Arbor Day

Arbor Day is celebrated in Ohio on the last Friday in April. At schools this usually involves planting a tree. This is a symbolic act, but trees can also be used to touch on many of the state and national science standards. There are many ways to celebrate and learn about trees. Why limit it to Arbor Day?

- In the lower grades students learn about seasonal change in plants, life cycles and how organisms can only survive in environments that meet their needs.
- In middle school students learn about inheritance, diversity, reproduction and that ecosystems can only support the number of organisms that it has resources for.
- In high school students delve deeper into the miracle of photosynthesis and look at environmental quality and resource issues at the national and local level.

Background

The first Arbor Day was held on April 10, 1872, and more than one million trees were planted. Why do we need a day to celebrate trees? Think about what trees give us: oxygen, food, shade, furniture, clean air, homes for wildlife – the list could go on. Why wouldn’t we celebrate trees?

The activities and resources listed below will help your students understand why we celebrate Arbor Day and how trees are important to us.

Activities

Arbor Day Scavenger Hunt
http://tinyurl.com/nkqlygh
(Grades K-8) – Find trees, animals, leaves and much more.

The Giving Tree and Receiving Tree
http://tinyurl.com/oj5s736
(Grades K-3) – Read Shel Silverstein’s The Giving Tree and discuss ways that trees and humans depend on each other.

Trees Help Us
http://tinyurl.com/6498zd
(Grades 5-12) – By doing a little math, calculate the number of trees it takes to store the same amount of carbon dioxide your family creates in a year.

Arbor Day Across the United States
http://tinyurl.com/3g3q5d8
(Grades 3-8) – Learn about hardness zones and create a color-keyed map to show when different states celebrate Arbor Day.

Forest Products
http://tinyurl.com/ooarmpn
(Grades 9-12) – Learn how much we rely on forest products and what it takes to be a steward of the forest.
**Resources**

**Websites:**

  Official web site of the Arbor Day Foundation; learn how to identify or plant a tree, search for tree activities for kids, and much more.

- **The History of Arbor Day** [http://tinyurl.com/qd5w952](http://tinyurl.com/qd5w952)
  Learn about the history of Arbor Day and read a proclamation by President Theodore Roosevelt.

- **10 Things You Can Do With Your Students on Arbor Day** [http://tinyurl.com/qd5w952](http://tinyurl.com/qd5w952)
  Fun ways to celebrate Arbor Day in the classroom.

- **Wood from the Hood, Rising from Ashes** [http://tinyurl.com/pkv7uxb](http://tinyurl.com/pkv7uxb)
  Discover ways that old and diseased trees have been salvaged for furniture and other uses. Browse through a photo gallery [http://tinyurl.com/pxotgq4](http://tinyurl.com/pxotgq4) of furniture made from ash trees killed by the emerald ash borer.

- **Project Learning Tree** (Grades PreK-12) [http://tinyurl.com/ndbrytk](http://tinyurl.com/ndbrytk)
  Project Learning Tree® (PLT) is an award winning, multi-disciplinary environmental education program filled with activities and curriculum ideas for educators and students. PLT is a program of the **American Forest Foundation** [http://tinyurl.com/nkv8pzv](http://tinyurl.com/nkv8pzv)

**Books:**

- **Arbor Day Square** by Kathryn O. Galbraith [http://tinyurl.com/p24p45r](http://tinyurl.com/p24p45r)
  (Grades K-3)
  A growing frontier town and one family in particular, still mourning the loss of their mother strives to make the place feel more like home by planting trees, in this fictionalized retelling of the origins of Arbor Day.

- **We Planted a Tree** by Diane Muldrow [http://tinyurl.com/nmrjrfj](http://tinyurl.com/nmrjrfj)
  (Grades PreK-4)
  In this simple poem two young families in two very different parts of the world plant a tree. As the trees flourish, so do the families, while trees all over the world help clean the air, enrich the soil and give fruit and shade.