

KEYSTAGE 1-2
ART



The secret life of trees



Did you know that trees talk to each other? It may sound crazy - but they do!

A tree's roots, which grow under the earth, spread out and come into contact with fungi then carry messages and resources from tree to tree. It's like a massive underground network of sharing! It's called the **Wood Wide Web**, and about 90% of the plants on Earth connect and share with each other this way.

The Wood Wide Web is really important to the environment because it helps trees to survive and grow, which gives us more fresh air to breathe and helps to slow down climate change.

Here are a few of the ways that trees use the Wood Wide Web to communicate...



< Fungi growing on bark of tree

Trees pass on information to each other about dangers like insects attacking, so they can build defence systems.

Dying trees can share their remaining resources like nutrients and sugars via the web so that healthy trees can grow stronger.

Adult trees can pass energy to young trees to help them.

The Screaming Oak >



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ACTIVITY 1: Draw your own Wood Wide Web

Take a look at this [short video](#) from the BBC.

Now have a think about how you might represent this underground sharing network and draw a picture of your very own Wood Wide Web!

You can use whatever method you like - it could be a collage of collected leaves, twigs and other materials, a painting or a drawing. Be as adventurous as you like!

For inspiration, search Wood Wide Web online and look at some images.

ACTIVITY 2: Make a 'Dinosaur Tree'

The Wood Wide Web has been helping trees to communicate with each other for over 200 million years... That's when dinosaurs walked the Earth! At Marks Hall Estate we have a species of tree that is over 200 million years old too - so we've nicknamed our Wollemi Pines 'Dinosaur Trees'.



Take a look at our photos of the Wollemi pines at Marks Hall Estate. Now have a go at making a model of one.

We have many hundreds of varieties of plants and trees at Marks Hall Estate. Imagine all the 'Tree Talking' that goes on under your feet!

TOP TIPS

Use everyday items in your house or garden (but ask a grown up first). Things like sticks or kitchen roll tubes make a good trunk. Lolly sticks, dried spaghetti, twigs, cocktail sticks or strips of card can work for branches. For the leaves try using pine needles or small strips of green card or green pictures cut from magazines - or even pipe cleaners coloured green!

Why not take a photograph of your picture or model and share it with us.

