

# TREE BARK

Adult: As you explore trees with distinctive bark, share some of the following information with children. Ask questions and encourage children to defend their answers with evidence based on previous knowledge and observation.

## Why do trees have bark?

- Bark protects the delicate cambium layer (live cells) from bumps and cuts.
- Bark protects from temperature extremes.
- Bark protects from intense sunlight.
- Like a scab on a wound, bark protects against disease organisms.
- Bark is somewhat porous, so bark helps the tree breathe.
- Bark retards the loss of water.

## What are some uses for bark?

- Chemicals can be extracted to tan leather or used as dyes.
- Some bark has medicinal values when steeped into a tea or ground.
- Inner bark can be used to make rope, weave baskets, or cane chair bottoms. Also used to make canoes, cloth, and as surface for paintings and map making.
- Some bark is flammable and used to start fires.
- Bark can be used as shingles and wall coverings.

## What living things are found on or in bark?

- Lichen and moss; climbing vines and sometimes ferns
- Spiders and webs
- Ants, beetles, larval stage of other insects, and egg sacs
- Other invertebrates
- Fungi, especially on dead wood

## What are some basic bark types?

**Smooth**



**Scales**



**Plates**



**Shaggy**



**Papery**



**Furrowed**



Walk the landscape and try to find the bark types featured above. Use your sense of touch to gain more information about the qualities of the bark. Discuss.

Did you find any new bark types? How would you describe them?

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What living things did you find on the bark? Draw and label some of them:
