Family Literacy Lesson Plans
*A Tree for Me*

**Adult Education Lesson Plan**
Using Venn Diagrams to Analyze News Stories

![Blank Venn Diagram](image)
![Example Venn Diagram](image)

**Early Childhood Education Lesson Plan**
Matching Games with Trees and Animals

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**Interactive Literacy Lesson Plan**
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Resources
Adult Education Lesson Plan
for
In the Woods: Who’s Been Here? and A Tree for Me

Name of Activity: Using a Graphic Organizer to Critically Observe Televised News Broadcasts

Students Participating; size of group: Individuals in small or large groups

Lesson Goal: Learners will successfully compare two TV news broadcasts using a Venn diagram.

Learning Objectives/Skills: The learners will be able to:
a) Attend to visual and oral information presented in two different televised news segments.
b) Monitor comprehension and adjust viewing strategies to gather information by use of a Venn diagram.
c) Analyze the accuracy, bias, and usefulness of the TV news segments through discussion with peers and teachers.

Environmental Adaptations, Time & Materials Needed:
The following activities can be adapted to different situations. Students can work individually or with partners. Feedback can be given from peers or from the instructor(s). The activities will take approximately 30-40 minutes depending on students. If video equipment is not available, the same exercise can be done with newspapers or articles in news magazines. The following materials will be needed:
- TV monitor with video player.
- A videotaped recording of two broadcast news segments. For variety, try a local station and a national network.
- Paper and writing instruments for learners.
- Whiteboard, chalkboard, or chart paper with appropriate writing implements.
- Overhead projector.
- An overhead transparency of a blank Venn diagram.
- Venn diagram sample.
- Optional: Individual copies of Venn diagram sample as a worksheet for each participant.

Procedure/Description of the Activity:
1. Introduction: Discuss the value of observation and visual analysis as skills. Point out the unconscious use of these skills in every day routines. Examples: compare the doneness of a cooking dish, the color of water filter, the growth of a child. Tell the learners that they will be learning to use a specific technique to visually organize their thoughts. They will learn to compare items by graphically separating them into things that are the same and different. This method is called a Venn diagram.
2. Explain that Venn diagrams are useful for helping children make comparisons too. For example their children are reading two books that can be analyzed using a Venn diagram. Read the two books to the learners, making sure they can see the pictures: In the Woods: Who’s Been Here? and A Tree for Me.
3. On an overhead projector show the Venn diagram sample that compares the two books. Explain that the titles of the books are in their own circles with individual characteristics of each book under the appropriate title. Then explain that any characteristics that describe both books are placed in the middle where the circles intersect. Encourage the class to add other similarities and differences to the diagram. Affirm their ideas and add them to the overhead with a marker.
4. Explain that a Venn diagram can be used in comparing other kinds of information. For example we can analyze news sources using this technique. Show learners the two previously videotaped news segments on the same topic. Encourage note taking and other current language arts strategies for remembering information. If necessary view the video segments again in order for learners to gather enough details to analyze and discuss their observations.

5. Guide the learners as they work in pairs to diagram the information from the news stories. Use questions regarding accuracy, bias, and usefulness of the information provided in order to prompt learner analysis of the content. For example: “Are the facts in both news stories the same? If not what are the differences?” While learners are working on this activity, affirm vocabulary words that clearly distinguish similarities and differences. Instructors can also review and reinforce current language arts goals such as separating the main point from supporting details in expository writing or recognizing persuasive language by asking questions like: “What was the point of view of the reporter? How do you know?”

6. Then ask pairs to report the findings from their small group work. As they report, create a class Venn diagram on board or overhead. Provide guidance to keep the Venn diagram categories clearly distinct from one another. Continue to praise learners for focusing on characteristics that are alike and those that are different.

7. Wrap-up: Discuss how separating information in this fashion helps us organize thoughts and make decisions. Ask what new ideas occurred after viewing and sorting the information. Discuss how this activity might influence the learners as they seek news information in the future. Praise the learners for their ideas and accomplishments. Discuss other situations in which a Venn diagram might be useful. Suggest that parents use this Venn diagram technique with their children after reading books on similar topics such as In the Woods: Who’s Been Here? and A Tree for Me.

Resources:
### Assessment: For Informal Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Attends to visual and oral information in two different TV news segments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Uses Venn Diagram approach to monitor and adjust viewing strategies.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c) Analyzes the accuracy, bias, and usefulness of the TV news segments through discussion with peers and teachers.</td>
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### Reflect on the Activity:

1. What worked well?
2. What didn’t work?
3. What might have made the activity more successful?
4. Did you notice any potential for follow-up activities based on what the students said or did?

