

Name:

Date:.....

Tree Dressing Day

Write down 3 things you know about trees:

Why do you think we need to look after? Write your ideas here.

What is Tree Dressing Day?

Tree Dressing Day takes place during the **first weekend in December**. It is a day to celebrate the value of trees and to remind us that we need to look after trees. Tree Dressing Day is based on many customs and stories from all over the world. In **India**, some people wear bright coloured clothes and cover trees with spices and flowers and dance round them.

In **Africa**, people often meet together under big trees. In the **UK**, a long time ago, people used to visit holy wells. On their return home, they would tie strips of cloth to trees and say prayers for people they loved.

In **Japan**, people tell the story of a camelia tree with silver roots, a golden trunk and branches hung with jewels.

Tree Dressing Day gives us all a chance to remember how important trees are and reminds us to look after them.

What is a tree?

Trees are the largest living things on earth. They can grow to over 30 metres tall. They are formed of roots, a trunk, branches and leaves.

There are two types of tree:

- **Broad leaved (or deciduous) trees** like the **oak**, the **sycamore**, the **weeping willow** and the **horse chestnut (or conker)** all drop their leaves in the autumn;
- **Evergreen trees** (like the **pine**, the **fir** and the **cypress**) have small, spiky leaves usually called **needles**. They keep their leaves all the year round.



How does a tree grow?

Trees need **sunlight**, **air**, **water** and **minerals** to grow. The roots of the tree go deep into the ground. The tree uses its roots to drink water from underground and suck up minerals from the soil. The roots also help the tree to stay up. The trunk holds up the branches and the leaves. The green leaves of the tree use the sun's energy to make food.

What can a tree do?

A tree is a **habitat**. It gives many animals food and shelter. Birds and squirrels make nests in its branches. Squirrels eat the acorns that grow on oak trees. Owls live in holes in the trunk. Insects live under the bark on the trunk. Woodpeckers hammer into the bark to eat the insects. Other animals make their homes under the trees among the roots. This makes them safe from **predators**.



Lots of **fruit** grows on trees. Many types of **nut** grow on trees too. In the UK we can grow fruit like apples, plums, pears and cherries in our gardens or in orchards (which is like a fruit farm). Can you think of some fruit that you like eating?

Trees also keep our air clean. They take carbon dioxide (which can be a harmful gas) out of the air and give out oxygen which is a gas we need to be able to breathe.



Other uses of trees

Look around your classroom. You may see things made from wood. Can you name all the things made of wood. Wood can be made into paper. How many things can you see around you that are made of paper?

We must remember that when we cut down a tree to make a table or pencils or to turn it into paper, we need to plant more trees to replace what we have taken to keep the Earth healthy.

Trees are very important. They give us food, shelter, wood and, most importantly, they keep our air clean. That's why we say thank you to trees on Tree Dressing Day.



I am a tree: Can you remember what I do and how I grow?

Arrow to leaves: We are the leaves. Fill in the missing vowels:

