

Teacher-Led Remote Learning Activities

Harvard Forest Schoolyard Ecology Spring Workshop

Session Four



Activity: Mystery Tree Game

- **Description of Activity:** *Students guess the identification of schoolyard tree branches in early spring.*
- **Teacher/Author:** Mary Reed
- **School:** St. Mary's Parish School
- **Level:** 5th Grade-Science
- **Schoolyard Project:** Buds, Leaves and Global Warming

Educational Objectives:

Motivational activity to begin Spring field observations and build beginning Tree ID skills.

Students will be able to identify their own tree by seeing the branch. Hopefully, they will get several of the others correct as well.

Students will also write about why they feel that they got their answers correct or incorrect.

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Buds, Leaves and Global Warming Mystery Game Worksheet

St. Mary's Parish School

Teacher: Mary Reed

Name: _____ Date: _____

Buds and Leaves Mystery Game

Write the letter of the branch next to the name of the tree it came from.

Cherry _____

Apple _____

Birch _____

Forsythia _____

Lilac _____

Sweet Gum _____

Playing Buds, Leaves and Global Warming Mystery Game



Mary Reed

Forsythia



Lilac



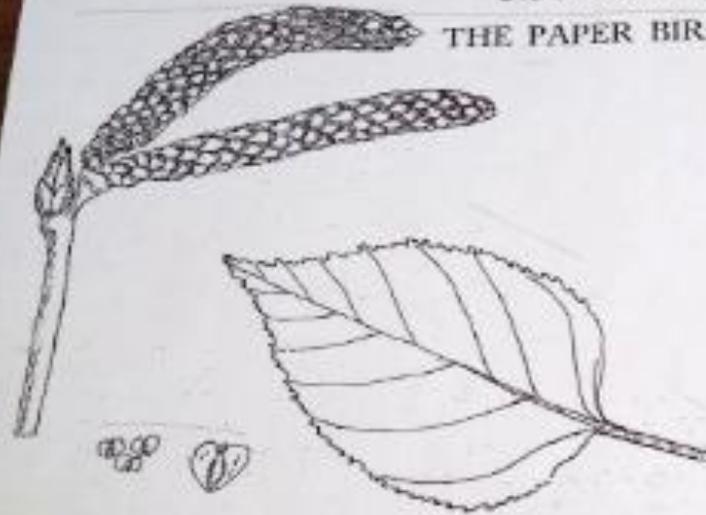
Sweet Gum
Tree



Name: _____

Buds, Leaves & Global Warming
*Sketches of trees that are being
observed.*

THE PAPER BIRCH



Apple



Mystery Game Answer Key

Write the letter of the branch next to the name of the tree it came from.

Cherry D

Apple C

Birch E

Forsythia B

Lilac F

Sweet Gum A

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Did We Meet Learning Objectives?

- All students were successful in identifying their own study tree.
- Many students were able to successfully identify other trees as well.
- Students made some really good observations, in writing about why they felt they correctly identified trees or not.

Implementation Notes:

- Fall Tree ID preparation work:

I do not do a lot with tree identification in the fall but we do talk about how the leaves can be arranged on the branch and what the scars mean. We look at all the trees together but of course they focus mostly on their own tree.

- Spring Tree ID work:

When I begin the game, I remind them of how leaves can be arranged and therefore the buds would be arranged on the new branches. I ask them to pay particular attention to the arrangement when making their guesses.

References: I do have some tree ID books in the room that they can consult also besides their reference sheets.

- Prediction and Revision:

Students do get a second chance to change their answers as the buds start to open up more before they showed me their answers.

- As my kids are young, this game is more of a "let's get back into the observing of our branches" motivational activity more than anything else. We do a winter sketch in February but this game leads us right into making observations...or would have!