### Transfer Home/Extension Ideas:

- Compare the labels of two brands of a commonly purchased item (e.g., cereal or a cleaning product) in a Venn Diagram in order to determine which brand better serves the family’s needs.

- Visually compare a child’s photographs from infancy to toddlerhood, or toddlerhood to preschooler. Discuss how organizing this information graphically helps to describe where their child is developmentally.

### Literacy Area(s)* Addressed (check all that apply):

- [x] The Power and Pleasure of Literacy
- [x] Phonological Awareness
- [x] Building Knowledge & Comprehension
- [x] Fluency
- [x] The Literate Environment
- [x] Phonemic Awareness
- [x] Reading Comprehension
- [x] Language Development
- [x] Types of Text
- [x] Knowledge of Print
- [x] Motivation
- [x] Multiple Literacy
Early Childhood Education Program
for
A Tree for Me

Name of Activity: Matching Games, Trees and Animals

Students Participating; size of group:
Groups of 4 or 5 children (ideally) or larger, with a leader for each group

Lesson Goal: Learners will play two different matching games that will allow them to practice using and recognizing nature words and concepts that they learned during story time.

Learning Objectives/Skills: The learners will be able to:

a) Learn new words as they are introduced to specific trees, leaves, animals and animal habitats.
b) Engage in literacy related play by playing games that focus on the animals and trees mentioned in the book.
c) Connect reading to their experiences as they learn about some of the animals that they see in their daily lives.

Environmental Adaptations, Time & Materials Needed: This activity can be adapted to almost any environment. Children will need a flat surface (table, tray, floor) for playing the games. You may choose to do both matching games in one session, or spread them over two sessions, doing the Tree and Leaf game on the day you read A Tree for Me, and the Animal Habitat Game on the day you read In the Woods: Who’s Been Here?
The activities will take approximately 25 – 30 minutes depending on students. The following materials will be needed:

- Sets of Matching Cards: Tree Leaves to Trees—one set per group. Optional: color and laminate the cards.
- Sets of pre-cut Jigsaw Cards: Animal Habitats to Animals—one set per group. Optional: color and laminate the cards.
- A copy of A Tree for Me. If you have already read that story to the children, do a re-reading together or read In the Woods: Who’s Been Here?
- The Animal Fact Sheet.
- Real pictures of all the trees and animals introduced in the games, and a collection of the tree leaves if possible. (Pictures can be found in the websites listed in Resources.)
- Teacher-made posters showing the pictures and words for both games: the trees (Maple, Oak, Pine, Willow, Dogwood, Tulip Tree, Hemlock, and Sassafras) and animals (Monarch Butterfly, White-Tailed Deer, Red Fox, American Robin, Black Bear, Snowshoe Hare, Beaver, Ruffed Grouse, Opossum, and Woodchuck/Groundhog).
- Optional: extra sets of cards for children to color and take home to play with families.

Procedure/Description of the Activity:
1. Prepare the setting: Display the posters where all children can see at the story circle. Distribute matching game cards and jigsaw cards in each area where children will play the games.
2. Gather children and seat them for story time. Read the book A Tree for Me or In the Woods: Who’s Been Here? Ask questions that will prepare them for the activity. For example, where do you think an opossum lives? What kind of tree do you think this might be? Do you know how we can know what a tree’s name is?
3. Show children the posters of trees and animals. Tell them some of the trees and animals are very common and can be found in their community. Invite them to look closely at the pictures of animals and trees. Ask them if they have seen some of them. Share the information from the Animal Fact Sheet. Encourage the children to learn the words with you by recognizing the first letter of each word. Then read through the chart, pointing to the words and emphasizing the first sound of the words as you say them. Ask the children to read after you. If there is time, allow each child to point
to a tree or an animal and read it. Remember to praise them when they try.

4. Tell children that they will be playing two matching games and will use these tree and animal words in the games. Assign groups of children to the areas where they will be playing the games. Tell them to listen to the leader in the area to find out how the games work.

5. Leaders in each area can ask children if they are ready for the matching games and show them how to match the tree leaves to tree cards as well as the animal habitats to animal jigsaw cards.
   a) **Matching Cards: Tree Leaves to Trees.** Mix the cards and lay them face up on the table. Have children take turns matching the leaves to the trees. Help them recognize the names of the trees by identifying the first letter of the each word. Once a pair is found matched, remove both cards from the pile. After one pair is matched, the next child takes a turn. Praise children for remembering and reading the names of the trees.
   b) **Jigsaw Cards: Animal Habitats to Animals.** Mix the cards and lay them face up on the table. Have children take turns finding the two jigsaw pieces that match. Help children to remember the habitats each animal has. Praise children for remembering and using the correct words.

