



Kentucky's Outdoor Classroom Newsletter

September 1999

Volume 1, No. 3

Trees For The New Century



Welcome Back! Now that everyone is back from a long summer break it is time to make use of those outdoor classrooms. This newsletter is packed full of ideas to start off the new school year. Here are two great interactive ideas for you and your students to get outside and learn more about your outdoor classrooms and nature.



- Have the students conduct an inventory of their outdoor classroom and then have the students create a map from their inventory.
- The year 2000 is almost here. Planting trees would be a great way to celebrate and mark the new millennium.

Inventory and Mapping

An inventory is a good project to conduct in your outdoor classroom at the start of a new year. Have the students catalog:

Flora and Fauna

Look at trees, plants, and wildlife growing in the outdoor classroom and their different habitats from sunny to shaded to wetlands.

Physical Features

The natural features of the outdoor classroom such as the soil, rocks and topography (is flat land or hilly land). Also the other physical features such as school building, playground equipment and benches.

Land Use

By investigating the plants, animals and physical features the students can start answering questions like "How do people use the property?" and developing different uses such as recreational, utilitarian, educational, and landscaping for the area.

Mapping

Once the students have conducted their inventory they should be able to make detailed map of their outdoor classroom. You can vary the difficulty of the maps around the students levels. The students could create a large class map of the area along with individual maps to use in the field.

(For more detailed descriptions about this project use the *Teacher's Guide Developing, Using & Maintaining Outdoor Classrooms in Kentucky*.)

Trees for the New Millennium

What is the event that everyone, everywhere is planning for and talking about? The year 2000. Our world entering a new millennium is a hot topic these days. It also is an excellent time for your outdoor classroom to have a tree planting activity. The trees will become a type of benchmark for the year 2000. People will be using the new millennium as a benchmark for everything from graduations to births. So let one of the benchmarks for the year 2000 be your new trees. Everyone will remember the year 2000 trees. So celebrate the new millennium and trees by starting them off together.

- What** Contact the Kentucky Division of Forestry so a resource person can help you decide what type of trees to plant. **(502) 564-4496**
- When** Most planting in Kentucky is done in the early spring from February to May.
- Where** Order your trees from the Kentucky Division of Forestry or a local nursery. ***Place your orders as soon as possible!*** Because orders take 6 to 12 months for delivery.
- Why** Because who wouldn't want a tree celebrating the birth of a new century and millennium.



Project Learning Tree (For lessons and activities related to trees)

PLT Activity #5 **“Poet-Tree”** encourages writing about and sharing feelings and values concerning tree and forests.

PLT Activity #12 **“Tree Treasures”** is all about the wide array of products that come from trees.

PLT Activity #21 **“Adopt A Tree”** encourages awareness and appreciation for our surrounding environment.

PLT Activity #27 **“Every Tree For Itself”** which explains all the different nutrients trees need.

TAKE YOUR TREES ONLINE

Identification books work well for identifying trees, but if you want to incorporate a web activity into your outdoor classroom try using an online tree identification page. Bill Cook of the Michigan State Extension Service maintains an excellent one at

<http://forestry.msu.edu/uptreeid/>



Or if you just want to know **more** about trees check out The Tree Web

<http://quercus.ca.uky.edu/> A wonderful web page that details not only the physical characteristics of the many trees found in Kentucky but also provides a tremendous amount of information on the natural history of our trees.

New Website

The Secret Forest where you explore the mysteries of forest life. This site has experiments to try, a forest dictionary, games and an area called Speak-up! Where students can answer new forest related questions and share cool forest discoveries with other students across the country.

<http://www.afsee.org/sf/>

BOOKS

There are many children books that help drive home the value of out trees and forests.

A Tree is Nice by Janice May Undry, briefly describes the value of trees.

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein A tree and boy become friends. The tree helps the boy. This is good for showing children the connections between people and nature.

Upcoming Events

Youth Environmental Summit (YES)

For any high school student interested in environmental and economic issues. *September 10 - 12, 1999*. Conducted by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. For more information contact:

Brenda Franey (Fayette County Extension)
606-257-5582

Esther Moberly (Scott County Extension)
502-863-0984

Kentucky Association of Environmental Educators (KAEE) Annual Conference

October 8 - 10, 1999, Frankfort, KY.

The theme for this year is Environmental Learning is Real Life Learning. Attend the conference and explore ways to bring real life learning to your educational programs.

For registration information contact KAEE:

606-578-0321 or

e-mail: KPReagor@aol.com

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