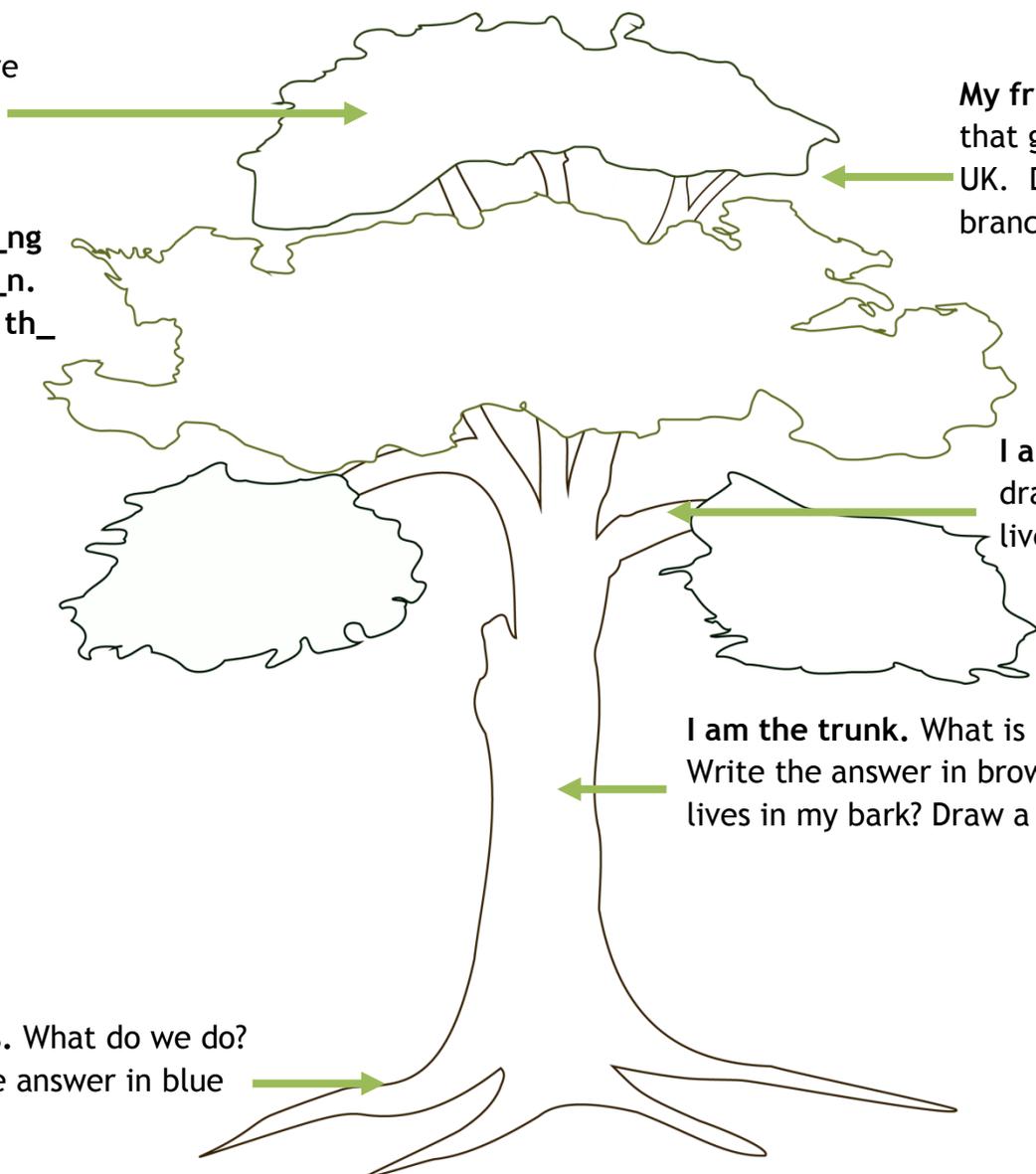
W_ m_k_ f_ _d _s_ng
_n_rgy fr_m th_ s_n.
W_ h_lp t_ k_ _p th_
r cl _n.

My fruit – name 3 fruits that grow on trees in the UK. Draw them on my branches.

I am a branch. Write or draw on me 2 animals that live here.

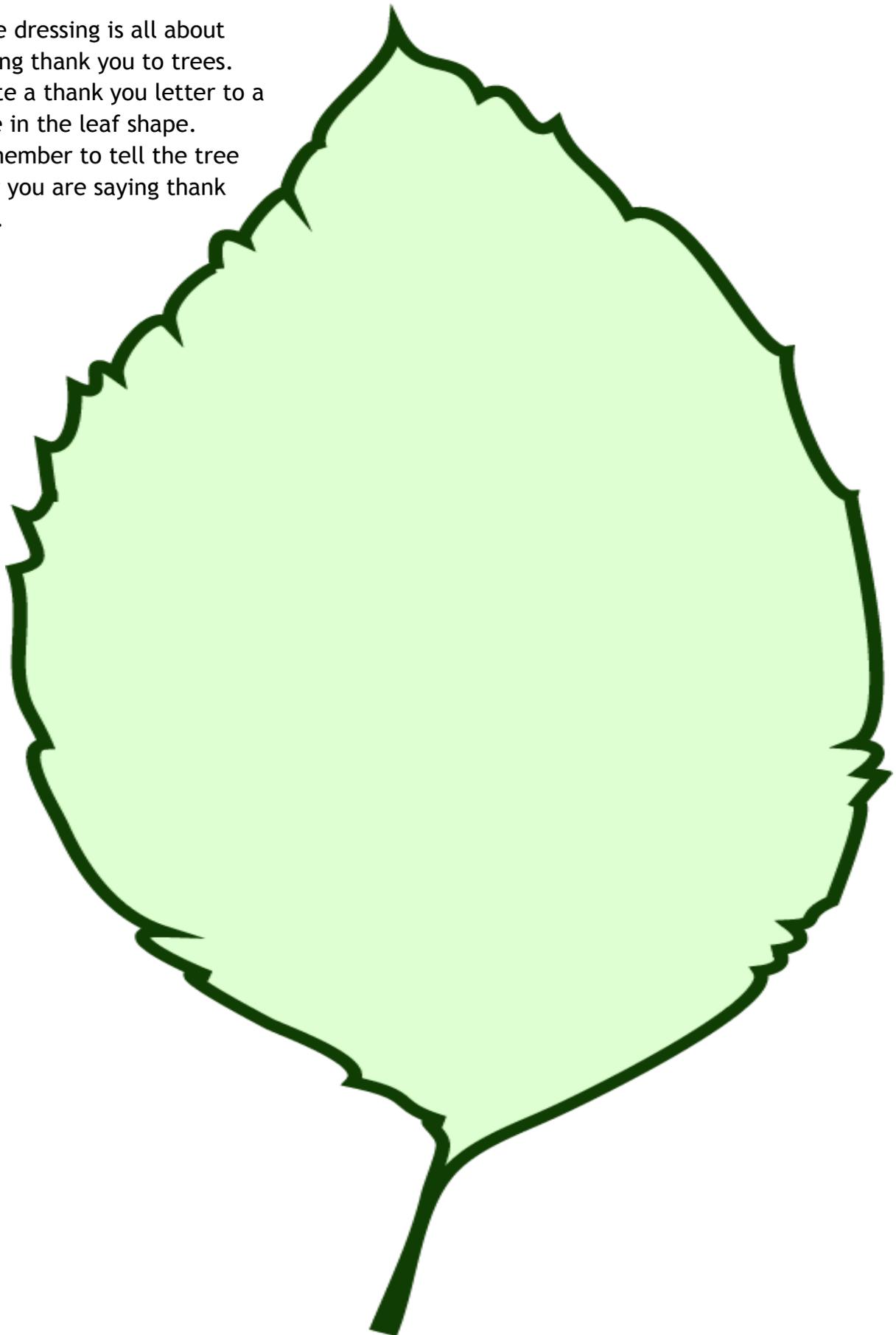
I am the trunk. What is my job? Write the answer in brown. What lives in my bark? Draw a tiny picture.