6. When the games are finished, have children in each group show a pair or two of the tree and animal matches they have made. Encourage them to say the tree and animal's names and praise them. Optional: Tell them they can each choose a pair of the animals and a pair of the trees to take home and color if they like.
Assessment:

For Informal Assessment

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<td>a) Learns new words specific to trees, leaves, animals and animal habitats.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Engages in literacy related play by playing games that focus on the animals and trees mentioned in the book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Connects reading to own experiences while learning about trees, animals, and habitats.</td>
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Reflect on the Activity:

1. What worked well?
2. What didn’t work?
3. What might have made the activity more successful?
4. Did you notice any potential for follow-up activities based on what the students said or did?

Transfer Home/Extension Ideas: a) Glue the matching cards of the trees and animals, color them and make a nature book. b) Take a naturel walk as in the Interactive Literacy activity to look for the trees and animals introduced in the games. c) For a challenge or with older children, play ‘concentration’ (the memory game) with the tree leaves to trees matching cards. Lay all the cards face down on a table; turn over one card, and then try to turn over to its partner. If the match is correct, take both cards off the playing surface. If not, turn the cards face down again. Encourage children to try to remember where they were, for another turn.

Literacy Area(s)* Addressed (check all that apply):

- The Power and Pleasure of Literacy
- The Literate Environment
- Language Development
- Phonological Awareness
- Phonemic Awareness
- Types of Text
- Letters and Words
- Vocabulary
- Knowledge of Print
- Building Knowledge & Comprehension
- Multiple Literacy
- Fluency
- Reading Comprehension
- Motivation

* from National Center for Family Literacy’s Building Strong Readers and Learning to Read and Write
**Animal Fact Sheet – Some Popular Animals of Pennsylvania**

**Monarch Butterfly:** Sometimes called the milkweed butterfly because its life cycle centers on the milkweed plant, the Monarch lays its eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves, and feeds on the leaves after hatching as a caterpillar. The caterpillar will also hang from the plant to create a chrysalis and transform into a butterfly.

**White-Tailed Deer:** Generally preferring open woodlands, White-Tailed Deer are also found on the fringes of urban areas and in farming country. In the spring and summer deer eat green plants, and in the fall and winter their diet changes to acorns and other nuts, twigs and buds. (State game animal)

**Red Fox:** Red foxes seem to prefer somewhat open habitats and are not creatures of dense forests; their favorite habitat is rolling farmland interspersed with woods. They may dig their own den or use old woodchuck burrows. Red foxes eat small mammals and birds; also eggs, fruit, and insects.

**American Robin:** Perhaps the first bird most people learn to recognize, "robin redbreast" is a brown bird with a darker head and tail and a rusty-red breast. Their nests are usually made of mud and grass in a tree or on a ledge. They live on earthworms and insects.

**Black Bear:** The black bear is the only species of bear found in Pennsylvania. They prefer to live in forests or dense swamps, although they sometimes visit farmlands. Bears will eat almost anything, including garbage, and will freeload if given a chance. They do not truly hibernate, but head for a den in October and sleep soundly much of the winter in nests or dens in hollow stumps, caves and under trees.

**Snowshoe Hare:** The snowshoe gets his name from his big feet, made bigger in winter by thick, coarse fur. He also changes from brown in summer to white in winter. They eat mostly green plants in summer, and woody browse (twigs, buds and bark) in winter. Hares like high elevation swamps, brushy areas, and forests of mixed hardwoods and conifers. Mature forests don't suit them well.
**Beaver**: Beavers build dams to create ponds in which they build lodges, or may build streambank burrows. Since they prefer to dam streams in shallow valleys, much of the flooded area becomes wetlands. They eat the inner bark of trees.

**Ruffed Grouse**: Pennsylvania’s state Bird. In other parts of the country, the grouse may be called a "partridge." Their feathers are predominantly gray or reddish-brown. They nest on the ground, often at the base of a tree. Buds, fruits and the leaves of aspen birch, beech and maple, grapes, and other fruits and nuts are their primary sources of food.

**Opossum**: Opossums live in open woods, swamps and wastelands. They climb well. Although they do not hibernate, during very cold weather they may hole up for several days at a time, risking frostbite on their naked ears and tail to seek food when hunger strikes. Their bed is a nest of leaves in a hollow log, tree cavity, or burrow. They eat almost anything: fruits, nuts, corn, worms, insects, frogs, snakes, birds, small mammals, eggs.

**Woodchuck (Groundhog)**: They are usually found near farmland but may also dig burrows in the woods. These later become homes for other animals, but cause problems for farmers. Woodchucks are also able to manipulate objects with their paws because they have thumb stumps with claws. They hibernate from October through February, so they eat heavily during the fall. They eat grasses, clover, alfalfa, plantain, apples, beans, corn and other plants.

