

Holly Tree Activity

Suggested activity time

5 minutes (a shorter time because the children will not get to touch and feel the Holly)

You will need

A picture of Holly berries,
or real or fake Holly berries



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

Activity

Ensure the children maintain a safe distance from the Holly. Many children will associate this tree with Christmas, however, it is important that they realise that it can be found throughout the year.

Make sure they know the correct name. Many children will refer to it as a 'Jaggy'

Ask them to describe the leaf – does it look like the other leaves they have looked at? Ask them why they think it is spikier than other leaves.

For the next part, make sure they can all see the leaves near the bottom of the tree. Next, ask them to look up to the leaves found at the top of the tree. There should be a difference. The lower leaves will be spikier, the upper leaves smoother and rounder. Ask them why they think this is. Explain that this is because the leaves found closer to the ground are protecting themselves from passing animals and humans. However, as we do not have any wandering giraffes, the upper leaves do not need protection.

Ask the children if they can find any seeds or nuts on the Holly – they may be able to see small red berries. However, some Holly trees will not have these – this is because they are male. Only female Holly trees will have berries!

If the Holly you are studying does not have any berries, show them a laminated picture of a berry found on the Holly instead.

Ask the children if they have any idea how the berries are transported to other parts of the park. The answer is through birds. They eat them and in much the same way as acorns and conkers are transported by squirrels, birds drop the Holly seed out in a new location as they go to the toilet.

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