

LEAF What wood I see

**Ages: 3 – 16****Time: 1 hr – full day**

Purpose: Pupils will learn about all the various products in their environment that are made from wood. This activity has been adapted from a resource created by the Foundation for Environmental Education.

Curricular links

EXA 0-4-02a, 1-4-03a, 0-4-04a
LIT 0-04a, 1-4-05a, 1-4-06a
SOC 0-08a, 2-08a, 4-08a
TCH 0-06a, 1-06a, 2-06a, 3-07a, 4-06a

Introduction

We are surrounded by wood in our daily life. But do we actually notice it? Have we ever considered how much wood we actually use?

This exercise lets the pupils investigate what is made of wood, and or what derives from wood, and where it is used. It can be done at home, in the classroom or anywhere else at the school.

The use of wood as material is beneficial for the environment as it is a renewable material. Wood also holds the carbon it collected during growth and therefore acts as a carbon sink.

Activity for younger pupils (Early years to P3)

You are going to look for things made of wood in your classroom and around your whole school / nursery.

1. Look around your classroom and identify everything that is made of wood or comes from a tree.
2. Let the pupils wander around and investigate what is made from wood.
3. Pupils can collect the objects or point them out to each other as you go.
4. Once you have found objects in your classroom, repeat the exercise by going for a walk around your school / nursery to find any other items that are made from wood or come from trees.
5. Examples of what you might find include: flooring, walls, furniture, window frames, toilet roll, musical instruments, pencils.
6. Create a poster or floor book to show what you found.
7. Discuss your findings:
 - a. Were there any surprises?
 - b. What is good and bad about using wood as a material?
 - c. Why is choosing something made of wood better for the environment than other options

Extension

It is amazing how many products contain something that derives from trees. Not all are obvious. Trees have many more qualities than just to provide us with wood. Wood consists of many substances that can be extracted and used in other products.

Can you figure out which of the following items definitely have nothing to do with trees?

Magazine	Nuts
Maple syrup	Cardboard
Eggs	Firewood
Pencils	Glass
Crayons	Roses
Chair	Toilet paper
Napkins	Guitar

The only ones which do not come from forests are:

Eggs, glass, roses.

(Crayons can be made using carnauba wax that comes from carnauba palm trees from Brazil.)

Activity for older pupils (P4 to Secondary)

Pupils will make an illustrated inventory of produces made from wood and derived from wood.

1. Ask pupils to examine what products they use over the course of one day that are made from wood and products that derive from wood.
2. Pupils can use a camera, or make an inventory, to document all wood based products.
3. Examples of what you might find include: flooring, walls, furniture, window frames, toilet roll, musical instruments, pencils, toothpaste, clothes made from viscose, paper products, medicine, ice cream.
4. Ask pupils to make a poster or a brochure to illustrate their findings.
5. Discuss pupils' findings:
 - a. Were there any surprises?
 - b. What are the pros and cons of using wood as a material?
 - c. Why is choosing products made of wood an environmentally friendly alternative?

**Extension**

It is amazing how many products contain something that derives from trees. Not all are obvious. Trees have many more qualities than just to provide us with wood. Wood consists of many substances that can be extracted and used in other products.

Can you figure out which of the following items definitely have nothing to do with trees?

Magazine	Internet
Maple syrup	Cardboard
Eggs	Firewood
Skateboard	Glass
Toothpaste	Roses
Ice cream	Toilet paper
Pencils	Medicine
Paint	Charcoal
Rubber	Nuts
Cinnamon	Wine cork
Cabinet	Canoe paddle
Staples	Weetabix
Crayons	Shoe polish
Chewing gum	Napkins
Chair	Guitar

The only ones which do not come from forests are:

Eggs, staples, internet, glass, roses, Weetabix

(Crayons and shoe polish can be made using carnauba wax that comes from carnauba palm trees from Brazil. Chewing gum can be made using natural ingredients, such as Chicle from *Manilkara* trees.)