

ORCHARD ART: CLAY FACES

Learn more about trees and make art using clay and found objects.

This lesson plan was written by The Orchard Project, a charity that work in partnership with local communities to plant, manage and restore orchards in community spaces. These lessons are designed to be carried out in an orchard or wooded area close to your school to help students to connect with nature in a fun and practical session. For more information about us, please visit www.theorchardproject.org.uk.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

KS2 Science (year 3)

- identify and describe the functions of different parts of flowering plants: stem/trunk and leaves.

KS2 Art

- to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials [for example, pencil, charcoal, paint, clay]

KS2 Literacy

- Spoken language: maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments

RESOURCES

- Orchard with young or mature trees, cagoules for wet weather work, first aid kit, whistle
- Camera or iPad – check device and usage permissions
- For scavenger hunt – 15 x scavenger hunt list, bags to collect items
- For clay tree faces – 8kg of clay per class (500g per pair of children), pre-divided into balls, wet wipes

WALK TO THE ORCHARD (10 MINS)

Make sure that the children walk in pairs and check they know who is person 1 and who is person 2. They'll work with this partner for the Scavenger Hunt and to make the clay tree faces.

INTRODUCTION (10 MINS)

Where do you think you are?

Why are there lots of trees here? What kind of trees do you think they are? Why do you think they're planted like this, with big gaps between each tree?

Orchards are a group of five or more trees, planted with the intention of providing food. They often have quite big spaces between them to allow people to harvest the fruit easily and to allow light to reach all the fruit. Sometimes they are pruned short to make the fruit easier to reach.

In order to help fruit-trees grow well, we need to understand how they work. We're going to be talk about the purpose the different parts of the trees have – the leaves, branches, trunk and roots. We're also going to play games here and celebrate the trees by making some autumnal art.

(If there are veteran or fragile old trees) Do you have any grandparents?

How do we need to treat older people? Can anyone see any old-looking trees? How should we treat them?

SCAVENGER HUNT (15 MINS)

How should we behave in the orchard?

Check the children know how to behave safely in the orchard e.g. not eating anything or touching anything that looks very dirty or without checking what it is. Check they know to avoid touching any tree props or damaging new growth on trees.

Lots of plants and animals live in orchards. Let's do a scavenger hunt to see what we can find. Everyone stand in a circle around me, stand next to your partner. It's a bit like a relay race.

- Person 1 takes the scavenger hunt list and bag – see end of document for this
- Now person 2 must run off and find the first thing on the list and bring them back to the bag
- Person 1 hands the list and bag to person 2 who must now run off and find the second thing... and so on, until all the objects are found.



Make sure the children keep their bag safe – they will need it for the tree face activity.

What things were hard to find? Who finished their hunt very quickly? Show me any flowers you found. What role do the flowers have?

Flowers will hopefully become pollinated so that they can be turned into some kind of fruit or nut. The fruit or nut contains seeds which could grow into new plants. All plants want the same thing: achieving world domination!

How do you think plants get their seeds into the world?

Plants are more cunning than most people realise! Seeds can get blown by the wind (e.g. dandelion), exploded away from the plant (e.g. Himalayan Balsam), pooped out by animals (e.g. blackberries eaten by birds), carried away by animals (e.g. nuts buried by squirrels), or hooked onto animal fur (e.g. sticky willy seed cases).

Look at the leaves you collected on the scavenger hunt. What role do the leaves have?

Why are leaves so skinny? Why do trees push off their leaves in winter? Where do trees store their energy in the winter? What about evergreen trees? What do trees do in the spring?

Leaves act like mini solar panels and they need to be skinny so they can move easily to face the sun. They use the sun's energy to trap carbon dioxide from the air and they transform it into starch and oxygen. When there's less sunlight and temperatures drop, trees dump all of their waste into leaves and then push them off. It's their way of saving energy. In the spring the leaves re-grow. Different trees have different shapes - this helps us identify them.

We're going to use what you found on the scavenger hunt to make some exciting art!

TREE FACES (15 MINS)

Take the children to stand next to a prominent tree.

How could we make this orchard even more welcoming?

We thought it would be great to make some friendly tree faces to go on the trees. We can use clay and the scavenger hunt items to make a face.

- Take about 500g of clay and demonstrate how you'd press it onto the tree. Pinch out some of the clay to make a nose and make eye holes with your thumbs.
- Add objects found during the scavenger hunt to make a friendly-looking face, e.g. moss, berries and grass.
- Give child 2 500g of clay
- Ask child 1 to choose a tree in pairs and go and make a tree face.



When they've finished, have a quick look at all the faces.

Which tree faces look the most interesting and why? Do any of the faces look welcoming?

When you were touching the tree, did you notice how the bark felt? What is bark for? What does the tree trunk do?

The trunk is for supporting branches and leaves, lifting them away from grazing animals and towards the light. Bark is for protecting tree from the cold/insects/fungi/bacteria/grazing animals, surviving over winter, housing the plant's vascular system.

TIME TO RECAP (5 MINS)

What have we learned about trees today?

What parts of the tree have we focussed on? What are tree trunks for? What are the leaves for? Who can tell me something they've learned about orchards? What have you learned about flowers and seeds?

Who would like to talk about what we've learnt and what we did, in assembly? What do you think people will think when they find our tree faces? Would you like to visit this orchard again? Why?

WALK BACK TO SCHOOL (15 MINS)

SCAVENGER HUNT LIST

- 5 leaves that look different to each other
- 4 twigs
- 3 dried or living flowers
- 2 fruits, nuts or seeds
- 1 handful of moss or grass
- 1 stone



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