

**GRADE LEVEL:** PreK, K, 2

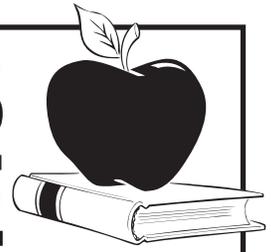
**NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS:** K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3, K-LS1-1, 2-LS4-1

**ILLINOIS EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS:** 11.A.ECb, 11.A.ECd, 11.A.ECf, 11.A.ECg, 12.A.ECb, 12.B.ECa, 12.B.ECb, 12.E.ECb

**SKILLS:** observing, critical thinking, communications

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will learn how to plant a tree and how to select a site that will not interfere with power lines or stunt the growth of the tree.

# TEACHER'S GUIDE



## UNIT THREE ■ LESSON THREE

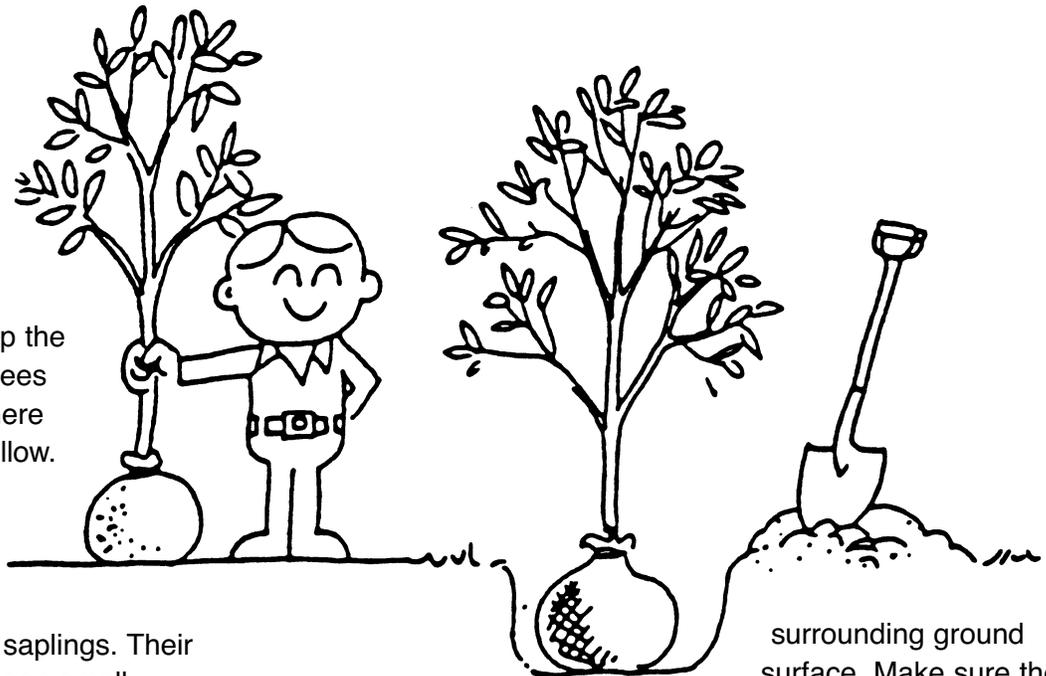
# Let's Plant a Tree

### BACKGROUND

Planting trees is a very rewarding thing to do. Trees add beauty to our world, provide homes and food for animals, grow to provide wood for homes and paper for books and help the environment. Planting trees is also easy and fun. There are just a few rules to follow.

**What to Plant.** The trees we plant in our yards, parks and along streets are called saplings. Their size is somewhere between small seedlings and mature trees. If students were trees, they would be saplings. Saplings are usually ready to plant when we buy them. Their roots are well developed and contained neatly in a pot or in a ball of soil wrapped in burlap. If there are any ropes around the tree and roots, they must be cut.

**How to Plant.** Dig a hole about twice as wide as the root ball on the tree. If the tree is in a pot, remove it from the pot and place it in the hole. If it has a ball of soil wrapped in burlap, place it in the hole and cut any twine which is wrapped around the trunk. The top of the ball should be slightly higher than the



surrounding ground surface. Make sure the tree remains straight and fill in the hole with the dirt you removed, pressing it down gently with your foot. Place a bark mulch around the base of the tree to cover the entire area of the hole. This will help hold in moisture. Mulch should be four inches deep, four feet wide and spread evenly. Pull mulch back two inches from the trunk. Water the tree thoroughly and then water it any time the soil begins to dry out. That's all there is to planting a tree.

