

# Oak Tree Activity

## Suggested activity time

15–20 minutes

## You will need

- Leaf ID sheet
- Seed ID sheet



For **Curriculum links and learning objectives** see the Autumn programme

## Activity

- Ask the children to touch the tree, give it a hug and describe what it feels like. Oak has a very rough bark. Explain that this is very good for mini-beasts – they can make their home in all the ‘nooks and crannies’ the trunk provides. Find an Oak leaf. Ask the children to describe its appearance. Does it have sharp edges? Is it curvy? Let everyone look at the leaf ID sheet and find the leaf they are looking at.
- Sing the ‘Hokey Pokey’ song, changing these words to ‘Oakly Dokey’. Also, when singing the words ‘Put your right arm in’, change this to ‘Put your oak leaf in’ and so on. Make sure all children are holding an oak leaf when singing this. Find an acorn. This can either be done pre-visit, or as you are looking at the tree. If no acorns can be found on the tree, look on the ground. Ask the children to identify it by looking at the ID sheets
- Explain to the group that acorns are very important for wildlife and vice versa. The small nut could grow as tall as the tree they are standing under given the right conditions. Acorns are too heavy for wind dispersal so they need other ways to spread. Squirrels eat acorns to gain energy and keep warm and survive the cold months. They run around the park hiding acorns to eat later and when this is about 20–30 metres from the parent tree and has access to water, sunlight and nutrients in the soil, there will be more space for it to grow tall and strong. Explain to the pupils that if this process did not happen, the acorn would grow too close to the ‘mother tree’. It would not be able to spread its branches, or receive enough sunlight, water or nutrients from the soil.

The **ParkLife** project helps local people get outdoors and explore nature in Belfast’s wonderful parks



**Belfast**  
City Council



# Oak Tree Activity

## Facts about the Oak

The Oak can grow over 40 m high, over 3m in diameter and often reach an age of 300 years old. Oak was traditionally used in boat /ship building, fencing, firewood, making charcoal and fuel for iron smelting. It is used now in cabinet and furniture making, joinery and carving and as veneer and plywood. The building of traditional Oak framed buildings is also becoming popular again.



## Further Activity

Measure the width and height of the trees. The children can count the number of leaves and acorns and create art back in the classroom with materials gathered. Think about the strength and durability of different kinds of wood and investigate what they were used for in the past.

The **ParkLife** project helps local people get outdoors and explore nature in Belfast's wonderful parks



**Belfast**  
City Council

