



TAKE CARE OF TEXAS: EDUCATOR MATERIALS

## LESSON PLAN

# Talking Trees

### Objectives:

Students will identify needs of trees, the parts of trees, the different stages of the life cycle of trees, and will be able to distinguish between saplings and adult trees.

### Duration:

45 minutes

### Materials:

- Student journal
- Center #1: Needs & Parts handout
- Center #2: Life Cycle of Trees Puzzle handout (will need to be cut apart prior to activity)
- Center #3: How old are trees? handout
- Center #4: Why are trees important? handout
- Tree trunk samples (At least five samples)
- How old is that tree? worksheet

### Prerequisite:

Teachers will need to print out copies of the handouts for each center.

### Introduction:

Have students close their eyes and picture a tree in their head. Tell students they will be acting like a tree and thinking about how trees grow. Ask them what part of the tree holds it down to the ground? When students say roots, have them stomp their feet down. Sticking with roots, ask students what the roots do for the trees. Guide students to say something about roots bringing water to the tree.

Next, ask students what helps keep a tree straight? When students say trunk, have students stand up straight. Explain that the trunk also helps bring water to the tree. Then, ask students what protects the tree? When they say bark, have them rub their skin to show that the skin is like bark.

Now, ask what body part could be the same as branches? When students say arms have them lift their arms up and make them look like branches. Tell students leaves are like hair because it covers the branches, have students wiggle their fingers. Explain that leaves help trees soak up the sun and start photosynthesis.

Finally, tell students that the flowers and seeds are like our heads and brains because they carry something



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very important to share – new trees. Have students nod their heads. Now, they are big and strong like trees. Have students freeze and pose like a tree. Take a photo and show students together they are like a forest.

## Procedure:

1. Determine how students will visit centers whether that is by table groups, assigned groups, or as pairs. Explain to students they will visit each center, once they are finished with the activity, they will collect a Center Token which they will glue into their journal to mark they have completed that activity. See below for the centers, materials for each center, and the activity that need to be completed.

### Center #1: Needs & Parts

- Instructions: Students will use the Needs & Parts handout to label the parts of the tree and its needs. Have students write the corresponding numbers and letters in their science journal and write what part or need it is showing. Teacher should provide a list of vocabulary words such as roots, leaves, trunk, branches, air, water, and sunlight to support students.

### Center #2: Life Cycle

- Instructions: \*\*Teacher will need to cut out the puzzle pieces prior to activity. Students will work together to put the puzzle pieces together to form the life cycle of a tree. They will then draw and label the life cycle into their science journal.

### Center #3: How old are trees?

- Instructions: \*\*Teacher will need to get up to five samples of trees for students to count their rings. Students will read about tree rings and count how many tree rings are in the given samples. If you are not able to get tree samples, use the “How old is that tree?” worksheet as an alternative.

### Center #4: Why are trees important?

- Instructions: Students will review what trees give us and using the questions provided on the “Why Trees are Important?” handout, will discuss with a partner. Students will think of a way to protect trees and write it down in their science journal.

## Assessments:

Assessment will be informal observations, the completion of the activities within the centers, and one-to-one discussions between teacher and students.