**Where to Plant.** Planting is easy, but you must be very careful selecting the location for the tree. The location will be determined by the mature size of the tree. Look up. Are there any electric wires overhead? If so, would the tree grow into the wires? Look down and around. Are there electric wires underground? It is very dangerous to dig a hole if there are buried electric lines. These are difficult to locate, but people at the electric and telephone companies know where the lines are buried

and you can call JULIE (Joint Utilities Locating Information for Excavating) at 1-800-892-0123 to find out if any lines are buried where you want to dig. Look all around. Your tree needs room to grow. Is it too close to a house? Is it too close to another tree? Your tree will get water through its roots underground so there should not be a lot of concrete or asphalt surrounding your tree. Put three stakes around your tree to protect it from mowers and other lawn care equipment.



**Future Care.** Trees need special attention so you should find out as much about your kind of tree as you can. Ask for care instructions at the nursery or garden center where you bought your tree. You can have the fun of taking care of and watching your tree grow for years.

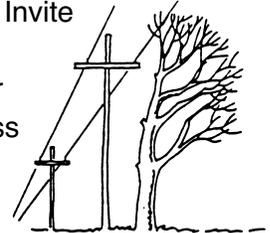
## PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

**Plant a Tree!** Select a location on the school grounds or elsewhere. Discuss with the class what kind of tree would be appropriate. Plant a tree that is native to Illinois. Find out as much as you can about that kind of tree. Examine the location carefully. Make sure there are no power lines. Call JULIE to check for underground cables. Make sure there is plenty of room for the tree to grow. Plant your tree in the spring, perhaps on Arbor Day (the last Friday in April).

Take the class on a neighborhood walk to find trees that have been incorrectly planted. What happens to a tree when it is too close to a building? Find trees that have been pruned because they were interfering with wires. Could this problem

have been avoided by planting the tree elsewhere? Invite a representative from your local power company to explain their company's forestry program. Why must trees be pruned? Are there different ways to prune trees? Are there kinds of trees that can be planted

under power lines? Invite a local tree nursery professional to your classroom to discuss tree planting and tree care.



## EVALUATION

On a large piece of paper draw an aerial view of a street, including the street, several houses, sidewalks, driveways and power lines (above and below ground). Place the paper on the floor so students may walk around and across the neighborhood. Using green (conifers), orange, red and yellow (fall hardwoods) construction paper make several sizes of cones to represent different sizes of trees. Have the students "plant" the trees in the best location.

## EXTENSION

Take the class on a field trip to an arboretum, city walkway, local tree nursery or a well-managed park. Arrange for a guide to conduct a tour and explain tree planting and tree care practices.

## VOCABULARY

arbor  
compost  
environment  
mulch  
pruning  
sapling



# Let's Plant a Tree

# STUDENT'S GUIDE

## Planting Trees Is Easy and Fun.

The young trees we plant are called saplings. If you were a tree, you would be a sapling.

