

## Suggested activity time

10 minutes

## You will need

Leaf ID guide

Seed ID guide



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

## Activity

Allow the children time to investigate the tree, what does the bark feel like, what do the leaves look like?

Use the Leaf ID guide to find the correct name for the tree. Explain to the group that each leaf has many leaflets. Count them together. There should always be an uneven number as the leaflets are opposite each other, apart from the one found at the top.

Ask the children to compare this leaf with other leaves they have already looked at. Is it smaller or larger?

Ensure that all the children can see a bud on the Ash branch. Ask them to describe its colour. It is very dark brown, almost black and so can be compared to the Ash found after a fire has burnt out. This is a useful way to remember the tree name.

Ask the children to look around the tree to see if they can find any seeds or nuts. They should find seeds hanging down amongst the leaves. Children sometimes relate these to hanging bananas. Compare them to keys their parents may have. They hang like a bunch of keys and this is what they are called – Ash keys.

The leader is to take one key from the tree. It is important that only the leader does this, children are to gather round and describe its appearance.

Ask the group why they think it is so thin and small. Explain to them that squirrels would not find the Ash key very tasty and so the tree has to rely on other methods to transport itself – wind! It will blow to another part of the park and will hopefully therefore have plenty of room to grow strong, far away from the 'mother tree' so that it will have enough room, light and nutrients in the soil to grow.

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Carefully take the seed from the case protecting it. Let the children see how small it is. Ask the group why they think it is so thin and small? Explain to them that squirrels would not find the ash key very tasty and so the tree has to rely on other methods to transport itself – wind! Show the children how it would blow in the wind, try it out.

It will blow to another part of the park and will hopefully therefore have plenty of room to grow strong, far away from the 'mother tree' so that it will have enough room, light and nutrients in the soil to grow.

Carefully take the seed from the case protecting it. Let the children see how small it is. It is amazing that something so tiny will grow so large!

### **Facts about Ash**

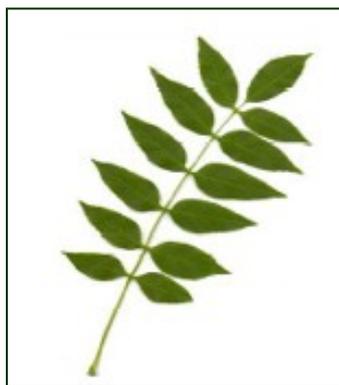
Ash wood is white and tough and can be used for oars, axe-handles, hockey-sticks, skis and many other 'implements' such as tools, handles. baseball and softball bats and bows. It also makes very good firewood. Ash trees are also perfect material for old fashion shafts for bow and arrows.

### **Further Activity**

Measure the width and height of the trees

Group and count number of leaves and acorns as a mathematics activity

Create art back in the classroom with materials gathered



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