

At-Home Guided Learning Plan *featuring the* Trees Study

Trees Study—Investigation 4: Who takes care of trees?

Over the next several days, you and your child will investigate the question "Who takes care of trees?" As you find the answer to this question together, your child will conduct research and learn more about the people who care for trees and what trees need to grow and survive.

This plan includes hands-on activities in which your child will discuss, make comparisons, and conduct research to learn

- how to care for trees,
- the similarities and differences between what people and trees need, and
- the special jobs people do to care for trees.

Each day of the *Guided Learning Plan* includes the following:

Study Concepts
This study-related activity offers guidance for helping your family explore the topic, investigate questions about it, or celebrate your learning together through hands-on discovery. You'll also find a question here to help you effectively share your child's learning and discoveries with your teacher.

Guided Learning Experience
Here you'll find a suggested 10- to 15-minute activity that's more focused on supporting a specific skill—which is listed next to the title of the activity—in your child's development. You'll also find a question to help you effectively share your child's learning and discoveries with your teacher.

Mighty Minutes®
Use these short chants, games, and rhymes to playfully engage with your child at any time of day!

"Something to Consider" Tips
Reflect on positive guidance and developmental tips and strategies from experts in the field of early childhood.

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Investigation 4: Day 1

Who takes care of trees?

Taking Care of Use and Taking Care of Trees

- Talk with your child about the things people do to take care of themselves. (e.g., drink water, eat healthy foods, take baths or shower, brush teeth, exercise). Create a list of the things you and your child talk about.
- Explain that people need certain things to take care of themselves and so do trees. Say, *I wonder if trees need the same things that we do.*
- Review the list to compare the things people need vs. the things that trees need. Introduce a few things that trees need to live (i.e., sun, soil, air, water) and discuss them with your child. For example, you might say, *Dante, you said that you drink water. Do trees drink water? Yes, trees drink water. Trees and people need water to live. What about baths? Do trees take baths? No, trees do not take baths.*

How did your child make comparisons between what people and trees need? What did he learn about how to take care of trees?

Guided Learning Experience

Making My Name—*Identifies and names letters*

- Write your and your child's name on paper, leaving extra space between each letter. Cut out each letter and place the names in separate containers.
- Tell your child that you are going to make your name. Model how to make your name by sequencing the letters in order.
- Invite your child to make his name. Offer support as needed.

Which letters did your child recognize?

Mighty Minutes®

Walk Around the Shapes—
Understands shapes

1. Draw four simple shapes (e.g., triangle, square, circle, star), each on a small sheet of paper. Arrange the papers in a small circle on the floor.
2. Play music and invite your child to walk around the circle and sit on a shape when the music stops.
3. Ask him to stand up, point out what shape he sat on, and create a silly song and dance together, e.g., *Triangle, triangle, [Billy] sat on a triangle!*
4. Play the game again until your child is no longer interested.



Something to Consider

Inviting your child to help you make a grocery list for this week's menu is a great way for them to learn new vocabulary and practice writing skills. Additionally, when children help create the menu and choose the healthy snacks for the week, they are often willing to be more adventurous with their food choices and try new things.

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Investigation 4: Day 2

Who takes care of trees?

How to Care for Trees

- Invite your child to think of ways to take care of trees. Write her ideas on a sheet of paper.
- Use the Internet with your child to research new ways to care for trees and add them to the list: *Shade, we learned that when trees' branches grow down near the trunk, they need to be pruned or cut back. Let's add "prune branches" to our list.*
- If you have a tree at home, take your child outdoors and show her how you care for it and ways that she can help.

Take a photo of the list you created with your child to send to her teacher.

Guided Learning Experience

How Big Around—*Measures objects*

- Show your child several long pieces of string or yarn. Explain that you will use the yarn to measure the distance around an object, or its *circumference*.
- Show your child how to measure your head by wrapping the string around it and carefully cutting the excess with a pair of scissors. Then repeat the same steps as you measure your child's head.
- Place the two lengths of yarn on the floor side-by-side. Talk about how the length of the yarn shows you which head is bigger around: *The yarn from my head is longer than the yarn from your head. That means my head is bigger around!*
- Invite your child to use additional pieces of yarn to measure the circumference of objects around your home. Help your child cut the yarn and encourage her to compare which objects are bigger around.

How did your child compare the lengths of the string?

Mighty Minutes®

Thumbs Up—*Rhymes*

1. Say two words that rhyme, e.g., *fall* and *ball*.
2. Ask, *Do these words rhyme?*
3. Explain that your child should put two thumbs up each time the words rhyme. If the words do not rhyme, they should put two thumbs down. Demonstrate these actions.
4. Invite your child to make funny sounds when they put their thumbs up and down.



