

# LETTER TO FAMILY

---

## Science News

Dear Family,

Our class is beginning a science unit called **Trees and Weather**. We will be observing and comparing the trees in our schoolyard and monitoring them and the weather over the seasons. Your child may come home with lots of information and questions about trees and their parts. You can get more details on this module by going to [www.FOSSweb.com](http://www.FOSSweb.com).

You can join in the tree study by taking your child for walks in your neighborhood to observe trees and other plants and to compare how they are alike and how they are different. For example, see if you can find two trees of the same kind. How were you able to tell they were the same kind? Which trees lose their leaves in the fall, and which ones keep them all year? Look closely at the leaves. What shape are they? Do the trees have buds, flowers, fruit, or seeds? By making these close examinations of trees, you might notice things about trees that you never thought about before.

Your child's homework assignment is to gather some tree leaves to press at school. Please help your child gather six or eight leaves. Put them in a small plastic bag to keep them fresh on the way to school. We would like them at school by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Sincerely,



## Science News

Dear Family,

Our class is beginning a science unit called **Trees and Weather**. We will be observing and comparing the trees in our schoolyard and monitoring them and the weather over the seasons. Your child may come home with lots of information and questions about trees and their parts. You can get more details on this module by going to [www.FOSSweb.com](http://www.FOSSweb.com).

You can join in the tree study by taking your child for walks in your neighborhood to observe trees and other plants and to compare how they are alike and how they are different. For example, see if you can find two trees of the same kind. How were you able to tell they were the same kind? Which trees lose their leaves in the fall, and which ones keep them all year? Look closely at the leaves. What shape are they? Do the trees have buds, flowers, fruit, or seeds? By making these close examinations of trees, you might notice things about trees that you never thought about before.

Your child's homework assignment is to gather some tree leaves to press at school. Please help your child gather six or eight leaves. Put them in a small plastic bag to keep them fresh on the way to school. We would like them at school by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Sincerely,



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION

### Investigation 1: Observing Trees

**Read this aloud with your child before doing the activity together.**

Think of a place near your home where there are trees. This should be a place where there are not too many trees to count. Your street, block, yard, or a neighborhood park might be good choices.

#### Activity

1. Without looking, guess how many trees there are in the place you chose. Ask everyone in your family to guess the number of trees.

\_\_\_\_\_ thinks there are \_\_\_\_\_ trees.

\_\_\_\_\_ thinks there are \_\_\_\_\_ trees.

\_\_\_\_\_ thinks there are \_\_\_\_\_ trees.

\_\_\_\_\_ thinks there are \_\_\_\_\_ trees.

2. Go outdoors together, and count the trees. Look at the kinds of trees you find. Compare bark, leaves, and the shapes of the trees. Answer these questions.

- *How many trees did you find?*
- *How many different kinds of leaves did you find?*
- *What kinds of animals did you find living in the trees?*
- *What did you find around the trees?*

3. Record what you saw.

We counted \_\_\_\_\_ trees.

We found \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION

---

## Investigation 2: Observing Leaves

### Is This My Leaf?

Play this game with two or more players—the more the merrier.

#### Materials

- 8–12 Leaves that have fallen from the same kind of tree
- 1 Box or bag to hold the leaves

#### Activity

Collect a batch of leaves that have fallen from one tree. Take them to a table to play a leaf-identification activity.

1. Spread your leaves on a table.
2. Each player chooses one leaf and studies it carefully for a minute or two.
3. Everyone returns his or her leaf to the bag.
4. Mix up the leaves gently and spread them out again.
5. Try to find your leaf as quickly as possible.

Compare leaves with the other players. Discover what makes your leaf different from all the other leaves. Is it the smallest? Is it the biggest? Does it have a special spot or mark on it? Does it have an unusual edge or shape?

When all players are sure they know how their leaf differs from all the others, return the leaves to the bag and let everyone draw a new leaf. Repeat the activity.

# HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION

---

## Investigation 3: Observing Weather

### Wind Chimes

#### Materials

- Large cup, paper or plastic
- Paper clip
- String
- Metal objects of various kinds \*

#### Activity

1. Poke a hole in the middle of the cup's bottom.
2. Pass a string through the hole. Tie a paper clip to the middle of the string so when the string is pulled up, the paper clip will hit the inside bottom of the cup and secure the string. A length of string will remain trailing down.
3. Use string to attach metal washers, discarded flatware, bolts or machine screws, jar lids, and so on to the center string and to strings attached to the lip of the cup. The hanging objects should all hang at about the same distance so they can hit each other in the wind.
4. Hang the wind chime outdoors to clatter and ring in the breeze.

\* **SAFETY NOTE:** Avoid using any sharp or dangerous items.