**Resources**:


Monarch Butterfly
[http://www.kidzone.ws/animals/monarch_butterfly.htm](http://www.kidzone.ws/animals/monarch_butterfly.htm)

Ruffed Grouse
[http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/PGC/bird_Mam/birdMam01.htm](http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/PGC/bird_Mam/birdMam01.htm)

White-Tailed Deer
Red Fox
http://www.wildwnc.org/af/redfox.html

Beaver
http://www.beaversww.org/beaver.html

Woodchuck
http://www.hsus.org/ace/14573
D _______  Dogwood

T _______  Tulip Tree
M ______
Maple

O ______
Oak
Pine

Willow
H ___________ Hemlock

S ___________ Sassafras
Parenting Education Lesson Plan for
A Tree for Me

Name of Activity: Discovering Rhythm and Rhyme
Students Participating: size of group: Family members in any size group. These activities can also be done individually during a home visit.

Lesson Goal: Participants will learn how to provide enjoyable phonemic awareness and conversation experiences for their children while reading and discussing the featured book.

Learning Objectives/Skills: The learners will be able to:
   a) Extend their expertise in reading varied books by fluently reading a children’s book in a manner that emphasizes the rhythm and rhyme.
   b) Implement a turn-taking strategy that involves identifying places in the story where children will be most able to join in and read some words.
   c) Suggest re-reading strategies that involve children in meaningful, pleasant conversations about the storybook.

Environmental Adaptations, Time & Materials Needed: This activity can be conducted in a home or a group setting. Participants will need a space for reading and writing; otherwise no particular room arrangements are required. The leader should practice reading the book aloud so that the rhythm flows easily, and words are properly emphasized. Click here for specific read aloud hints. Activities will take from 25 to 35 minutes depending on group size and amount of discussion and practice time. This lesson could be divided into two 20-minute sessions, emphasizing the first two objectives during the first session and the third objective during the second session.

The following materials are needed:
   - Copies of A Tree for Me for leader and for each family.
   - Pre-folded bookmarks, for leader and for each family. Click here for bookmark folding directions.
   - Pre-made sample bookmark.
   - Pencils or pens for note taking.

Procedure/Description of the Activity:
1. Introduction: Gather families and briefly discuss their memories of favorite childhood rhymes, such as jump rope and counting out rhymes. Point out that rhyme and rhythm help children learn important language skills. Distribute copies of the book, A Tree for Me. Tell parents that this book is a perfect choice for helping their children learn to listen for the rhythm of speech and to recognize words that rhyme. Research shows that these skills especially help children learn to read. Optional: You might want to note that these skills are part of phonemic awareness.

2. Catch the rhythm. Read through the book as participants follow along. Invite them to enjoy and listen for the rhythm and the rhyming words. Tell participants that when their children catch the rhythm, they will want to join in and read. Explain that you can emphasize the rhythm by clapping, foot tapping, etc. as you read. Ask for other suggestions from participants, and decide on a way to mark the rhythm. Then, ask participants to read along and mark the rhythm (e.g., clap) while you reread the book. Choose a speed that suits your participants. It is easy to stumble over some of the lines, so plan on repeating and practicing sections where needed.

3. Find the rhymes. Ask participants if they noticed any rhyming words as they read the story. If necessary provide guidance in identifying words such as tree, me, free; tiptop, stop; mistaken, taken; etc. Optional: point out that words that end alike are called word families; and that children learn to read them by focusing on the first letters.
4. Demonstrate using the rhymes for turn taking during reading. Tell participants that when children have heard a rhyming story read a time or two, they can often guess and fill in the rhyming word at the end of a line. In that way, they are taking a turn to read. Demonstrate this technique by reading the page with the Owl in the tree. Point under the print as you read:

One owl nesting,
golly gee!
No room for **me**
in this ol’ . . . (Stop reading but point under the word, **tree**, and wait for the listeners to fill it in. Show them how to prompt if their child doesn’t say the word).

Remind parents to praise and affirm their children when they say the right word: “Wow! You read that word!” “Yes, what word did you read?” “Yes, **me** and **tree** rhyme.”

5. Practice. Ask parents to find other places in the text where their children can fill in the rhyming words. Praise their efforts. Have participants practice this strategy with a partner, making sure that everyone gets an opportunity to be the reader. Circulate and give feedback.

6. Conversations During Rereading. Show the sample of the folded-paper bookmark and demonstrate two ways to use it.
   a. Like most bookmarks, it can be used to hold under the lines of print as you read to your child. If we do this now and then, it will help children learn to read from top to bottom, to pay attention to print, and to recognize phrases of print. Demonstrate this by reading a page from the book while using the side of the bookmark that has an arrow on it.
   b. It will also remind us of ways to talk about the book after reading it—an important part of reading to our children. Distribute copies of the folded paper bookmark, and ask participants to open it and read over the list of conversation starters with you. Ask which ones they think would work with their children. Solicit their other suggestions. Encourage them to write their own ideas on the list.