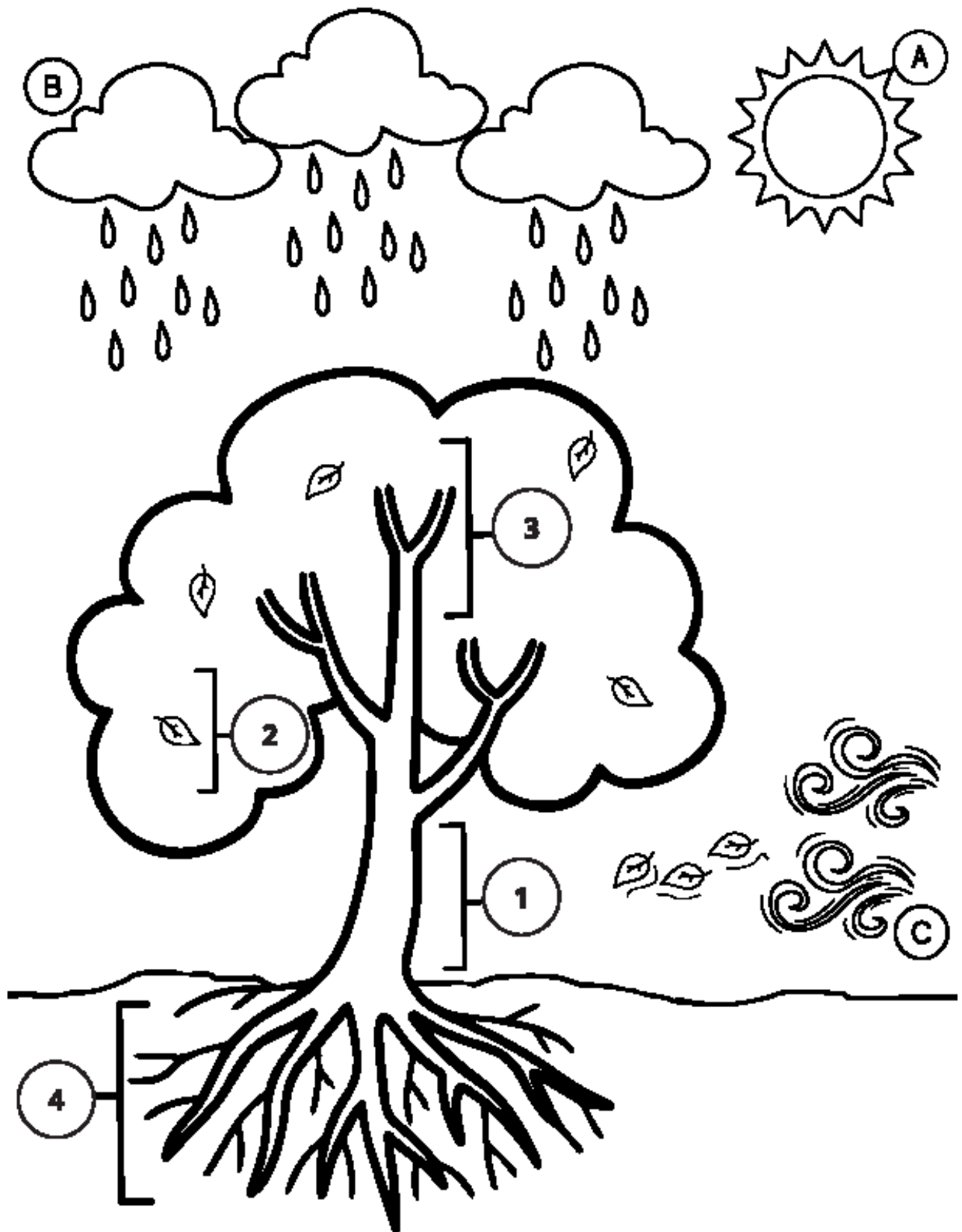
## Glossary:

- **Roots** – a part of a plant that is usually hidden underground. They hold the plant in the ground and keep it upright. They take water and food from the soil.
- **Leaves** – one of the most important parts of a plant. Leaves produce food for the plant through a process called photosynthesis.
- **Trunk** – the main stem of a tree; usually covered with bark
- **Branches** – a woody part of a tree or bush that grows out from the trunk
- **Seed** – the small parts made by plants from which new plants grow
- **Sapling** – a young tree
- **Tree rings** – made each year the tree grows. It can tell you how the tree has grown.

