



Outdoor Hour Challenge

Tree Challenges #31-35 and #37-38

<http://handbookofnaturestudy.blogspot.com>

Getting Started Challenges also available at:

<http://www.lulu.com/content/6059459>

Outdoor Hour Challenge #31

Trees-Introduction

1. This week read in the *Handbook of Nature Study* pages 618-622. Highlight any information that you wish to share with your children during your outdoor time. Make note of the labels in the diagram on page 619 showing the names of the tree parts. Use these names during your outdoor time.

2. Spend 15 minutes outdoors this week with your children in your own yard or on your own street. Start to notice all the different types of trees you have close at hand. If you have been following along with the Outdoor Hour Challenges, you will already have picked a tree to study for a year. Use your time this week to observe trees with all your senses. If you can remember, use the correct tree labels with your children so they will begin to learn the names of the tree parts.

3. After your outdoor time, spend a few minutes discussing any trees you saw. Were there some interesting cones, leaves, needles, or other parts to any trees you observed? Take a closer look at any objects you brought home with you. Parents: Look in the table of contents of the *Handbook of Nature Study* for any trees you have growing in your yard or on your street. Highlight trees you think you might encounter over the next six weeks. Read the information about one tree you think you might observe later this week or even in next week's challenge.

4. Make sure to give time and the opportunity for a nature journal entry. Let your child decide what part of the tree they would like to draw and label. If your child wants to draw the complete tree, this is a great opportunity to label each part using page 619 as a guide. If you have younger children, a leaf or needle rubbing is a great alternative and easy to complete. You could also think about keeping a collection of pressed leaves. You can use your flower press as a leaf press for this focus area.

5. If you identified a tree this week, start a list of trees in the front or back of your nature journal.

6. Post an entry on your blog sharing your experiences and then come back to the Outdoor Hour Challenge post and add your blog link to Mr. Linky. All the challenges are listed on the sidebar of the Handbook of Nature Study blog.

Outdoor Hour Challenge #32

Trees-Pines

1. This week read in the *Handbook of Nature Study* pages 670-675 to learn more about pine trees. Even if you don't think you have any pines in your area, it is still interesting to read the information for future reference. Make sure to note the ideas suggested for studying pines in the lesson at the end of the section.

2. Spend 15 minutes outdoors this week with your children in your own yard or on your own street. This week you will have two suggested activities.

*If you have a pine tree of any variety in your yard or on your street, use the ideas from the lesson on page 674 and 675 to guide your observation of the pine tree.

Some ideas to get you started:

What is the general shape of the pine tree?

Is there one central stem running straight up through the center of the tree to the top?

What color is the bark? Is the bark ridged or in scales?

Study the pine leaves. Why are they called needles? How many needles in the bundle?

Does it have a cone?

*If you do not have a pine to observe or you would like an additional activity, take some time to lay under any kind of tree that is available. Look up at the branches. Listen to the sounds of the leaves. Try to spot some kind of wildlife in the tree. Have your children tell you with their words what they experienced while under the tree.

3. After your outdoor time, spend a few minutes discussing any trees you observed. Talk about anything that interested your child. Maybe they brought home a leaf or a cone to examine and you could look at them with a magnifying lens. This would be a good time to look up any pine trees you observed in your field guide and see if you can learn more about your particular pine tree.

4. Make sure to give time and the opportunity for a nature journal entry. If you observed a pine tree, try to complete exercise ten of the lesson on pine trees: Draw a bundle of pine needles showing the sheath and its attachment to the twig; the cone; the cone scale; the seed. Sketch a pine tree. You could also include a leaf or needle rubbing in your nature journal this week.

5. If you identified a tree this week, add it to your list of trees in the front or back of your nature journal. Make a note indicating whether it is an evergreen or a deciduous tree.

6. Post an entry on your blog sharing your experiences and then come back to the Outdoor Hour Challenge post and add your blog link to Mr. Linky. All the challenges are listed on the sidebar of the Handbook of Nature Study blog.

Outdoor Hour Challenge #33

Trees-Oaks

1. This week read in the *Handbook of Nature Study* pages 639-642 to learn more about oak trees. Even if you don't think you have any oaks in your area, it is still interesting to read the information for future reference. Make sure to note the ideas suggested for studying oaks in the lesson at the end of the section-Lesson 176.

2. Spend 15 to 20 minutes outdoors this week with your children in your own yard or on your own street. This week you will have two suggested activities. In addition, how about taking a photo of your child with a tree in your yard? This is a great way to document growth of both the tree and your child over time.

*If you have an oak tree of any variety in your yard or on your street, use the ideas from the lesson on page 641 and 642 to guide your observation of the oak tree. Take along your magnifying lens if you want to get a closer look at the bark or leaves of your tree as you spend time outdoors. Don't forget to look for acorns. If you have an oak tree to observe, it would be fun to share a photo of your acorn. There are many types of acorn shapes and sizes and it would be great to see what your particular acorn looks like.

