



ENCHANTED FOREST

Lesson Objective

To introduce the importance of forestry in Mississippi.

Learner Objective

Students will learn about the forest industry and how trees affect their daily lives.

Educational Outcomes

1. Students will be able to identify trees grown in Mississippi.
2. Students will be able to identify common products made from trees.

Core Concept Areas

Science, art, reading, writing, oral communication

Materials Needed

Interest Approach: Products made from trees

FARMtivity 1: Leaves from trees

FARMtivity 2: Colored pencils and art paper

FARMtivity 3: *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein (book and/or video)

FARMtivity 4: [Know Your Trees](#) and My Tree Poster instructions (below)

FARMcabulary

Tree – Woody perennial plant with a single stem or trunk and branches some distance from the ground.

Forest – A large area covered with trees and undergrowth.

Evergreen – A plant that keeps green leaves all year long.

Deciduous – A plant that sheds its leaves annually.

Conifer – A tree that grows cones and has needle-like or scale-like leaves.

Magnolia – State tree of Mississippi that has large, white, waxy flowers.



FARMfacts

Tree-covered areas are called **forests**. Almost one-third of the earth's land surface is covered by forests. Forests grow everywhere except above the timberline on high mountains, in frozen land areas, in deserts, and in grasslands.

Forests and forest products have always been important to humans. Forests gave cave dwellers wood for fires, nuts and fruits to eat, and clubs for protection. Early humans lived in huts made from poles and bark and traveled in boats made from hollowed logs. Today, we still need forests—to provide food, fuel, transportation, and building materials. Forests also provide us with vacation and recreational areas, as well as habitats for animals. Forestry is a billion-dollar industry that provides jobs for millions of people worldwide.

In Mississippi, forestry is an important agricultural commodity. Over half the total land area in Mississippi is classified as forestland. Forest landowners plant and grow more trees than are harvested every year. Mississippi has over 19 million acres of forestland.

Trees are classified into two main categories: **deciduous** trees that produce hardwood and **evergreens** (or **conifers**) that produce softwood. Hardwoods include oak, hickory, and gum. Evergreens (softwoods) are primarily pines.

Interest Approach

Ask students to look around the classroom and list all the items in the room that are made from trees. Discuss the many things that are made from trees.

FARMtivity 1: Green Leaves or Brown?

Materials needed

- Leaves from trees

The day before this lesson is taught, ask students to gather a leaf and other materials from a tree in their yard or near their home. They may collect a cone, fruit, or nut; some bark; or a flower. Ask them to be very careful when transporting their materials to school so they do not get crushed. Have the students tape the leaf to a plain white sheet of paper. Ask them to identify the tree their leaf came from and write the tree's name in pencil on the paper. They may need to ask an adult to help them identify the tree.

Note: Deciduous trees may not have many leaves in the winter, but students should be able to get a leaf that has turned brown, even if it is a fallen leaf.

When students bring their leaves to school, write two headings on the board—**evergreen** and **deciduous**. Have students categorize their leaves under the two headings and place their leaves under the correct heading. Give them clues to help:

- Evergreens stay green all year.
- Evergreens usually have needle-like leaves.
- Evergreens have cones. (Evergreens are also called conifers.)
- Evergreens have softwood.
- Deciduous trees lose their leaves in the winter after they turn brown.
- Deciduous trees have different shapes of leaves, and they are usually large and broad.
- Deciduous trees have acorns and nuts.
- Deciduous trees have hardwood. (They are also called hardwood trees.)

After the students categorize their leaves, discuss the two categories based on the facts above.

FARMtivity 2: FARMart

Materials needed

- Colored pencils
 - Art paper
1. Have students draw an evergreen tree as it would look in the four different seasons.
 2. Have students draw a deciduous tree as it would look in each season.





FARMtivity 3: FARMreads — *The Giving Tree*

Materials needed

- *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein (book and/or video)

Have the students read *The Giving Tree* and answer the following comprehension questions about the story:

1. What does the boy realize at the end of the story?
2. In what ways does the tree try to make the boy happy?
3. Does the boy change from the beginning to the end of the story? If so, how?

FARMtivity 4: Mississippi Trees

Materials needed

- [Know Your Trees](#)
- My Tree Poster instructions (below)

Ask students, "What is the state tree of Mississippi?" (**Magnolia**)

Have a magnolia leaf and seed pod to show, if possible.

Have students research the history of the magnolia tree as the state tree and write a short report.

Discuss other important trees in Mississippi, such as pine, cedar, ash, maple, elm, hickory, oak, and gum. These are broad categories, as there are many species under each category. Pine and cedar are evergreens, and the others are deciduous.

Homework

Assign each student a tree to make a poster about. Students should use the publication [Know Your Trees](#) to research their tree. Give each student a copy of the My Tree Poster instructions below.

My Tree Poster

Using the tree that you were assigned, create a poster following these instructions:

- Use a 22-by-28-inch sheet of poster board.
- Use [Know Your Trees](#) to find information for your poster.

Your poster should include the following:

- Title
- Name of tree (common and scientific names)
- Deciduous or evergreen
- Uses of the tree and its wood (timber, wildlife value, landscaping, etc.)
- Labeled items or pictures of the following (if applicable):
 - leaf
 - bark
 - fruit or nut
 - flower
 - twig

Write and present an oral "tree report" to your class, using your poster as a visual aid.





Reference

Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine. (2022). [*2022 Mississippi Ag Fact Book*](#).



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