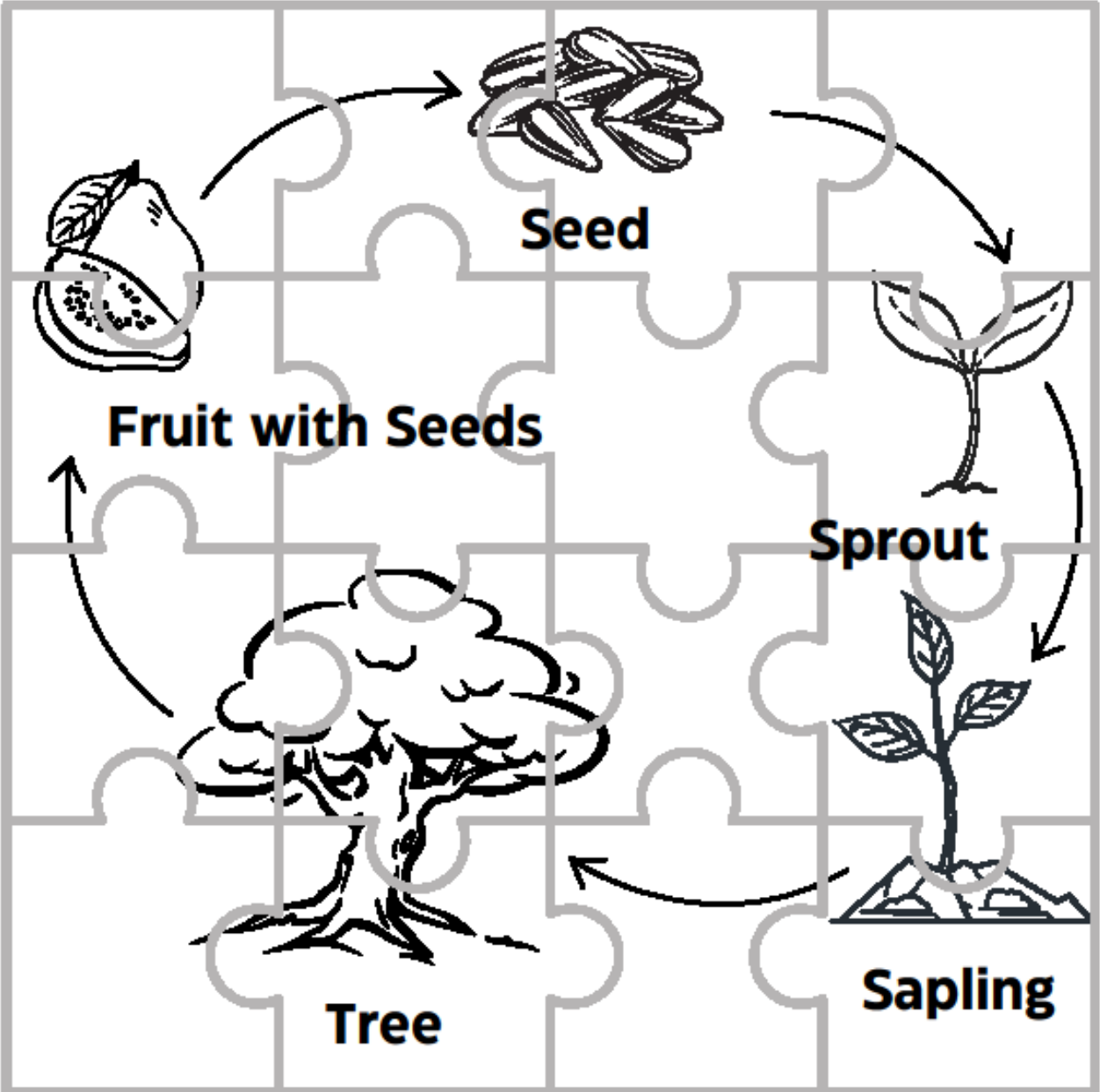
## Applicable TEKS:

- **1<sup>st</sup> Grade** -- §112.2.K.b.12A; 13A; 13C
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade** – §112.3.1.a. 1E
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade** – §112.4.2.b. 12A; 13A

