

AIM: To develop children's awareness of trees as 'plants', to enable them to distinguish between deciduous and evergreen trees and to enable them to recognise different parts of a tree.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON

Although the poster introduces children to different trees, it is not envisaged that children study the names and leaves of each. Rather, the emphasis is on distinguishing two types of trees - deciduous and evergreen. The children will return to the different varieties of trees later in the programme.

DISCUSSION

- Look at the poster and discuss the different trees, the shape of their leaves, which lose their leaves and which do not etc.
- Read and discuss the poem.

WORKSHEET

Colour in.

LET'S DO IT

Erect and decorate a real Christmas tree in the classroom, using this as an opportunity to develop the children's awareness of the role of real Christmas trees in sustainable development.

CHRISTMAS TREES

Choose a real Christmas tree because -

- Growing Christmas trees helps remove harmful 'greenhouse gases' such as carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Trees turn bad air into good air.
- Most Christmas trees sold in Ireland are replaced each year. Real Christmas trees also provide habitats for birds and wild animals while they are growing.
- A real tree can be recycled; artificial trees are made from plastic and cannot be broken down naturally.

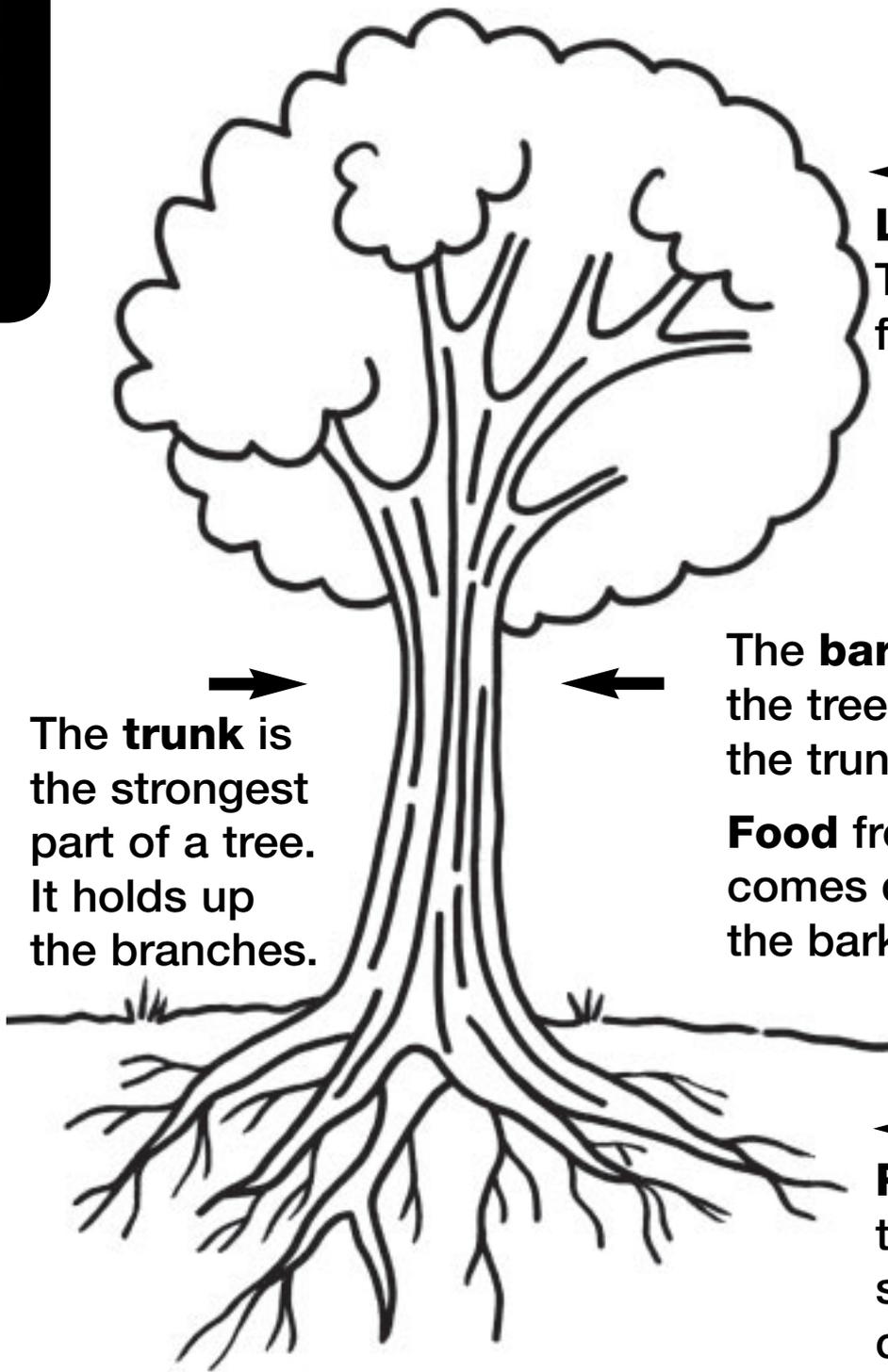
SAFETY

- Stand your tree in a special Christmas tree stand - it's safer.
- Give it a drink - about half a litre of water per day, to keep it from dropping its needles and to help it keep its fresh smell.
- Put it in the coolest part of the room.
- Always unplug your tree's lights at night (at home) or if you are going away.

HISTORY

About 1200 years ago, an English missionary called Winfrid (later called Boniface) was travelling through northern Germany. One day he met a group of Druids at a sacred oak tree about to sacrifice Prince Asulf to the God Thor. Winfrid stopped the sacrifice and cut down the tree. Immediately a young fir tree sprang up where the oak had stood. Winfrid called it the new Holy Tree and told the Druids that its wood would provide homes for them. German settlers brought the tradition of the Christmas tree to America and from there it spread around the world. Its colour reminds us that even in winter, there can be 'greenness' and life.

PARTS OF A TREE



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The **trunk** is the strongest part of a tree. It holds up the branches.

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Leaves are green. They make food for the tree.

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The **bark** is the skin of the tree. It is all around the trunk.

Food from the leaves comes down through the bark to the roots.

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Roots hold the tree in the ground so that the wind cannot blow it over.

The tree gets water through its roots.

Water from the roots goes up the trunk to the leaves.