*If you do not have a oak tree to observe or you have an additional time period for nature study, choose another variety of tree to observe. Study the leaves on your tree and then describe the shape of the leaf, the edges, the color on top and below, count its ribs and veins, and then describe how it feels and how it smells. Encourage your children to observe quietly for a few minutes of each outdoor time period.

3. After your outdoor time, spend a few minutes discussing any trees you observed. Talk about anything that interested your child. Ask them to give you a brief description of something they saw while on their nature walk. This would also be a good time to look up any oak trees you observed in your field guide and see if you can learn more about your particular oak tree. If your child found something else of interest, look it up in the index of the *Handbook of Nature Study*. Read over the pages before your next nature study time so you will be ready to share the information with your child.

4. Make sure to give time and the opportunity for a nature journal entry. There is a suggestion in the *Handbook of Nature Study* to draw your oak in the fall and then again in the winter. Also, the *Handbook* suggests finding three leaves from your oak that differ in form, and then sketch them in your notebook. A nature journal entry can be as simple as a sketch, a label, and a date.

5. If you identified a tree this week, add it to your list of trees in the front or back of your nature journal. Make a note indicating whether it is an evergreen or a deciduous tree.

6. Post an entry on your blog sharing your experiences and then come back to the Outdoor Hour Challenge post and add your blog link to Mr. Linky. All the challenges are listed on the sidebar of the *Handbook of Nature Study* blog.

Outdoor Hour Challenge #34

Focus on Trees-Maples

1. Read the section titled "Nature-Study and Object Lessons" on pages 7 and 8 of the Handbook of Nature Study.

2. This week read in the *Handbook of Nature Study* pages 628-634 to learn more about maple trees. Even if you don't think you have any maples in your area, it is still interesting to read the information for future reference. The information may help you to identify a maple in your neighborhood that you didn't realize was there before. Make sure to note the ideas suggested for a fall observation of maples in the lesson at the end of the section-Lesson 174.

3. Spend 15 to 20 minutes outdoors this week with your children in your own yard or on your own street. This week you will have two suggested activities.

*If you have a maple tree of any variety in your yard or on your street, use the ideas from the lesson on page 632 to 634 to guide your observation of the maple tree. The lesson suggests studying the maple out of doors if possible.

*If you do not have a maple tree to observe or you have an additional time period for nature study, choose another variety of tree to observe. Use the suggestions on page 623 to observe the roots of a tree.

4. After your outdoor time, spend a few minutes discussing any trees you observed. Ask them to give you a brief description of something they saw while on their nature walk. If your child collected an item during your outdoor time, take a few minutes to look at it closely. Ask if your child has any questions that they would like to research over the next week. Make note of anything they are interested in learning more about. Look it up in the index of the *Handbook of Nature Study* and read more about it if it is covered in the book. Check your local library if you need additional information.

5. Make sure to give time and the opportunity for a nature journal entry. The lesson in the *Handbook of Nature Study* suggests sketching the fruit including the seeds. Another suggestion is to sketch the leaf and to watercolor your maple tree. A nature journal entry can be as simple as a sketch, a label, and a date. See challenges 2 and 3 for alternatives to drawing in your nature journal. Press any leaves you collected this week and add them to your nature journal later on.

6. If you identified a tree this week, add it to your list of trees in the front or back of your nature journal. Make a note indicating whether it is an evergreen or a deciduous tree.

7. Post an entry on your blog sharing your experiences and then come back to the Outdoor Hour Challenge post and add your blog link to Mr. Linky. All the challenges are listed on the sidebar of the Handbook of Nature Study blog.

Outdoor Hour Challenge #35

Focus on Trees-Apple

1. Read pages 661-670 in the *Handbook of Nature Study* to learn about the apple tree and apples. Pay special attention to page 664 where Lesson 182 outlines the study of an apple tree.

"A visit to a large, well-grown orchard in spring or autumn will aid in making this work interesting. Any apple tree near at hand may be used for the lesson."

Handbook of Nature Study, page 664

If you do not have access to an apple tree, you can use your nature study time this week to study apples using the suggestions on pages 667-670. These pages give lots of great information about apples and how to observe them in your nature study.

2. Spend 15 to 20 minutes outdoors this week with your children in your own yard or on your own street. This week you will have two suggested activities.

*If you have an apple tree of any variety in your yard or on your street, use the ideas from the lesson on page 664 to guide your observation of the apple tree.

*If you do not have an apple tree to observe or you have an additional time period for nature study, choose another variety of tree to observe. Pay special attention to the leaves and collect a few to observe indoors after your outdoor time.

3. After your outdoor time, spend a few minutes talking with your child about any trees you observed. Complete any of the suggested activities from the *Handbook of Nature Study* if you observed an apple tree. Ask if your child has any questions that they would like to research over the next week. Make note of anything they are interested in learning more about and then look it up in the index of the *Handbook of Nature Study*. Read more about it if it is covered in the book or check your local library if you need additional information.