7. Wrap-up. The leader should review the many good ideas participants had, and encourage them to try the various techniques with their children. Solicit questions and suggestions. Encourage participants to report on their successes at the next meeting.
**Assessment:**

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Implements turn-taking strategy and identifies places in the story where it can be used.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Recognizes and suggests rereading strategies that involve children in meaningful, pleasant storybook conversations.</td>
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**Transfer Home/Extension Ideas:**
1. Suggest that parents make simple shakers that their children can use for keeping rhythm as they read the book together.

**Literacy Area(s)* Addressed (check all that apply):**

- [x] The Power and Pleasure of Literacy
- [X] The Literate Environment
- [x] Phonological Awareness
- [X] Phonemic Awareness
- [x] Letters and Words
- [x] Vocabulary
- [x] Building Knowledge & Comprehension
- [x] Reading Comprehension
- [x] Fluency
- [x] Multiple Literacy
- [X] Types of Text
- [X] Knowledge of Print
- [X] Motivation

* from National Center for Family Literacy’s *Building Strong Readers* and *Learning to Read and Write*
In *A Tree For Me*, repeated words and phrases, rhyming words, and punctuation guide us as we read aloud. But sometimes it’s hard to find the rhythm of a poem. Rhythms in our language are made by accenting the alternating syllables of words within a phrase. When Mary Poppins says *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious*, we can remember the word (and learn how to repeat it) by hearing the accented and soft syllables.

**Su per cal i frag i l is ex pi al i do cious**

You can clap your hands, tap your foot, or even sing along with the rhythm the syllables make. Look at the emphasized words in this excerpt from *A Tree for Me*, and try tapping your foot as you read aloud.

I *look, look, look* for a tree for *me*.
*Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,*
*old one, fat one, I choose that one.*

*Up I go* to the tippy tiptop.
*Uh-oh!*
*Oh, no!*
*Wait a minute. STOP!*

*I’m mistaken.*
*This one’s taken.*

Nearly every phrase in *A Tree For Me* is repeated. Once you’ve established a rhythm as you read aloud, it is easy to maintain because you don’t have to learn a rhythm for new phrases. Just don’t let the unrepeated phrases interrupt the rhythm! It might help you to think of the unique lines as if they were prose, not poetry. As you read, allow the unique lines of the poem to flow smoothly, giving a pause at punctuation, like a comma or a dash, or when you come to a rhyming word. Use the rhyming word or the pause to “restart” the momentum of the rhythm. For example:

*By the pond, butterflies flit and flee*  
*as I look, look, look* for a tree for *me*.
*Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,*
*old one, fat one, I choose that one.*

Or

*One owl nesting,*
*golly gee!*
*No room for me*
*in this ol’ tree.*

Your final clue for finding the poem’s rhythm is to look for rhyming and repeated words. In the above examples the red and blue words rhyme within each stanza. When you read aloud, the rhymes will guide you to emphasize the accented syllables that produce the poem’s rhythm. Repeated words are often de-emphasized, acting as the “backbeat” of the poem.
Words in red and blue rhyme within each stanza. Words in purple are repeated words. Bold words indicate a good place to pause, and often come immediately before a comma.

All around the hill where the brook runs free,
I look, look, look for a tree for me.
Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,
old one, fat one, I choose that one!

Up I go to the tippy tiptop.
Uh-oh!
Oh, no!
Wait a minute. STOP!

I’m mistaken.
This one’s taken.

One owl nesting,
golly gee!
No room for me
in this ol’ tree.

All along the brook, frogs peep, “Chip-chee!”
as I look, look, look for a tree for me.
Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,
old one, fat one, I choose that one.

Up I go to the tippy tiptop.
Uh-oh!
Oh, no!
Wait a minute. STOP!

I’m mistaken.
This one’s taken.

Two possums dangling,
golly gee!
No room for me
in this ol’ tree.

In the weeds, grasshoppers fiddle diddle dee
as I look, look, look for a tree for me.
Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,
old one, fat one, I choose that one!

Up I go to the tippy tiptop.
Uh-oh!
Oh, no!
Wait a minute. STOP!

I’m mistaken.
This one’s taken.

Three worms crawling

golly gee!
No room for me
in this ol’ tree.

By the pond, butterflies flit and flee
as I look, look, look for a tree for me.
Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,
old one, fat one, I choose that one.

Up I go to the tippy tiptop.
Uh-oh!
Oh, no!
Wait a minute. STOP!

I’m mistaken.
This one’s taken.