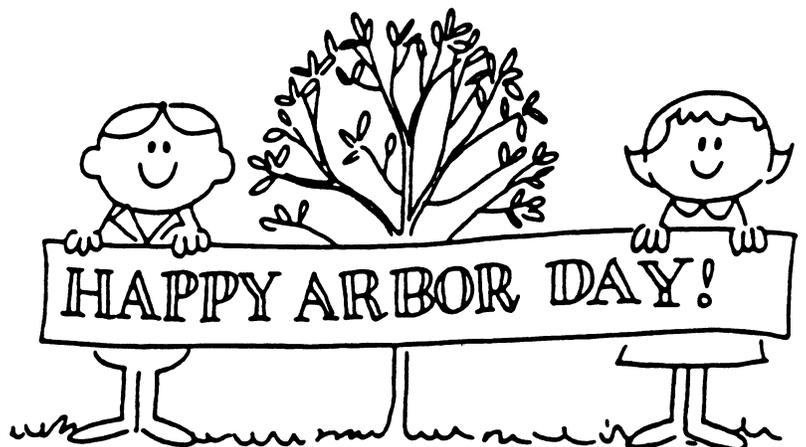


## Be Careful Where You Plant!

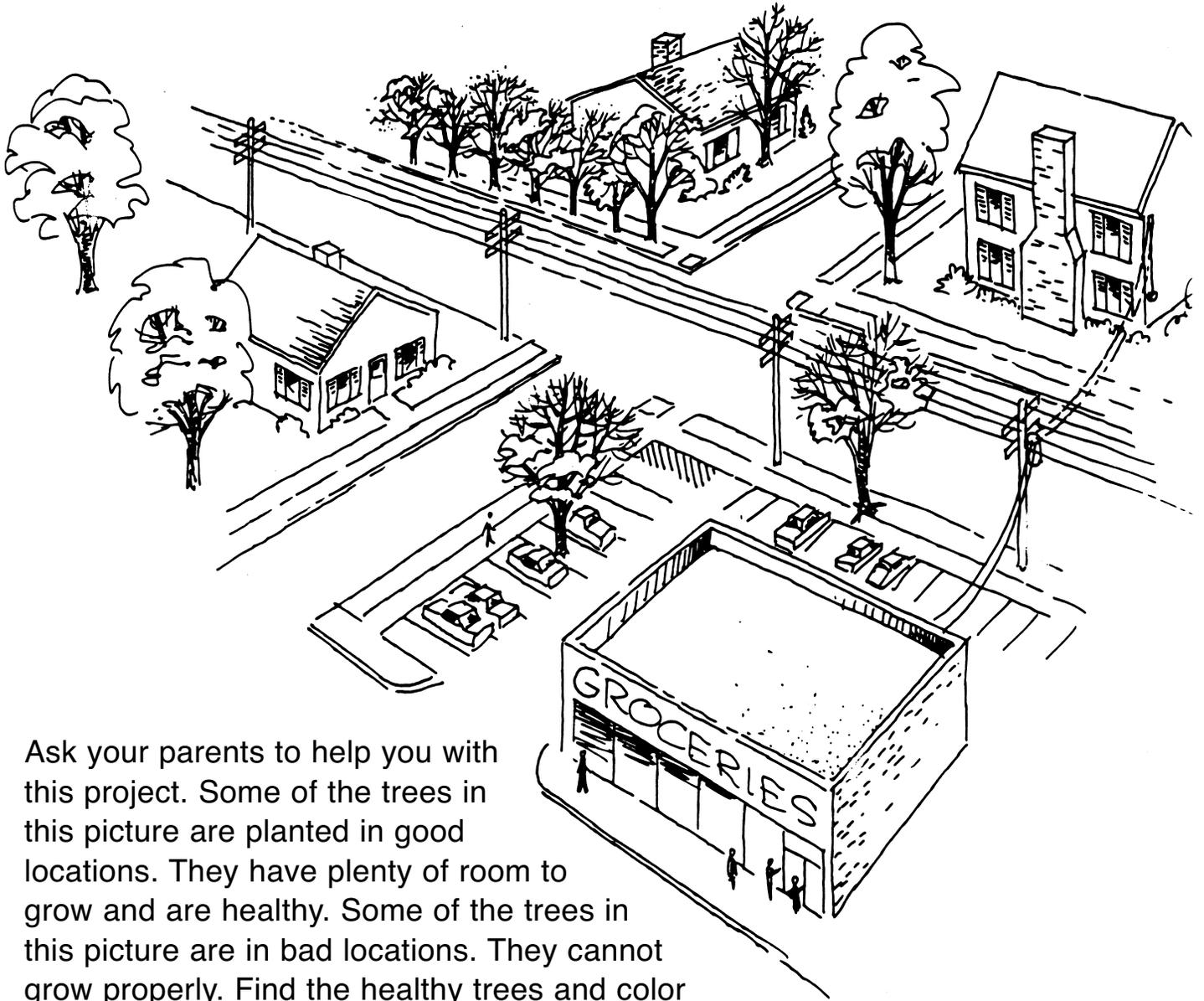
Trees need lots of room to grow. Look up. Look down. Look all around. Will your tree have enough room?



Illinois' Arbor Day celebration is the last Friday in April. If you plant a tree now or on Arbor Day, you can watch it grow for years and years.



# Find the Healthy Trees



Ask your parents to help you with this project. Some of the trees in this picture are planted in good locations. They have plenty of room to grow and are healthy. Some of the trees in this picture are in bad locations. They cannot grow properly. Find the healthy trees and color them. Find the trees that are not healthy and circle them. What is wrong with these unhealthy trees? Discuss why some locations are better than others for planting trees.