

RAFT IDEAS

Topics: 3-dimensional art, Traditions, Ecosystems

Materials List

- ✓ Green file folder, similar cardstock, or construction paper
- ✓ Stapler
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Optional: Stickers, beads, wire, colored paper
- ✓ Optional: 3 mm (1/8") or 1.5 mm (1/16") hole punch

This activity can be used to support the teaching of:

- Ecosystems and plant environments (CA Science Standards: Grade 4, 3.a & 3.b)
- 3-dimensional art construction (CA Visual Arts Standards: Grade K and above, creative expression, 2.0)
- American traditions (CA History Standards: Grade 1, 5.3)

3D Tree

Simple, Paper Evergreen Trees for a Tabletop Winter Wonderland



A bit of cutting and stapling will produce wonderful, little trees that stand up on their own. Decorate the tree for a great winter holiday project, or create several trees of various sizes to make a tabletop scene.

Assembly

1. Punch 2 or 3 Evergreen trees (conifers) on the Ellison die-cutting machine using green file folders or green construction paper. Alternate construction: cut 2 or 3 identical tree shapes from the cardstock
2. Score and crease each tree vertically along the middle of the tree.
3. Cut the tree trunks off the bottom of the trees.
4. Lay the 2 or 3 trees together and staple 3 staples along the middle line.
5. Spread the half parts of the trees around in a circle so the tree will sit on a table.
6. Optional: decorate the tree using stickers, beads, wire, or bits of colored paper. Punch holes in branch tips to aid in hanging decorations.
7. For smaller trees, cut each tree at a higher branch or cut out smaller tree shapes.

The Content Behind the Activity

Conifers are softwood plants that reproduce by seeds and pollen on cones and have needles or scale-shapes leaves. Most are evergreen, upright trees (e.g.- pines, spruces, and firs) and shrubs that grow throughout the world (except in Antarctica) and prefer temperate climate zones. They include the world's smallest tree (Natural Bonsai Cypresses (*Cupressus goveniana*) and Shore Pines (*Pinus contorta*) which can be mature at 8") and world's tallest trees (Coast Redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) which can grow to over 360 ft.). Conifers were the dominant type of vegetation just before the appearance and diversification of angiosperms (flowering plants) about 100 million years ago. Evergreens retain their leaves (needles) year-round, contrasted with deciduous plants that lose all foliage for part of the year.

Evergreen trees (especially firs) and clippings from evergreen shrubs (holly, mistletoe) have been part of Winter Holiday celebrations for centuries, and actually part of in-home decorations as early as the 16th century. During cold winter months, when most of the landscape is dead or dormant, evergreen plants bring good cheer and hope, and they serve as reminders that the environment will again grow green and lush in the upcoming spring.

Web Resources (Visit www.raft.net/more for how-to videos and more ideas!)

For more about conifer species, see:

www.oregon.gov/ODF/FIELD/Nursery/Conifers.shtml