

Planting trees

Children learn that trees can reproduce via cuttings, and nurture them from a cutting into a planted bush or tree in the classroom.

Season:	spring (March, April) to autumn
Location:	classroom, schoolyard, forest
Learning aids:	• educational material from the Internet on cultivation of trees with cuttings, e.g.

Video: Greenhouse Notes: Rooting Fruit Tree Cuttings

Topic:	natural sciences, speech and language, environmental education, research
Objectives:	children <ul style="list-style-type: none">• see the plant prepare for rooting and growing of leaves and realize what it is that plants need to grow and thrive.• understand the life cycle of the vegetation and compare with their own life cycle with the aim of respecting all living things

Activities:

1. Start the project in the early spring months, before buds have opened. Explain the project to the children. Discuss the life cycle of trees and bushes, focusing on how they can reproduce by growing from clippings.
2. Have children cut off clippings from suitable trees or bushes at the school grounds. Make sure the buds are still dormant. One can easily propagate willows, poplars, red and black currants, viburnum and forsythias. Have the children cut a branch with three to four buds.
3. Willow and poplar cuttings can be put in jars with water, and their development monitored. For example, look at root formation and record changes and have children make drawings of the progress.
4. If possible, acquire soil produced by a farmer in the vicinity of the school. Blend the soil with compost created in the school. Go through the production process of the plant soil and the compost with the children.

5. After two to four weeks, have children plant the cuttings in flowerpots filled with soil. If you plant some of the clippings in a transparent box, you can continue following the development of roots. Have children water the soil regularly and continue to record progress with drawings.

6. In the spring or fall, once the cuttings have reached a viable level of maturity, organize a trip where children help plant new trees and bushes. If you wait until autumn, the children need to transplant the cuttings into larger pots.

7. Discuss the project with the children. Ask them what they liked and what they did not like, and what they'd like to be done better.