Four squirrels quarreling,
golly gee!
No room for me
in this ol’ tree.

On moss-covered rocks, crickets chirp, “Chirree!”
as I look, look, look for a tree for me.
Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,
old one, fat one, I choose that one.

Up I go to the tippy tiptop.
Uh-oh!
Oh, no!
Wait a minute. STOP!

I’m mistaken.
This one’s taken.

Five spiders spinning,
golly gee!
No room for me
in this ol’ tree.

Deep in the woods, I hear a chickadee
as I look, look, look for a tree for me.
Big one, small one, skinny one, tall one,
Old one, fat one, I choose that one!

Up I got to the tippy tiptop.
I climb and climb and do not stop.

No owl nest, no possums rest,
no inchworms crawl,
no squirrels at all,
no spiders creep-
-just me, asleep.

Chip-chee, chirree,
fiddle dee,
Zeeeeeee.
3. Take turns reading the book, one page at a time.

2. Write a list of all the rhyming words. Ask if anyone can add some others.

1. After you find the words that rhyme, ask:

   Especially for older readers:

   - Read the book with your child joining in.

   - Practice counting to 5 by counting the animals.

   - Can you remember the names of all 11 animals?

   - Find all 8 of them in this book.

   - Listen for words that rhyme with "tree." Can you find all 8 of them in this book?

   - Draw your ideal tree on the front of this book.

   - Talk about what kind of tree you would like to grow in your neighborhood.

   - Compare these trees with the ones in your neighborhood.

   - When you read it again:

     - big
     - small
     - skinny
     - tall
     - old
     - fat

A Tree for Me
A Tree for Me

- big
- small
- skinny
- tall
- old
- fat
To fold the bookmark:

1. Fold paper in half widthwise so that pictures and text face outward and away from each other.

2. Fold paper in half widthwise again so that text faces inward and pictures face outward.
Make Shakers. -- Make shakers from clean plastic drink cartons of various sizes. Fill the containers with items that will make a nice sound: bird seed, rice, beans, salt, pebbles. Glue the lids shut when you are finished. Children can hold them by the handles and shake as they step to the rhythm of music or poetry.
**Interactive Literacy Lesson Plan**

for

*A Tree for Me!*

**Name of Activity:** Scavenger Hunt

**Students Participating; size of group:** Any size group of children and their families.

**Lesson Goal:** Children and their families will participate in a nature walk that involves integrating various literacy skills with scientific exploration, observation, and discussion.

**Learning Objectives/Skills:** The learners will be able to:

a) Listen attentively and responsively as their children locate and identify scavenger hunt items as well as other items of interest during the activity.

b) Direct children’s eyes to meaningful print while reading the scavenger hunt list and the counting out rhymes.

c) Print letters and words for their children during the scavenger hunt, so that the children can read them back at the end of the hunt.

d) Engage in meaningful, pleasant conversations with children in a group setting, as a follow up to the nature walk and scavenger hunt.

**Environmental Adaptations, Time & Materials Needed:** The following activities can be adapted to different situations. This activity is best suited to a park, yard, woods, or other local nature setting. If necessary, however, it can be conducted indoors in a simulated nature setting.

The activities will take approximately **40 to 75 minutes** depending on students and setting. The following materials will be needed:

- Paper bags for gathering items, with family names printed on them—one for each family.
- Pre-made Nature Notebooks containing scavenger hunt list, note taking page, and counting out rhymes—one for each family.
- Pens or pencils for writing.
- Large chart with Scavenger Hunt List printed on it.
- Large charts with Counting Out Rhymes printed on them.
- Three man-made items that the leader has pre-hidden in the setting. Some suggested man-made items are: empty food containers, bottle caps, small toys like a ball, jack or small vehicle, paper items such as a band-aid cover, notepaper or candy wrapper, and plastic items like empty bottles or six pack holders.
- Optional: Crayons.

**Procedure/Description of the Activity:**

1. Gather families together near the location of your scavenger hunt and explain that they will be taking a walk in the woods, just like the characters in the book you read *(A Tree for Me or In the Woods: Who’s Been Here?)*. Ask if anyone has participated in a scavenger hunt, and invite them to describe the experience.

2. Tell the participants that everyone will need to be a good observer during this walk, because there are some specific things to look for. Show them the large Scavenger Hunt List, and read the items together.

3. Pass out the Nature Notebooks and ask children to find the page with the Scavenger Hunt List. Read the items together one more time, asking children to point to each item and join in as you read.

