

More Trees, Please



What Is this Activity?

How do trees affect people? And people affect trees? With your child, count and compare the number of cars and trees on your block. Then have your child write about a favorite tree.

Big Science Idea: Every living thing impacts the area where it lives. People can make the air dirty by driving cars, and trees can help make the air clean again.

GO OUTSIDE

What You'll Need:

“PLUM Loves Trees” handout and pen or pencil

1. Read the “PLUM Loves Trees” handout with your child.
2. Take the handout and a pen or pencil outside. Breathe deeply, along with your child. Ask: *What does your neighborhood smell like? What are some good and bad smells? What things make the air in a city or a town smell dirty?* (Exhaust from cars and trucks, cigarette or cigar smoke, burning wood, oil or gas to heat homes, factory smokestacks, etc.)
3. Explain that trees remove air pollution (harmful stuff in the air). They also give off oxygen, making the air cleaner to breathe. Ask: *Do you think there are more trees or more cars on your block?*
4. Circle the block together and count the trees and cars—both parked and in motion. Make a mark on the back of the handout for each one you see. If you come to a place with too many items to count (e.g., a parking garage or a large park), help your child estimate the number.
For older or more mature children: Have them track big and small trucks, buses, motorbikes, and motorcycles. They will compare them later.
5. At the end of your walk, compare the number of trees to cars. Explain that roughly 10 trees can absorb the air pollution that one car produces in one year (about 10,000 miles of driving). Ask: *Are there 10 times more trees than cars and trucks on your block?*
For older children or more mature children: Have them categorize and compare the vehicles. *How many big trucks? Do big buses add to or reduce overall air pollution? Why?*
6. Discuss: *How else do trees make cities and towns better?* (Review the “Plum Loves Trees” handout.)

Exploring your world,
one mission at a time
pbskids.org/plumlanding

Topic

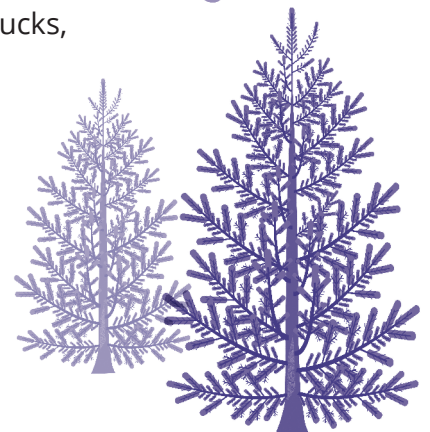
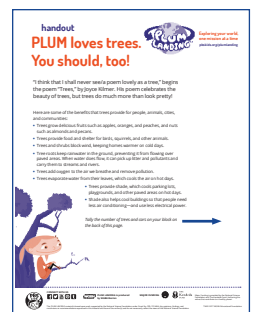
human impact on the environment, air and atmosphere, ecosystems

Activity Type

outdoors (all weather—rain, clouds, sun, or snow)

Activity Time

20–60 minutes



EXPLORE SOME MORE

Report a Tree

Check out Project BudBurst, a national effort to survey trees and other plants. Citizens report when local tree leaves bud in spring, when flowers bloom, when fruit or nuts appear, and when leaves change color in the fall. Visit the website to identify deciduous (leaf-dropping) trees that you saw on your block walk.

Adopt a Local Tree

Encourage your child to “adopt” a favorite tree on your block by visiting it regularly and noting changes over the weeks and months. Your child might want to write a poem, a thank-you note, or a song about this tree and draw a picture. See what other kids wrote and drew on the Plum Landing “Backyard Mission” page at pbskids.org/plumlanding.

Cities vs. Plants Song

Watch this short video with a song about how big cities replace forests and fields with buildings and concrete and how city plants fight back—by finding surprising places to sprout.

Go Plant a Tree

Watch this short video and discuss: *What are some places in your neighborhood where you could plant trees? How would those trees make the area a better place for animals, including people?*

Outdoor Family Fun with Plum App

This app gets families outdoors exploring the world. Every day, the app offers five outdoor missions to get everyone thinking and talking about nature and the science that’s all around us.

VISIT pbskids.org/plumlanding to find apps, videos, games and more activities.



CONNECT WITH US



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MAJOR FUNDING



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handout

PLUM loves trees. You should, too!



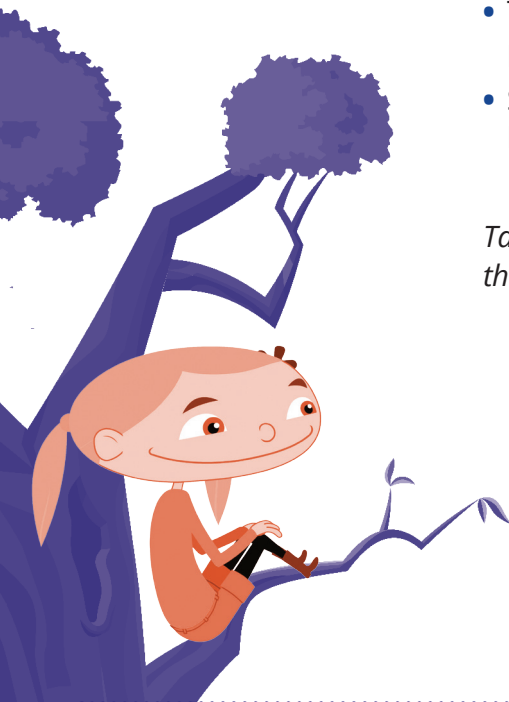
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"I think that I shall never see/a poem lovely as a tree," begins the poem "Trees," by Joyce Kilmer. His poem celebrates the beauty of trees, but trees do much more than look pretty!

Here are some of the benefits that trees provide for people, animals, cities, and communities:

- Trees grow delicious fruits such as apples, oranges, and peaches, and nuts such as almonds and pecans.
- Trees provide food and shelter for birds, squirrels, and other animals.
- Trees and shrubs block wind, keeping homes warmer on cold days.
- Tree roots keep rainwater in the ground, preventing it from flowing over paved areas. When water does flow, it can pick up litter and pollutants and carry them to streams and rivers.
- Trees add oxygen to the air we breathe and remove pollution.
- Trees evaporate water from their leaves, which cools the air on hot days.
- Trees provide shade, which cools parking lots, playgrounds, and other paved areas on hot days.
- Shade also helps cool buildings so that people need less air conditioning—and use less electrical power.

Tally the number of trees and cars on your block on the back of this page.



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