



What is an Urban Forest?

Pre-Activities (Grades K & 1)

Urban forests are located within a city or town. They can include urban parks, street trees, landscaped boulevards, gardens, rivers, greenways, river corridors, wetlands, nature preserves, and more. Prepare your students for a visit to Hoyt Arboretum, an urban forest in Portland.

Find and discuss urban forests in your area

- Review maps of your school and/or surrounding towns and neighborhoods
- Have students identify areas that are green and might represent an urban forest
- Discuss what might be there. A water source? Tall trees? Flowering plants?

Read the book “My Forest is Green” by Darren Lebeuf and Ashley Barron

- Purchase the book to have in your classroom
- Watch the [video](#) with your students

Have students create their own forest using their choice of art media

- Add a descriptive word or sentence(s) to describe their forest
- My forest is _____.
- Ask students to compare their forest to the forest in the book

Take your students outside for a nature walk

- Bring paper and crayons for each student and invite them to create rubbings on different textures in nature (rocks, tree bark, sticks, grass, leaves on the ground, grass, etc.)
- Write or discuss words that describe the different textures





Tree Explorers

Post-Activities (Grades K & 1)

During your field trip at Hoyt Arboretum, students were introduced to the structures and the functions of different parts of a tree. Here are a few ideas to continue the exploration back at school:

Seeds

- Collect different seeds from the ground around your school
- Have students observe them and discuss if they move to new locations by wind, water, or animals
- Test them out
 - Do some float in water?
 - Do some have wing shapes and fly through the air?
 - Do some stick to clothes or fur?
 - What other seed shapes can you find?

Pick a tree near your school to observe over the seasons

- Each time you visit talk about how it has changed
- Take pictures to document the changes and make comparisons
- Invite students to create a new drawing during each seasonal visit

Leaf Comparison

- Bring in leaves to the classroom or have students collect them outside
- Have students compare different leaves in small groups
 - Which one is larger?
 - Can you arrange them in size order?
 - How do they feel?
 - Which one is the softest? Roughest?
 - What colors do you see?