4. Make sure to give time and the opportunity for a nature journal entry. You could use the suggested activity and sketch an apple from your tree, making special observation of the shape of your apple. You also could cut your apple in half and sketch what it looks like inside. A nature journal entry can be as simple as a sketch, a label, and a date. Press any leaves you collected this week and add them to your nature journal later on.

5. If you identified a tree this week, add it to your list of trees in the front or back of your nature journal. Make a note indicating whether it is an evergreen or a deciduous tree.

6. Post an entry on your blog sharing your experiences and then come back to the Outdoor Hour Challenge post and add your blog link to Mr. Linky. All the challenges are listed on the sidebar of the *Handbook of Nature Study* blog.

Outdoor Hour Challenge #37

Focus on Trees-Spruce

1. Read pages 675-678 in the *Handbook of Nature Study* to learn about the Norway spruce and spruces in general. Since this is not the most widely known variety of tree, you may need to look it up on the internet or in a field guide to learn if you have this particular tree in your area.

2. Spend 15 to 20 minutes outdoors this week with your children in your own yard or on your own street. This week you will have two suggested activities.

*If you have spruce tree of any variety in your yard or on your street, use the ideas from the lesson on page 677 to guide your observation of the spruce tree. The *Handbook of Nature Study* explains that this is the perfect time of year to study the cones of the spruce tree so pay special attention to finding a cone to observe up close. One suggested activity is to hang a closed cone in a dry place and see what happens.

*If you do not have an spruce tree to observe or you have an additional time period for nature study, choose another variety of tree to observe. If you do not have access to an spruce tree, you can use your nature study time this week to study any tree with cones if possible.

3. After your outdoor time, spend a few minutes talking with your child about any trees you observed. Complete any of the suggested activities from the *Handbook of Nature Study* if you observed a spruce tree. Ask if your child has any questions that they would like to research over the next week. Make note of anything they are interested in learning more about and then look it up in the index of the *Handbook of Nature Study*. Read more about it if it is covered in the book or check your local library if you need additional information.

4. Make sure to give time and the opportunity for a nature journal entry. You could use the suggested activities and sketch and describe a cone scale, paying attention to the shape of the tip. A nature journal entry can be as simple as a sketch, a label, and a date. Press any leaves you collected this week and add them to your nature journal later on.

5. If you identified a tree this week, add it to your list of trees in the front or back of your nature journal. Make a note indicating whether it is an evergreen or a deciduous tree.

6. Post an entry on your blog sharing your experiences and then come back to the Outdoor Hour Challenge post and add your blog link to Mr. Linky. All the challenges are listed on the sidebar of the Handbook of Nature Study blog.

Outdoor Hour Challenge #38

Focus on Trees-Elm, Hickory, or Chestnut

1. Read pages 634-638 on American elms, pages 643-645 on the hickory, and pages 645-650 on chestnuts in the *Handbook of Nature Study*. These pages will help you to identify if you have any of these particular trees in your area. The pages will also include suggestions for things to observe for each type of tree during your outdoor time. You can see my suggestions in step two.

2. Spend 15 to 20 minutes outdoors this week with your children in your own yard or on your own street. If you have an elm, a hickory, or a chestnut tree, spend your time observing the details of the tree as well as the overall shape and form. If you do not have access to any of these particular trees, please feel free to observe and study *any* tree that you have in your yard that we have not covered in a challenge already.

Suggestions for each tree:

American Elm: Page 637 suggests observing the tree in autumn and making a sketch of the autumn colored foliage. It also suggests looking at where the tree grows, noting the shape of the tree, observing the trunk and the branches and how they divide, and taking a close look at the texture of the trunk.

Hickory: Page 645 has specific suggestions for autumn tree study. Some of these ideas are to observe the trunk and branches, note the shape of the leaflets, and to describe the outer husk of the nut.

Chestnut: Describe and sketch the horse chestnut tree.

3. After your outdoor time, spend a few minutes talking with your child about any trees you observed. Ask if your child has any questions that they would like to research over the next week. Make note of anything they are interested in learning more about and then look it up in the index of the *Handbook of Nature Study*. Read more about it if it is covered in the book or check your local library if you need additional information. Make note of any trees you would like to study again in the spring as a way of comparing the changes made over the winter.

4. Make sure to give time and the opportunity for a nature journal entry. A nature journal entry can be as simple as a sketch, a label, and a date. Press any leaves you collected this week and add them to your nature journal later on. Taking a photograph of your tree and then printing it for your journal is a great way to document the seasonal changes.

5. If you identified a tree this week, add it to your list of trees in the front or back of your nature journal.

6. Post an entry on your blog sharing your experiences and then come back to the Outdoor Hour Challenge post and add your blog link to Mr. Linky. All the challenges are listed on the sidebar of the *Handbook of Nature Study* blog.