We are the roots. What do we do? Write or draw the answer in blue



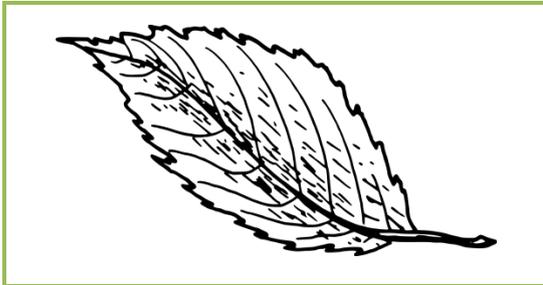
Write a thank you letter to a tree

Tree dressing is all about saying thank you to trees. Write a thank you letter to a tree in the leaf shape. Remember to tell the tree why you are saying thank you.



Leaf research challenge:

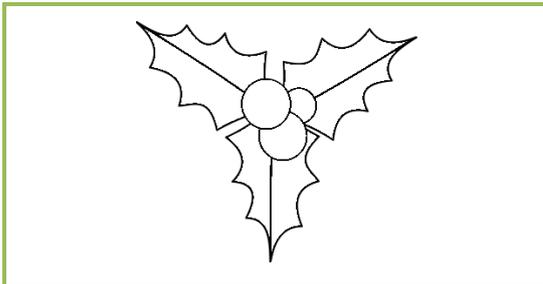
Using some books about trees or the [woodland trust nature detectives leaf ID guide](#), identify the leaf shapes below in some tree books. Can you match them up to the names of the trees?



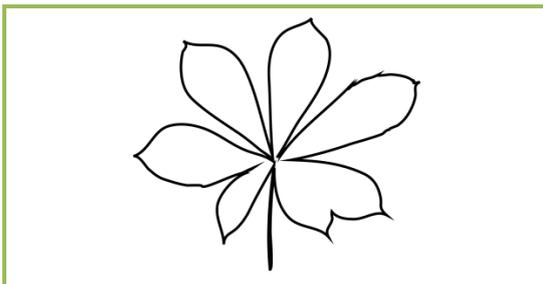
Horse chestnut



Oak



Beech



Holly



Sycamore

Colour the deciduous leaves bright autumn colours. Watch out! One leaf is evergreen.

Teaching notes

Learning objectives

Science KS1

Year 1 – Pupils should be taught to: identify and name a variety of common plants including trees. Identify and describe the basic structure of trees. Identify common materials, including wood. (Observe changes in the four seasons.)

Year 2 – Pupils should be taught to: identify that most living things live in habitats. Describe how animals obtain food from plants. Describe how plants need water and light to enable them to grow.

Pages 1 and 2

An information text about Tree Dressing Day and some further information about trees. This can be read to or with the class as a whole-class reading exercise or given to children to read independently. For images of tree dressing, and further information, visit: www.commonground.org.uk/tree-dressing-day/

Page 3

This worksheet can be used to see how much the children have learnt from the text. Children could name a variety of animals that live in trees e.g. squirrel, birds, owls, dormice, woodpecker. The trunk holds the tree up. Insects live under the bark. The roots suck up water and minerals from the soil.

Missing vowels: The leaves say, *We make food using energy from the sun. We help to keep the air clean.*

Page 4

The children use their knowledge and imagination to write a thank you letter to a tree. This encourages them to think about why trees are important and to express it in their own words. A tree display could be created in the classroom, e.g. a small tree silhouette to attach the writing to. Or children could be encouraged to ask an adult to tie the letters on trees around the school grounds. This could be an alternative way of decorating the school Christmas tree this year.

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Involves the children in some research either using reference books or websites such as the [woodland trust nature detectives leaf ID guide](#).