4. Ask participants to look at the next page, the note-taking page. Explain that this is a special challenge page! If they are careful observers, they will find some things that **don’t** belong in nature—you know because you have hidden three of them along the way. Tell participants to look for them, but to keep it a secret by just writing down what they found and where they found it. Their parents will help them do the writing.
5. Pass out the pre-labeled bags and pencils, and ask families to turn to the last page in the Nature Notebook. Explain that these rhymes are a good way to take turns or choose who will be “it” in a game. Ask if families notice that one of them is from the story, A Tree For Me. These rhymes are also lots of fun to say. Dismiss the first two or three family groups for the hunt by saying the counting out rhymes while pointing to the family groups. After dismissing these families, dismiss the rest all together. This will save time, and no one will be sad about being last.

6. Accompany families during the hunt, prompting and reinforcing families as they engage their children in the various objectives. Also, be certain to encourage children and families to investigate, explore and enjoy the nature setting.

7. After an appropriate amount of time (usually 15 –20 minutes), call families together in a circle in order to share their findings:
   a. Read each item on the Scavenger Hunt List, asking children to hold up what they’ve found. Respond to, compare, and briefly discuss their findings. Make certain that you single out each family at least once. For example, say, “The Smiths found a leaf with a long needle; and the Marvins found one with a short needle.”
   b. Ask the whole group to identify the hidden items that did not belong in nature. If your hunt took place in a natural setting, participants may have found additional items, too. Ask some of the participants or a helper to gather and dispose of those items, emphasizing the importance of taking care of nature.

8. Wrap-up. Engage families in discussion by asking some open-ended questions such as, “How might that tin can have got into the woods?” “Why should we pick up the litter we find in the woods?” “What was your favorite tree? What did you like about it?” “What would happen if we cut down all those trees?” Congratulate children on their good reading and writing, and encourage them to continue to enjoy nature and trees. Remind them to use the Counting Out Rhymes as they play. Optional: Pass out crayons so that children can color pictures on the Counting-Out Rhymes page or decorate the cover of the Nature Notebook while they participate in the discussion.
**Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Participant's Names</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Listens attentively and responsively to children during the activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Directs children's eyes to meaningful print in Nature Notebooks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Prints letters and words for children to read.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Engages children in meaningful, pleasant conversations throughout activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reflect on the Activity:**

1. What worked well?

2. What didn’t work?

3. What might have made the activity more successful?

4. Did you notice any potential for follow-up activities based on what the students said or did?

**Transfer Home/Extension Ideas:** Suggest nature walks at home and at other near-by locations. Gather nature guides for families to borrow for those excursions. Remind families to use the counting-out rhymes for turn-taking and choosing “it” for other games. For a follow-up activity, try a different kind of nature hunt, such as a sensory hunt where families focus on what they hear or smell rather than what they see. Invite families to share and write down rhymes and chants from their childhood such as those for jumping rope and bouncing balls. Then they can teach those rhymes for their children. Finally, make a nature scrapbook together so that children can keep a record of their nature finds, such as pressed leaves or flowers they have identified, drawings of bugs, daily weather and temperature.

**Literacy Area(s)* Addressed (check all that apply):**

- [x] The Power and Pleasure of Literacy
- [x] The Literate Environment
- [x] Language Development
- [x] Phonological Awareness
- [x] Phonemic Awareness
- [x] Types of Text
- [x] Letters and Words
- [x] Vocabulary
- [x] Knowledge of Print
- [x] Building Knowledge & Comprehension
- [x] Reading Comprehension
- [x] Motivation
- [x] Fluency
- [x] Multiple Literacy

* from National Center for Family Literacy’s *Building Strong Readers* and *Learning to Read and Write*
Putting together your NATURE NOTEBOOK:

You will need:

two pieces of cardboard or construction paper measuring 8½ x 11 inches

a hole punch

the three pages from the lesson plan: Scavenger Hunt List; Note-Taking Page; and Counting out Rhymes

1. Start by punching three holes along the long side of each piece of cardboard and each lesson plan page.

2. Next, cut three equal lengths of string or yarn from the ball.

3. Now line up the pages along the punched holes so that the lesson plan pages are between the pieces of cardboard, and put the string through the holes.

4. Tie the ends of the string together to bind your book. You're all finished!
SCAVENGER HUNT LIST

When you find an object fitting the descriptions on the left, check the box next to the picture with an "X."