Something to Consider

Using scissors is a complex skill, especially for little hands! You can help your child learn to hold and use scissors by practicing the motions using clothespins or squeeze-trigger spray bottles. Next, offer child-sized, blunt-tip scissors to snip molding dough before trying paper. Draw a happy face or put a small sticker on your child's thumb for proper hand placement. Explain, *Make sure you can see your thumb and the smiley face as you cut.*

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Investigation 4: Day 3

Who takes care of trees?

Tree Expert

- Invite your child to share what they have learned about how to care for trees.
- Explain that there are special people whose job it is to care for trees (e.g., gardener, arborist, forester, nursery worker).
- Use the Internet to find videos, articles, or photos of different people who take care of trees. Talk with your child about the clothes the people are wearing, the tools they use, and how they care for the trees. You might say, *The nursery worker in the photo is wearing gloves while she plants a tree. The gloves protect her hands from getting cut or hurt. What else do you notice?*

What types of jobs did your child learn about today?

Guided Learning Experience

Molding Dough—*Measures objects*

- Prepare for making a recipe with your child by washing hands, cleaning countertops, and gathering ingredients. Gather shape cookie cutters.
- Read the recipe with your child and discuss what you will make. Help him to measure, add, and mix ingredients for the recipe.
- Invite your child to explore the finished molding dough. Demonstrate how to use the cookie cutters and talk about the sizes of the shapes you cut out. Use a variety of measuring tools to measure the molding dough shapes. You might say, *This cutter made a small circle. Let's see if we can find a cutter that will make a bigger circle. How can we tell which circle is bigger?*

Ingredients

1 cup water
3 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 cup oil
food coloring (optional)

Directions

In a large bowl, combine ingredients and mix with a spoon. Add more flour if mixture is too sticky. Put in a large resealable bag and seal.

How was your child able to count and measure the ingredients?

Mighty Minutes®

Echo Clapping—*Recognizes and understands patterns*

1. Ask your child to repeat, or echo, your claps.
2. Clap a simple pattern and invite your child to repeat it, e.g., three quick claps, pause, three quick claps.
3. Take turns being the leader and increase the difficulty of the patterns as you continue having fun.



Something to Consider

Your child might ask questions that stump you. For example, your child might ask, "How does a forester take care of trees?" When you are uncertain of these answers, help your child find them in books or by researching the topic on the Internet.

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Investigation 4: Day 4

Who takes care of trees?

What Do You See in My Tree?

- Ask your child to imagine seeing something in a tree. Encourage them to share by saying the following refrain:
  [Daniel, Daniel] what do you see? I see a [monkey] in my tree.
- Invite your child to share what he imagined seeing in the tree (e.g., monkey, bird, squirrel, snake). Provide him with crayons and a sheet of paper and encourage him to draw what he sees: *Daniel, you said that you imagined seeing a red bird in a tree. What does the red bird look like? What type of tree was he in? Can you draw the bird?*
- Support him by writing the refrain as a caption for his illustration. Encourage him to write his name and any other words or letters.

Save the drawing and share with your child's teacher.

Guided Learning Experience

Patterns—*Recognizes and understands patterns*

- Walk around your home and show your child a few examples of common patterns, e.g., stripes on a shirt or repeated colors on wall tiles or on blankets: *Look at the stripes on your sister's shirt—red, white, red, white, red, white. That's a pattern!*
- Offer your child a group of objects in two colors, e.g., red and blue cars, green and black blocks, or blue and white socks, and explain that he will create his own colored pattern. Support your child as he creates it. You might say, *Here are black and yellow crayons. Can you make a pattern like the bumblebee toy we saw on your bed? Black, yellow, black, yellow, black, yellow. What color comes next?*

How was your child able to recognize and create patterns?

Mighty Minutes®

High in the Tree—*Rhymes*

1. Say the fingerplay and create motions to go along with the words.

   [Five] [fuzzy peaches], hanging in a tree,
   Let's pick a few for you and pick a few for me.
   Along came [Justin], [he] was up to no good,
   [He] shook that tree as hard as [he] could,
   Then ate [three] peaches,
   Mmm-mmm good.

2. Invite your child to join you in the fingerplay as you think of new words together to use in the rhyme.



Something to Consider

As you take a walk in your community, help your child look for patterns on your journey. You may want to keep a record of the patterns you notice by taking a digital photo and creating a collection of patterns.

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