



SPEAK FOR THE TREES, Boston

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Tree Care

Grades: 7 - 12

Setting: Outdoors

Purpose of Lesson: Students will learn how to properly care for trees, learning three of the more important tasks in ensuring a tree lives a long healthy life:

1. Watering
2. Mulching
3. Weeding

Essential Questions:

- Why do we need to care for trees?
- How do we care for trees?

Materials:

- PPT on Tree Care
- Mulch
- Watering Equipment
 - Hydrant meter
 - Hose
 - 5-gallon Watering Jugs
- Gloves

Program Session Schedule [~ 70 mins]:

Self Introduction & Group Check-ins: 10 mins

Icebreaker: 5 mins

Discussion of lesson topic: 30 mins

Activity: 20 mins

Review & Wrap-Up: 10 mins

Lesson Implementation

Self Introduction & Group-Check-ins (5 mins): Take this time to introduce ourselves and our organization. Who we are, what we do, and our goal for today's lesson. Use this time to let the students share their names and grades as well.

Icebreaker (5 mins): Students will introduce themselves and share what they are excited about for their upcoming week.

Guided Discussion (20 mins):

1. Begin by discussing the benefits of trees and why urban trees are so important.
2. Ensure students know that without proper care, those trees would not survive in urban environments. 3 of the more important forms of care these trees need are:
 - a. Watering
 - b. Mulch



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- c. Weeding
 3. Continue to discuss the role of each and why each is so critical in its own right.
 - a. Watering: Trees need water - especially at a young age - to develop strong roots, grow their canopy, and mature at the proper rate.
 - b. Mulch: Mulch is needed to assist the work of watering trees by ensuring the soil and ultimately the roots are retaining water. What happens too often, especially in dry environments and hot weather, is that the soil becomes very dry, and not all, if any, of the water given to a tree will reach the roots.
 - c. Weeding: Having invasive weeds in tree pits or the same soil as trees means they will be fighting to share the same nutrients and water. This can inhibit the growth of trees.
 4. Now, we will explain how to properly water and mulch street trees.
 - a. Important points to remember for watering are:
 - i. 10 - 15 gallons of water a week for young trees (2 - 7) is ideal.
 - ii. If trees are not mulched, then it would be very helpful to aerate the soil by using a hand pick/hand rack/ho/etc.
 - iii. Pour water slowly!
 - iv. Watering bags are great if they are available.
 - b. Important points to remember for mulching:
 - i. Donut, NOT a Volcano! Do not pile up all of your mulch at the base of the tree.
 - ii. Start from the outside of the tree pit or at the drip line (point in the soil where the tree's canopy extends furthest) and work towards the base of the tree. Mulch should be about 3 inches high in this area.
 - iii. Put only a thin, roughly 1" layer of mulch at the base of the tree.

Activity (30 mins): * Dependent upon location of lesson and need of trees in the area*

Go outside and demonstrate how to properly care for trees, allowing enough time for students to participate in each step in the process.

Review & Wrap-Up (10 mins):

Have the students walk you through the process by asking them what each step is in either activity they completed (watering or mulching) and ensure they understand why each step in the process is important.