Interactions with Trees

Meet a Tree: Find a tree you want to get to know and see how many observations you can make about your tree.

1. First, stand back and take a look at your tree. Walk all the way around it so you can see all sides of it.
   Can you see the top of the highest branch? ______________________________
   Do you think it is taller or shorter than your house? _______________________
   What is the overall shape of your tree? Is it tall and straight, or do the branches spread out far? ________________________________
   Can you reach any of the branches? ________________________________
   On one side of the tree, find the branch that reaches out the farthest and stand under the tip of the branch. Have another person do the same for the opposite side of the tree and notice how far apart you are. If you have a tape measure, try to measure the distance between you. ______________

2. Look at the branches of your tree.
   Do you see any leaves? _________________________________________________
   If yes, what shape and color are the leaves? ______________________________
   If no, do you see any buds where leaves might start growing soon? _______
   Is your tree a deciduous or coniferous tree? ______________________________

3. Give your tree a hug.
   Can your arms reach all the way around it? ______________________________
   How many main trunks does your tree have? ______________________________
   If you have a tape measure, measure the circumference around the trunk.

4. Feel the bark of your tree.
   What words can you use to describe the bark? ______________________________
   Use a blank sheet of paper and crayon to do a bark rubbing. Hold the piece of paper up against the trunk of your tree. Take the paper covering off the crayon, hold it sideways, and rub it on the paper.
   Describe the pattern the bark made on your paper. _______________________

5. Look for signs that other plants and animals use your tree.
Are there any vines or any other plants growing on your tree? 

Can you find any insects crawling on your tree? What color, shape, and size is it? 

What other signs of animals using your tree can you find? 

Can you make any other observations? Draw a picture of your tree and try repeating these observations with a different tree.
Ephemeral Art

Ephemeral art is art that only lasts a short time. Use items you find outside that comes from trees to make a work of art. Maybe arrange it in a beautiful design, make a picture of something, make a little house for an animal, make a house for yourself, or anything else you want to create.

Here is an example that was made in the fall:
### Scavenger Hunts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trees Are Terrific K-2 Scavenger Hunt</th>
<th>Trees with 2 or more trunkumps</th>
<th>Tree withsingle trunkump</th>
<th>Leaf that is big</th>
<th>Leaf that is bigger than your hand</th>
<th>Tree with one main trunk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree with needles</td>
<td>Signs of an insect being a tree</td>
<td>Leaf that is green</td>
<td>Branch with thorns</td>
<td>Leaf with a heart shape</td>
<td>Animal on a tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short, pointed bud</td>
<td>Hole in a tree</td>
<td>Berry from a woody plant</td>
<td>A tree that is flowering</td>
<td>Toothed leaf</td>
<td>Hickory Nut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal on a tree</td>
<td>A tree with alternating branching</td>
<td>A tree with opposite branching</td>
<td>A tree with no leaves</td>
<td>Evidence of animal use</td>
<td>Winery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A plant using a dead tree</td>
<td>A plant deciduous without any holes</td>
<td>A tree completely bare</td>
<td>A tree that is evergreen</td>
<td>Leaf</td>
<td>Leaf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parts of a Tree

- **Heartwood** – forms the central core of the tree. It is made up of dense dead wood, and it provides strength.
  Motto: “I support, I support!”

- **Sapwood/Xylem** – surrounds the heartwood and brings water and nutrients up from the roots to the leaves. Older xylem cells become part of the heartwood. {Not active in winter}
  Motto: “Gurgle, slurp, transport water!”

- **Cambium** – a very thin layer of growing tree tissue. It makes cells that become new xylem, phloem, or cambium.
  Motto: “I make new wood!”

- **Inner bark/Phloem** – carries sap from the leaves to the rest of the tree. At certain times of the year, phloem may also move stored sugars from the roots up to the rest of the tree.
  Motto: “Food to the roots!”

- **Outer Bark** – protects the tree from injury caused by insects, animals, plants, diseases, and fire.
  Motto: “No getting in!”
f. Roots – anchor the tree, absorb water and nutrients,
   Motto: “Drink water!”

g. Branches – grow out of the trunk; the tips are twigs that grow buds that open into leaves and flowers in the spring; the flowers then turn into seeds, nuts, and fruits.
   Motto: “Buds, leaves, flowers, fruits!”

h. Leaves – make food through photosynthesis
   Motto: “We make food!”