

The Ancient Tree Hunt

SCIENCE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION SCIENCE AND THE WOODLAND TRUST ANCIENT TREE HUNT

TEACHERS NOTES

The Woodland Trust is engaged in a nationwide project to discover and record our ancient trees.

Investigate the content of The Woodland Trust, Ancient Tree Hunt website www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk. Study the objectives of this site – the need to encourage people of all ages to become aware of the need to preserve and value our ancient trees, in woodlands, parks, countryside and towns. Discuss with students their attitudes and thoughts concerning the value of our trees and countryside, before you start, and after you have done some investigating.

Help The Woodland Trust to find and map all the old, fat trees across the UK. Use these activity ideas as part of the Science Key Stage 3 curriculum to investigate, learn about, and participate in the discovery of these special trees.

The Ancient Tree Hunt website and these activities are intended to encourage young people to actively engage in learning about ancient trees. They can use observations, measurements, experimentation, and research to find out as much as possible about how they grow, their life expectancy, the ageing process and their value for biodiversity and in the landscape. They should process, analyse and share the information they gather to create more awareness of how trees grow and local trees generally, and ancient trees in particular. In this way, you can fulfil curriculum requirements, and create publicity for the Ancient Tree Hunt. Even if you haven't got ancient trees in your area, you can join in!

Use the opportunity for 'joined up thinking' by working with other departments. Have a look at other learning and teaching resources in this series – particularly Art & Design and Geography.

Timetable and develop a holistic, real world, investigation of ancient trees in your local area, and with research, draw together the connections between different disciplines e.g. art and design, science, social subjects, and language.

Learning Objectives

Use this opportunity for outdoor learning and studying real-life trees as a basis for finding out about science – bring science alive with firsthand experience.

Investigate and learn about how the life processes of trees, as our largest organisms on planet Earth, are supported. Study how trees grow, adapt and change over time. Find out how ageing processes and behaviour in trees are linked with their survival strategies.

Explore the variation in trees, their interaction with each other and the environment, and what human, biotic and abiotic factors affect their growth and ageing.

Explore the huge variety of living organisms associated with ancient trees, living interdependently in habitats and communities constantly changing over time.

Work both individually and in small groups to organise, plan and carry out a scientific investigation, considering all the factors effecting our measurements; reinforce knowledge gained earlier, and explore others opinions, using the information gathered to develop arguments and conclusions.

Curriculum opportunities:

Through their participation students should make progress as successful learners in science; gaining confidence through their achievements, and increasing knowledge of different trees, and how they grow and age. Their understanding of the role ancient trees play in our landscape and their value to biodiversity will enable them to make informed decisions, and contribute positively as enterprising and responsible citizens.

These units provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Research, experiment, discuss and develop arguments
- Pursue independent enquiry into an aspect of science of personal interest
- Use real-life examples as a basis for finding out about science
- Study science in local and national contexts and appreciate the connections between these
- Explore contemporary and historical scientific developments and how they have been communicated
- Prepare to specialise in a range of science subjects at a higher level and consider career opportunities
- Make links between science and other subjects and areas of the curriculum.

There are 5 units:

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| Unit 1 | Meet the Ancients – What makes a tree ancient? |
| Unit 2 | Ancient Trees and Survival Strategies |
| Unit 3 | Ancient Trees – Hotspots for Wildlife |
| Unit 4 | Ancient Trees and People |
| Unit 5 | Ancient Trees – Roots for survival |



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