1. Y-Shaped twig
   □ Found!

2. Seed
   □ Found!

3. Stone with more than one color
   □ Found!

4. Leaf shaped like an oval
   □ Found!

5. Leaf not shaped like an oval
   □ Found!

6. Something soft
   □ Found!

7. Something hard
   □ Found!

8. Choose any item that interests you. Draw it here!
   □ Found!
Can you find three things that don't belong in nature? Write your results in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What was it?</th>
<th>Where did you find it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Counting-Out Rhymes

1 Big one, small one,
   Skinny one, tall one,
   Old one, fat one,
   I choose *that* one.

2 Roses are red,
   Violets are blue.
   When I choose
   It will be *you*.

3 I asked my mother what I should do
   My mother said I should pick *you*.

4 Icky, bicky, cricky, tricky,
   Icky, bicky, boo.
   Icky, bicky, cricky, tricky,
   Out goes *you*.

5 I scream, you scream,
   We all scream for ice cream.
   Who screams loudest?
   Y-O-U.
Local Nature Settings

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/

Official state government website with links to state forests and state parks.

http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/index.aspx
Find a state park near you. Guided group walks can be arranged.

Pennsylvania Game Commission
http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/PGC/wildlife/index.htm

Pictures of wildlife and nature settings from the official PA Game Commission website.
SIMULATED NATURE SETTING

If you do not have a natural setting available, you can construct a simulated setting in an all-purpose room or even a hallway. The preparations can be done by parents and/or leaders. Use your imagination. Try some of these suggestions:

1. Line the walls with large paper trees you have colored and cut out.
2. Place leaves around the paper trees—gather real ones, or take them from artificial arrangements.
3. Set out stuffed animals that might make their homes in the woods—birds, bears, squirrels, chipmunks, frogs, foxes, snakes, etc. You might want to draw footprint prints or tracks leading to some of the animals.
4. Make a paper lake, and place stones around it. Gather some twigs to build a model of a beaver dam in the lake.
5. Make a paper stream that flows into the lake, and build a "bridge" over it. Draw plant and animal life in the stream.
6. Use large stones and twigs to make a model of a fire ring.
7. Place potted plants around the edges of trees and streams.
8. Hang paper birds from the ceiling.
9. Draw a sun, rainbow, and clouds.
10. Set up a small tent.
Resources for Lesson Plan: *A Tree for Me*

Web Sites

**All About Beavers**
http://www.beaversww.org/beaver.html

Information about beavers.

**Desert USA**

Information about White-Tailed Deer.

**Environmental Protection Agency Website for Kids**
http://www.epa.gov/kids/

Official EPA website. Games and activities to teach children as young as 4 about the natural world and how to protect it.

**Key to Leaves of Virginia Trees**
http://www.fw.vt.edu/dendro/forsite/key/intro.htm

An internet guide to identifying leaves that walks you through the process by describing the leaf.

**Monarch Butterflies**
http://www.kidzone.ws/animals/monarch_butterfly.htm

Information about Monarch Butterflies.
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/

Official state government website with links to state forests and state parks.

http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/index.aspx
Find a state park near you. Guided group walks can be arranged.

Pennsylvania Game Commission
http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/PGC/wildlife/index.htm

Pictures of wildlife and nature settings from the official PA Game Commission website.

http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/PGC/bird_Mam/birdMam01.htm
A list of Pennsylvania wildlife with images. Also from the PA Game Commission.

Rainforest Education
http://www.rainforesteducation.com/

Website with information about rainforests, games, and activities. Great for older kids who want to learn about forests and woodlands unlike places they can find near their homes.

The Red Fox
http://www.floodlight-findings.com/2redfox/redfox.html

Information on the red fox and many full color photographs of baby and adult foxes.
Jungle Photos
http://www.junglephotos.com/

Wonderful full color images of plants, animals, people, and towns in the Amazon.

Snowshoe Hare
http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eeik/critter/mammal/hare.htm

Information about the snowshoe hare from Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources.

Treelink
http://www.treelink.org/kids/ or http://treelink.org/

Website with helpful leaf identifying information for the eastern United States. The kids page includes games and activities.

Warren Newport Public Library Science Page

A list of helpful links for finding tree and leaf guides, and pictures of nature settings.

Western North Carolina Nature Center
http://www.wildwnc.org/af/index.html

A list of animal fact sheets for many animals native to Pennsylvania forests.

What Tree Is It?
http://www.oplin.lib.oh.us/products/tree/

A finding guide for trees by leaves, fruits, and name.
Woodchucks
http://www.hsus.org/ace/14573

Information about Woodchucks from the American Humane Society.
phonemic awareness--This is an important skill that helps children learn to read. Phonemes are the sounds letters make in words. When children pay attention to the letter sounds within words, we say they have phonemic awareness. If your child can hear the separate sounds in words, it will help her learn to read and spell better.

Songs and poems are great ways to learn phonemic awareness. You can also help by playing with the sounds in words, as you and your child talk together. Try some of these activities:

- Make up silly rhymes with your child-- "hamburger, bamburger, slamburger."
- Show your child how to make words longer by adding an ending-- "We are running, and talking, and laughing. Soon we will be eating, sleeping, snoring."
- Try to say some words backwards-- "Daysun, Daymon, Daytues."