



# Nature Display



**Purpose:** Students will collect items in nature to display on a tree cookie to hang on the wall.

**Background:** Each ring of a tree represents one year of growth.

Tree rings are made up of cells that are dead, but act like tunnels for transporting water to other growing cells. Much of the trunk is devoted to water transportation because of the quantity of water needed by all the growing parts of large trees.

When a cross section of a tree is taken, it is often referred to as a "tree cookie" due to its shape. The first year of growth is at the center of the tree cookie, while the last year's growth is where the wood meets the bark.

## Tree Facts:

Healthy trees in our communities improve our environment. In addition to the visual impact of trees, tree canopies and root systems provide a natural filter to our water supply and reduce stormwater runoff, flooding, and erosion.

The sabal palm (*Sabal palmetto*) is the most widely distributed palm in Florida. It grows in almost any soil and has many uses, including food, medicine, and landscaping. The 1953 Florida legislature designated the sabal palm as the state tree, and the 1970 legislature mandated that the sabal palm should replace the cocoa palm on the state seal.

**Materials:** Base: tree cookie approximately 4" X 5", paper clip or pop tab, white glue, 10 small items in nature: acorns, sturdy leaves, small twigs, etc., small container

**Preparation Before the Lesson:** Hot glue the tab or paper clip to the back of the tree cookie to act as a hook.

## Activity:

### Day 1

1. Students gather 10 small items from nature, making observations along the way. Use a small container to collect nonliving or things that used to be living. Items should be about the size of their thumb.
2. Students sort and compare objects acquired from the nature hike.

### Day 2

1. Observe tree cookie.
2. Place a generous amount of glue on the tree cookie.
3. Place some or all items on the glue.
4. Set to the side to dry.

## CROSS SECTION OF A TREE

