



**Fair Hill Nature Center**  
**Stewards of Tomorrow**  
**School-based Outdoor Learning Experiences**



## ADOPT A TREE

FHNC Objectives*	Connection to CCPS Focus Concepts and Objectives
<p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify an “adopted” schoolyard tree.</li> <li>2. Identify the basic parts of trees.</li> <li>3. Explain how plants respond to changes to their environment during the school year.</li> </ol> <p><u>Materials:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Weatherproof ribbon to mark chosen tree(s)</li> <li>✓ 1 clip board per student</li> <li>✓ 2 sheets copy paper per student</li> <li>✓ 1 crayon box per student</li> <li>✓ 1 thick crayon with paper removed per student (for bark rubbing)</li> <li>✓ Camera or cell phone camera</li> <li>✓ Folder for completed student work</li> <li>✓ Poster paper to create a classroom display of “Our Adopted Tree”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus Concept:</b> External Parts to Meet Needs</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> Students will be able to: Identify the basic needs of plants and animals (food, shelter, air water).</p> <p><b>Focus Concept:</b> Organisms’ Responses to Environment</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> Students will be able to: Explain how plants and animals respond to their environment.</p>
<p><b>* Note: the Adopt a Tree activity is designed to be repeated over the course of a school year so that students can study and observe their tree during different seasons and identify ways in which they respond to environmental changes.</b></p>	

<b>Preparation</b>	<p>Have materials together and ready for distribution. If this activity is done in conjunction with the <i>What Lives Here?</i> survey activity, do the survey first to help children become familiar with the study area, and then focus in on the chosen adopted tree.</p>
<b>Activities</b>	<p>Allow the students to choose one or two trees located in the study area of your schoolyard to adopt and study throughout the year. If identifying the same tree in the future might be difficult, mark with a weatherproof ribbon.</p> <p>Have the students explore their tree with the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a “scientific” drawing of the tree with crayons. Encourage the students to identify the colors they see and use crayons that help depict those colors in their drawings. Students should sign and date their work and keep in a folder to compare with future drawings. Choose a few drawings to display on the poster, along with a photo</li> </ul>

	<p>of the tree.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe the tree and inspect its bark and branches, etc. for signs that organisms live there or use it in some way. Have students add these details to their drawing if observed. Examples include lichen or moss growing on trunk and branches, holes made by woodpeckers, birds sitting in branches, old bird and squirrel nests, insects or signs of insects, etc.</li> <li>• Complete a bark rubbing. Place a sheet of paper against the bark of the tree and rub with the side of a thick crayon with paper removed to transfer the tree’s bark texture to the paper. Choose a few rubbings to display on the poster.</li> <li>• Depending on the time of year that the tree is observed, collect samples of leaves and seeds, a twig with buds, and flowers. These can be added to the Our Adopted Tree poster. Leaves collected in the fall can also be used in the <i>Why Do Leaves Change Color?</i> Activity. For activities involving buds, visit the <b>Stewards of Tomorrow</b> Teacher Resource section of the Fair Hill Nature Center website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ways to use observations/ data</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use leaves to identify the tree with the help of a tree guide.</li> <li>2. Research and write a paragraph about the adopted tree, including how it is used by animals and people.</li> <li>3. Write an imaginative story about the tree. Story starters could include:       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If I built a tree house in my tree, it would have . . .</li> <li>b. Pretend you are the adopted tree. Write a story about:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how it feels to have to live rooted to the ground.</li> <li>• how it feels to live in your schoolyard.</li> <li>• what its “job” is in the community, including animals and people.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>