



©Starflower Foundation

## Quick & Easy Habitat Education Activities

# Meet Douglas Fir

Developed by Heidi Bohan/ Starflower Foundation

2-2

Second grade

45-60 Minutes

Outdoors

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Description:</b> While students are sitting at the base of a Douglas fir tree in the habitat area they listen to one or more children’s stories about the Douglas fir tree while viewing related images. Guiding questions help students focus their attention, test comprehension and emphasize main themes. Students use drawings and graphic organizers to show understanding. This activity is followed by <i>Meet Bigleaf Maple</i>.</p>  | <p><b>Vocabulary</b><br/> <b>Characteristics:</b> <i>a distinguishing trait or property</i><br/> <b>Habitat:</b> <i>the environment where a plant or animal naturally lives and grows</i><br/> <b>Identify:</b> <i>to make known by observing recognizable characteristics</i><br/> <b>Myth:</b> <i>traditional story of a not necessarily true historical event that explains a view, belief or natural phenomena</i></p>   |
| <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students learn about the ecological function and life cycle of an important tree in urban habitats.</li> <li>• Students identify Douglas fir by using key field ID characteristics.</li> <li>• Students show understanding through drawing and labeling activities.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Washington State EALRs</b><br/> <b>Science 1.1 Properties:</b> Understand how characteristics are used to categorize life in living systems. <b>1.1.6</b> Understand characteristics of living organisms. Identify observable characteristics of living organisms. <b>1.1.7</b> Understand that plants and animals have life cycles. Observe and describe the life cycle of a plant or animal.<br/> <b>Reading 1.1</b> Use word recognition and meaning to read and comprehend text.<br/> <b>1.2</b> Build vocabulary through reading.<br/> <b>2.1</b> Comprehend important ideas and details.<br/> <b>Communication 1.1</b> Focus attention <b>1.2</b> Listen and observe to gain and interpret information <b>1.2.1.</b> Check for understanding by asking questions and paraphrasing.</p> |
| <p><b>Print Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘How-to-do Activity: Suggested Books &amp; Places’</li> <li>• Story: “The Mouse, Douglas Fir and the Great Forest Fire”</li> <li>• Images: ‘Meet Douglas Fir’</li> <li>• Masters: ‘Meet Douglas Fir’ student worksheet; ‘Tree Characteristics Matrix’ and ‘Life Cycle of Douglas Fir’ graphic organizers</li> </ul> <p><b>Teacher Supplied:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Story book (one or more) as suggested in ‘How-to-do Activity’</li> <li>• Copies of student worksheet ‘Meet Douglas Fir’; and ‘Tree Characteristics Matrix’ (also to be used in the <i>Meet Bigleaf Maple</i> activity), ‘Life Cycle of Douglas Fir’: 1/student</li> <li>• Pencils and/or color pencils, and student journals</li> </ul> |  |

|  |
|--|
| <p><b>Before activity:</b> Locate a Douglas fir in your habitat area, or visit an old growth Douglas fir (see ‘How-to-do Activity’ for suggestions). The more mature the tree and surrounding ecology, the more relevance this activity will have.</p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring students to a Douglas fir tree and seat them nearby.</li> <li>• Tell students that you would like to introduce them to ‘Douglas Fir’. Formally introduce them. “Douglas Fir, please meet this lovely class of students from...., Lovely class of students, please meet Douglas Fir.”</li> <li>• Show students images: ‘Meet Douglas Fir’. Point out the bark and leaves. Have students come to the tree and touch the bark. Have students touch, smell and look at the leaves. Ask students to suggest words to describe the bark and leaves.</li> <li>• Tell students that you would like to read them a story about Douglas Fir. Relate the story to the living tree and surrounding forest as much as possible. Read from one of the suggested books. During or after reading the story, ask guiding questions about the content of the story (see ‘How-to-do Activity’ for suggestions).</li> <li>• Find one or more nearby cones (there are usually cones on the ground nearby). Show the cone to students. Smell the cone; look at the details of the cones. Look for any cones on the tree. Tell students that cones hold the seeds of Douglas fir. Each seed can become a tiny new Douglas fir tree.</li> <li>• Have students look closely at the cone. Tell them, “This is a very special cone; it has a story to tell. I am going to read you an old local myth about a mouse and a great forest fire.” Read story: “The Mouse, Douglas Fir and the Forest Fire”.</li> <li>• Discuss the difference between facts and myths (see vocabulary). What is this myth teaching us? (Douglas fir has very thick bark which can protect it in forest fires). Is there really a mouse living under the scale of the cone?</li> <li>• Look around and see if students can find other Douglas fir trees. Compare the sizes of the trees you find. Notice the difference in the bark of younger Douglas fir trees (it is smoother, not as deeply furrowed).</li> <li>• Pass out ‘Meet Douglas Fir’ student worksheets and ask students to draw the whole tree and then label its plant parts (leaves, trunk, branch, cone). Ask students to draw the leaves and cone. Have students start the ‘Tree Characteristics Matrix’ graphic organizers to describe the shape, leaves and bark of Douglas fir (they will add to this graphic organizer in the <i>Meet Bigleaf Maple</i> activity).</li> <li>• Return to the classroom or remain in the field. Ask students to fill in ‘Life Cycle of Douglas Fir’ graphic organizer.</li> <li>• Student Journals: Ask students to write an expository paragraph about Douglas fir. Suggested prompts: How is Douglas fir important to other living things in the forest? Describe the life cycle of Douglas fir. What animals depend on Douglas fir? Describe how to identify Douglas fir. List five new things you learned about Douglas fir tree.</li> </ul> |
|--|