

## Adopt a Tree

*Teacher note: I found the following in my files and have no idea where it came from ?? But, wanted to pass it on since it appears to be a worthwhile activity and is similar to one that I had my students do- but, I didn't write it up.*

### Observing the seasonal changes in the life of a tree

1. Collectively or individually, have class members "adopt" a deciduous tree on or near school property.
2. Observe it throughout the school year and keep a log of changes and observations; make them every other week if possible.
3. First try to get a feeling for your tree: how tall do you think it is? Wide? How many students does it take to hug a ring around the tree? What is the color and texture of the bark? Feel it: is it rough or smooth? What about the leaves? What is their color, texture, and shape? Do they smell? Listen. What sound does the wind make in the trees?
4. Try to draw your tree, and a detail of one leaf. Do you notice any scars where branches have fallen off? Why do you think they fell off? How did the tree heal?
5. As you observe your tree throughout the year, be careful to note any changes. When leaves fall (what color are they?), when do buds form, when do birds visit (what kind of birds?). When does your tree fruit? Does the fruit have any insect holes? (Look inside. What insect caused them?) Note how the smells change throughout the year.
6. Try thinking of the tree as an apartment building. Who lives on the ground level? In the upper stories? Observe any insects, lichen, moss, or other life.
7. Draw a picture of your tree on or near September 22, December 21, March 20 and during the final week of school.