CENTER #1  
NEEDS & PARTS OF TREES



**CENTER #2**  
**LIFE CYCLE OF TREES PUZZLE**



**CENTER #3**  
**HOW OLD ARE TREES?**

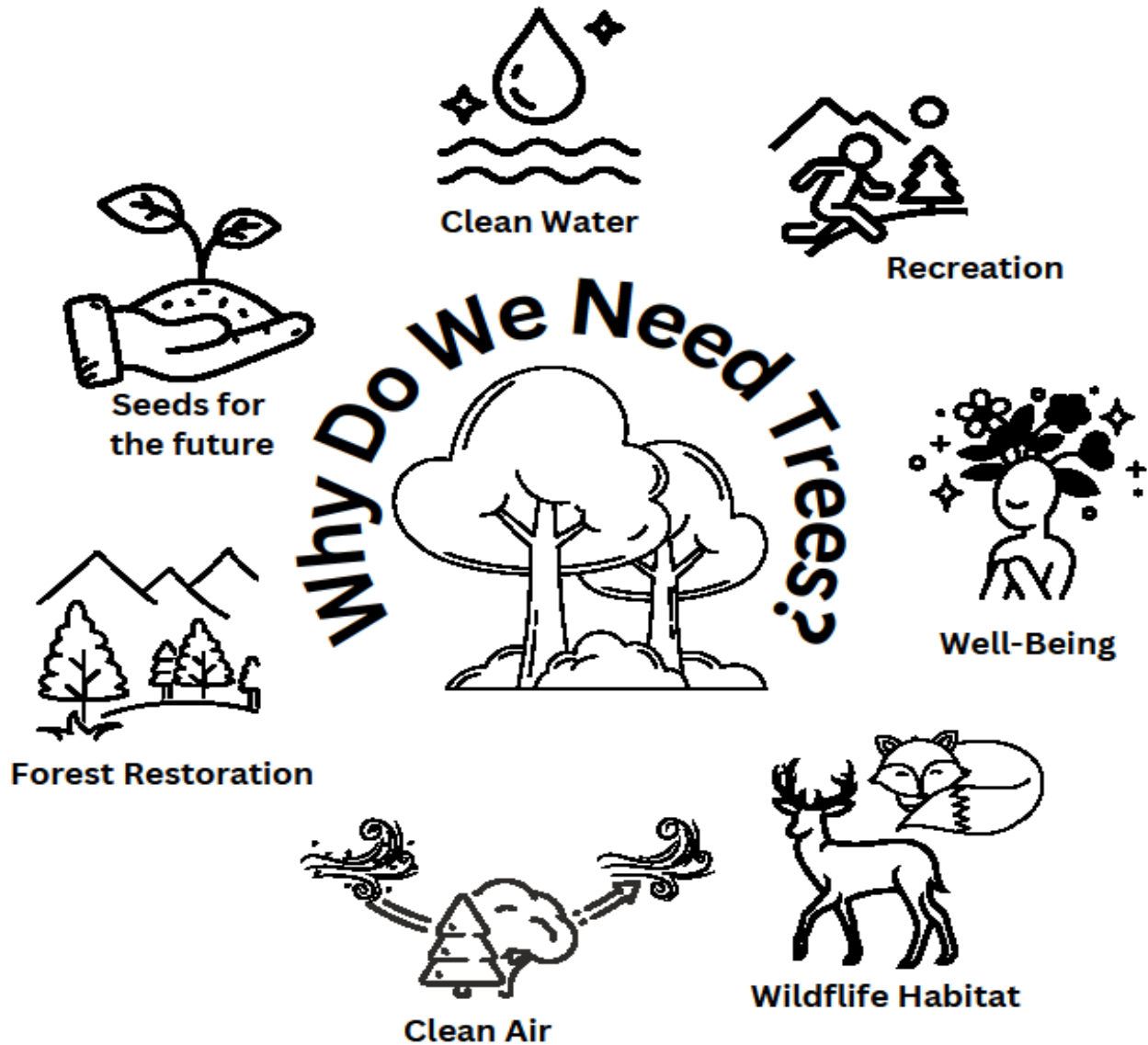


**Trees can't talk but they can tell us a lot without saying one word. During a tree's growing season, spring and summer, trees will get taller, wider, and add another layer of wood around its middle. Those layers become the tree rings. The size of the tree rings tell us the good and bad times the tree goes through. If the tree ring is skinny, the tree did not get enough water. If the tree is even and thick, the tree had a good year.**

**Look at the samples and count how many rings each sample has and write it down in your science journal.**



**CENTER #4**  
**WHY ARE TREES IMPORTANT?**  
**TALK WITH A NEIGHBOR**



**Which one is the most important thing trees give us?**  
**Why do you think that?**  
**What would be a way to protect trees?**  
**Write it down in your journal.**