

Handsome Tree

MATERIALS

FOR STUDENT: (one per student unless otherwise noted)

- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam: Block, cut from large Foam Block (see "FOR TEACHER") to 1" x 9" x 12"
- Balls, three 1" diameter
- Cardstock, 6" x 11", brown
- Tissue paper:
 - Green, forty 1 1/2" squares (for leaves)
 - Red, three 4" squares (for apples)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Paper plate
- Small plastic cup (to hold parts)

FOR TEACHER:

- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam: Block, 1" x 12" x 36" (you can get four 1" x 9" x 12" pieces from one foam block, serving four students)
- Spray paint, sky blue
- Pencil
- Permanent black felt tip marker
- Ruler
- Serrated knife
- Paper cutter
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Glue gun (for teacher only)
- Cutting mat or stack of old newspapers
- Large cardboard box (for spraying)



SCIENCE

GRADE LEVEL

EARLY CHILDHOOD – PRE K

COMPLETION TIME

- 60 minutes (or two 30 minute sessions)

OBJECTIVES

Students learn:

- About trees and how they grow
- To listen and follow step-by-step instructions
- The use of fine motor skills and afterwards, play

STANDARDS

- Explore objects, materials and events
- Make careful observations
- Describe, compare, sort, classify and order – Identify parts of living systems
- Answer questions by explaining observations of the natural world

LESSON INTRODUCTION

- Look at the photos of all sorts of trees. Discuss the many types, sizes and how they grow from saplings into fully-grown trees. Talk about the parts of a tree: Roots, trunk, branches, leaves and on some trees, fruit, such as apples.
- Explain that they will make a tree in a fun way – by having their arms and hands traced, cutting them out and then making "apples" to attach.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Note: Read through all the instructions first and check out the TIPS! Determine how you'll handle tracing all the students' arms/hands - either seeking assistance or starting several days before, tracing them when time, throughout the day. At the bottom, draw lines out like the base of a tree and use a marker to put the name of each student right at the bottom. Have a glue gun plugged in and ready to use (ideally set on low temperature) and out of student reach. It is also recommended that you make one tree, before preparing the materials for the others, since knowing how the parts fit, might affect how you prepare.

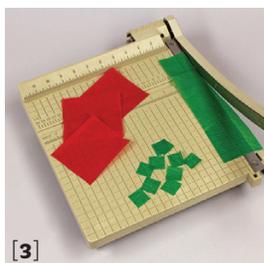
[1] Use a ruler and a pencil to measure and make small marks as ruler guides for the four 9" x 12" panels you can get from the full block. On a cutting mat, use a serrated knife against the edge of a ruler to cut the foam along the pencil lines with several passes of the knife for each cut. Cut one per student.

In a well-ventilated, newspaper-covered area (outside, inside the box) spray the front and sides of each block sky blue. Let dry

[2] Use the scissors to cut a general shape around each child's arm/hand (tree) to get rid of the excess paper for each student.

[3] Use the paper cutter to cut three 4" squares of red tissue paper and forty 1 1/2" squares of green tissue paper per student.

[4] On a paper plate set: Three foam balls in a cup, paper tree, tissue paper piles, scissors, pencil and glue stick. Set the painted foam block next to the plate at each student's place.



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INSTRUCTIONS

[1] Demonstrate and have the students turn the brown paper so that the fingers are closest to them. Show them how to cut from the edge of the paper along one finger line until they reach the inside of the finger. Then have them cut from the edge of the paper, along the side of the next finger, to remove the triangle area between the fingers. Repeat for cutting all fingers, explaining that they should cut carefully so that people can see the shapes as being their fingers. Then, have them cut the outside of the tree. (This minimizes losing branches by trying to twist scissors around in the V-part of the tree.)



[2] Have the students set their cutout "trees" onto the foam block, in the middle, with the bottom of the tree and the bottom of the block "aligned". Have them look to see how far the tree goes up, remove the tree and apply glue in that area. Ask them to rub plenty of glue into the foam (in just the tree area) so that the trees will stick well. Set the trees into the glue, folding it back and adding glue in the branches as needed. (Note: The leaves will help hold the branches in place, too.)



