

Lesson Title:	Adopt a Tree
Grade(s):	4
Prepared by:	Debbie Pope
Appropriate Science Areas:	Ecology
Science Concept(s):	The Plant Kingdom, characteristics of trees.
Lesson Objective:	Identify and describe basic characteristics and examples of trees.
Georgia QCC Standards:	Grade 4 Ecology: Cycles of Matter and Flow of Energy: Describes relationships in living communities, changes that occur, and the impact of these changes. Constructs a model or diagram of a food chain/food web. Describes the impact of an interruption in the chain.
Background:	All living things can be classified in groups based on similarities and differences. Trees exhibit variations in size and structure as a result of their adaptation to their habitat. How well each living thing exists is influenced by factors such as soil type, climate, availability of water, and human activities. From a tree's tiny root hairs to the highest leaves in its crown, each part of a tree plays a role in helping it to function.
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notebooks • pencils • drawing paper • crayons or markers • yarn or string • paper bag
Preparation Time:	20 minutes
Teaching Time:	The initial lesson can be completed in 50 minutes. Related and follow-up lessons can be done throughout the year as the seasons and trees change.
Procedures:	Have students make "Adopt a Tree" notebooks for recording information. Fold a sheet of construction paper in half, insert blank pages, and staple the book along the folded edge. Divide students into groups of five. (Each grade or class or student may adopt a tree.) Take students outside and choose a tree. Tie a piece of yarn or colored string on the tree to identify it as the group's/student's adopted tree. Students record

	<p>observations and complete activities about their tree in their notebooks. The paper bags can be used to collect leaves, twigs, bark, seeds, etc. (Be sure to instruct students to collect leaves, twigs, bark, seeds, etc. from the ground surrounding the tree rather than from the tree itself, in order to avoid hurting the tree.)</p>
Key Questions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where is your tree? Draw a map to show where it is located. 2. Is your tree alive? How can you tell? Is it healthy? Draw a picture of your tree showing its observable parts (leaves, bark, trunk, branches, etc.) Write a description of your tree. Do a leaf rubbing. 3. How does the leaf smell? How does the leaf feel? Make a rubbing of the tree bark. Does the bark smell? How does it feel? 4. Are any animals on or near your tree?
Student Evaluation:	<p>Over the year, students will add information to their notebook portfolio. Students' books will include drawings, poems, stories, pressed leaves, crayon rubbings, flowers, twigs, seeds, etc. Students can write an essay about the life from their tree's perspective, describing how it relates to the plants, animals, and people around it, and what problems it has.</p>
Helpful Hints:	<p>The teacher needs to scout out the selected area beforehand to make sure there are several trees around.</p>
Related Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the trees in your neighborhood? • Duplication
Suggested Extensions into Other Curriculum Areas:	<p>Math: Many measurements and graphing activities can be included in the book.</p> <p>Language arts: Writing activities such as stories and poems can be included as well.</p>