees are not harvested, the forests are hurt and things we would not have the things needed for our everyday lives. The teacher will explain that the younger trees clean the air better by taking in more carbon and giving off more oxygen. The older, taller trees take in less carbon and give off less oxygen than the younger trees. The older trees also block the sunlight for the younger trees, making it difficult for them to grow. When the older trees are harvested by loggers, many useful and beautiful things can be produced.

The teacher will discuss how letting a tree live in the forest and return to the earth naturally, is only returning the carbon to the atmosphere. Through the trees natural rotting process, all of the carbon that the tree has taken in throughout its life is released back into the atmosphere. The teacher emphasizes that if the sole purpose for not cutting down trees is to keep the air clean, then it doesn’t make sense to let it die naturally, releasing all of that stored carbon back into the atmosphere. The teacher can demonstrate the stored carbon in a wood product by knocking on a wooded desk or door in the classroom.

The teacher will teach/sing the “I’m a Tree” song from the provided CD.

The “Friends of the Forest” DVD can be shown to further explain the importance of harvesting trees.



## GUIDED & INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Students will play a game with the included sticky note pad. In groups of three or four students, they will travel around the room to label things that come from a tree. After several minutes of labeling items found in the classroom, the teacher will call students back to discuss the items found.

Students will work in groups to perform the skit, “Forest for a Day”.

## CLOSURE/EXIT ACTIVITY

The teacher will ask the students to think about their day from the moment they woke up. She/he will then tell them that they have used countless tree products and the day isn’t even over! The teacher will ask them the following questions in which the students will answer “trees” each time.

- When you woke up this morning you were sleeping in a bed, made from?  
(TREES!)
- The bed was in a house, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You were breathing in oxygen, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You jumped in the shower and used soap, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You brushed your teeth with toothpaste, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You put on your favorite rayon shirt, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You went into your kitchen and your parents were reading a newspaper, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You poured yourself a glass of orange juice, made from?  
(TREES!)

- You sat at the table, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You ate pancakes with maple syrup, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You grabbed your school books, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You walked out the door, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You jumped on the school bus with tires, made from?  
(TREES!)
- You came into class and sat at your desk, made from?  
(TREES!)
- Your teacher asked you to take out paper and pencil, made from?  
(TREES!)

Now that the point is clearly made, the teacher will ask the students to raise their hands to show if they have used a tree product today. She/he will remind students that if we don’t cut the trees down, we won’t have these things. Finally, she/he will ask the students what we would have without harvesting trees.  
(NOTHING!)

## NOTES

It is important to use the students’ location in the country and the resources surrounding the area as you present the lesson. For example, if there is a paper mill located nearby students will be familiar with the smell associated with the plant.

Teachers may also want to incorporate a discussion of the types of trees indigenous to their particular area.