[3] Demonstrate step-by-step for students how to cover the foam balls to make apples: Have them place one foam ball in the center of one red tissue paper square. Have them pull up the four corners of the tissue paper, bring them together and twist gently, but completely so that the tissue paper conforms to the ball and creates a twisted end. Have the students repeat with

the other two apples.

Show and ask students to hold their pencils "vertically" (straight up and down) and press into the foam, close to the edge of their tree (hand). Remove the pencil and repeat in two other places on the tree – touching their index finger and touching their thumb. Then have them set their apple stems into those holes. When they are sure they fit, Have them remove each apple, rub glue stick all around the hole and press the apple back in place.



[4] Explain to the students that for the leaves, they won't be making holes first – that they will be using the eraser end of their pencil and that they do not need any glue. Demonstrate and have the students remove one green tissue square from their plate and set it on the table in front of them. Have them set the eraser end of their pencil in the center of the tissue. Ask them to pull up the four corners and hold them and the pencil in one hand, while they press the eraser/tissue paper into the foam, touching the branches of the tree. Help them practice this a few times so that they catch on. Explain that they do not need leaves on the sides of the tree trunk and remind them that the leaves need to touch the tree or each other to look like they are attached and not floating.



[5] For grass, students can add about four green tissue squares on either side of the tree, at the bottom.



MODIFICATIONS

To simplify project:

- Reduce the number of tissue paper leaves to 20 or 30.
- Divide the activity into two sessions, applying the green leaves in the second session.

To expand project:

- Have the students trace around each other's arms/hands.
- Have the students research the names for the parts of the tree, write them on paper rectangles, glue them to tooth picks and insert them next to the appropriate part of the tree.

For multiple ages:

- Younger and older students can work side-by-side with the older students adding details to the trees such as bark texture, possibly a hole in the tree and a drawing of a squirrel or bird inside.
- Have older students plan how the other seasons could be made (See Additional Ideas.)

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- Make more apples, letting students choose from red, yellow-green or yellow tissue paper. Draw and cut out a paper basket and put apples into (just above it), at the base of the tree.

Create other seasons:

For fall, use orange, red, brown and green tissue paper squares on the branches, allowing a few to float between the tree and ground. Create several rows of leaves on either side of the base of the tree to resemble leaf piles

For winter, use white tissue paper squares on the branches and create several rows on either side of the base of the tree to resemble snow piles. (If desired, spray with glitter spray so that snow glistens.)

For spring, cut 1" lime green tissue squares for leaves (which are smaller than the ones used here) and scatter them on the tree. Add a few light pink squares for flower buds. (By making the tissue squares smaller, the leaves and buds will be smaller, looking as though they are just sprouting.)

- Make nests from crumpling tan tissue paper and birds from covering a 1" ball with blue tissue paper and adding construction paper wings and beak.
- Create other animals using the same technique.
- Use as a story starter, "And coming around the large tree was a" Or "Deep inside the old oak tree was a...."



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TIPS

- Keep the serrated knife blade perpendicular to the table so that the foam edges are straight. Score it lightly first and then press more firmly to cut deeper with several passes of the knife.
- When tracing the students, align their elbows with the bottom of the paper. If their fingers go off the top, have them move their arms down just enough for their fingers to fit. At the elbows, fan out the pencil lines to create the base of the tree (roots). Erase any lines that are not intended for the students to cut.
- As you trace, follow the ins and outs of their fingers to really show the shape. Be careful not to let the pencil go under their fingers and create "branches" that would tear easily.
- To cut the tissue paper, open up a single thickness, set on a table, and smooth to flatten. Cut the paper in halves or fourths so that the pieces fit on the paper cutter and are more easily moved as you cut the right size strips. Then cut the strips into the squares, counting as you go to get the right number to put on each student's plate. (This prevents students from taking too many squares from a collective pile.)
- If students have difficulty knowing where to apply the glue on the block, have them use their pencil to very lightly trace the outside edges of their trees onto the block. Then they can fill in that area with glue.
- As students work on applying tissue paper leaves, check to be sure that they are pushing in far enough for the tissue paper to stay, but not so deep that the tissue paper ends don't show.
- If any leaves fall out, apply a dab of glue stick to the hole and replace the tissue square. If any apples fall out, use a glue gun to attach them.

REFERENCES

There Was A Tree by Rachel Isadora
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
We Planted A Tree by Diane Muldrow
Gus Is A Tree by Claire Babin and Olivier Tallec