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Outdoor & Woodland Learning SCOTLAND

What's in the trees?

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Before you go:

Discuss why woodlands are valuable (for example - timber, walks in the wood, wildlife). Research how woods were used by people in the past (include food, medicines and dyes).

What do you need?

Collect items derived from trees, such as rubber gloves, a cork, chewing gum, olive oil, chocolate, marmalade, dried fruit, squash ball, pencil, artificial sponge, magazine, wooden items, apple, toilet roll, maple syrup, vanilla essence, soap, charcoal, book, bay leaves, eraser, wooden die, cricket bat, cardboard items, envelope, paper bag, wooden ruler, wooden musical instrument, and a notebook. Some items that don't come from trees.

Activity

Hang the objects along a path in the woods (for about 15m) at ground, eye and head level. Ask the children to be 'wood detectives' and in pairs, to guess which of the items come from trees. Ask them to remember or write down the things they find.

Discuss the results. Products are derived from all parts of a tree: the wood, gum, tree resin, fruits, leaves

Wood is the most obvious product, providing timber for houses, furniture, doors, and floors.

Cellulose is a main part of wood. Paper and products like books, magazines, and cardboard are made from cellulose. It is also an ingredient in products such as rayon, synthetic sponges, imitation leather, and shatterproof glass

Rubber products and chewing gum are made from **tree gum**. Soap and varnish are made from **tree resin**.

A wide variety of **fruits and nuts** are eaten or used for making other produce like cider and marmalade

The **bark** of cork trees is used for bulletin boards and bottle corks. Medicines, like asprin and quinine comes from bark.

Tree leaves provide food flavourings such as bay leaves.

The children can then go on to see if they can guess which products come from which part of the tree.

Follow-up

Make paper - you can find instructions here: http://www.foresteducation.org/images/uploads/woodproductssci.pdf

Think of substitute materials for some of the products and consider these questions: Is it made from a renewable source? Is it reusable or recyclable? Does the substitute require more or less energy to produce? What are the long term effects of our product choices?