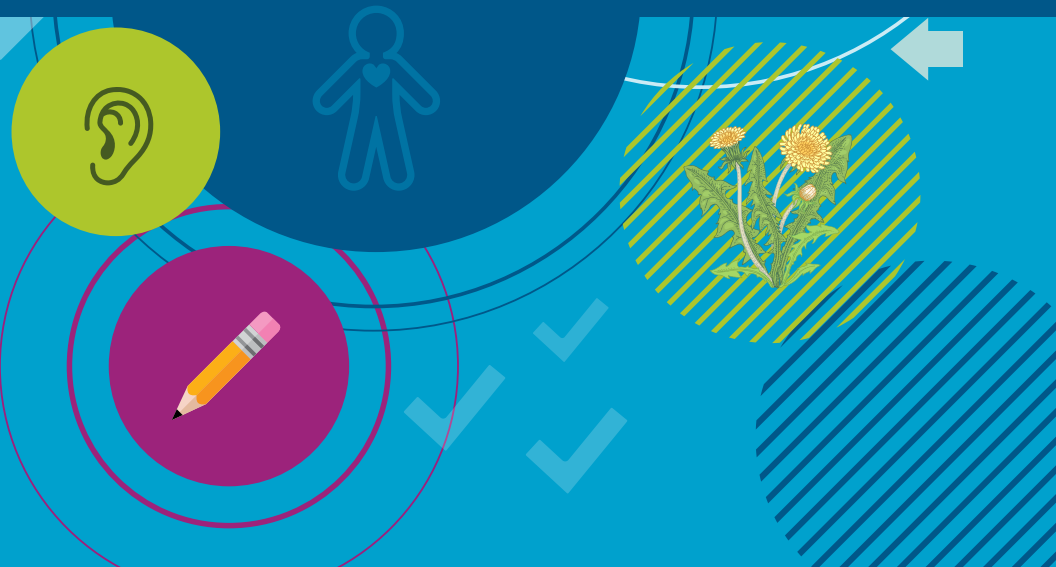


# MINDFULLY

## Outdoors Activity Book



## Activity 1:

# Land Acknowledgement

Spending time in nature makes us feel good. A breath of fresh air, space to play and the green plants and trees all help keep us healthy. Being out in nature makes our bodies stronger and our minds calmer and more alert! It helps us use our imaginations and be more creative all while learning about the plants and animals making up the wild community outside our doors.

You can find nature anywhere! It's outside your window, along your street, in your neighborhood park, in your school yard and in the valleys and trails weaving through your city. Using your five senses and your creativity, these activities will help you connect with the nature that is all around you. Remember, you belong outdoors!

We each have our own relationships with nature – the land, the water, the plants and animals are special to each of us. Because of this special relationship, we need to commit to taking care of the land and to honouring the Indigenous peoples who have taken care of the land for thousands of years and who continue to take care of it today. By acknowledging the land and all that it provides us, it helps us remember that it's our responsibility to protect nature for the people who will live here after us..



Use these links – [Whose Land \(www.whose.land\)](http://www.whose.land) or [Native Land \(www.native-land.ca\)](http://www.native-land.ca) – to help you research the Indigenous groups who have lived on this land since before we can remember.

How can humans help take care of the land?

How does the land help humans?

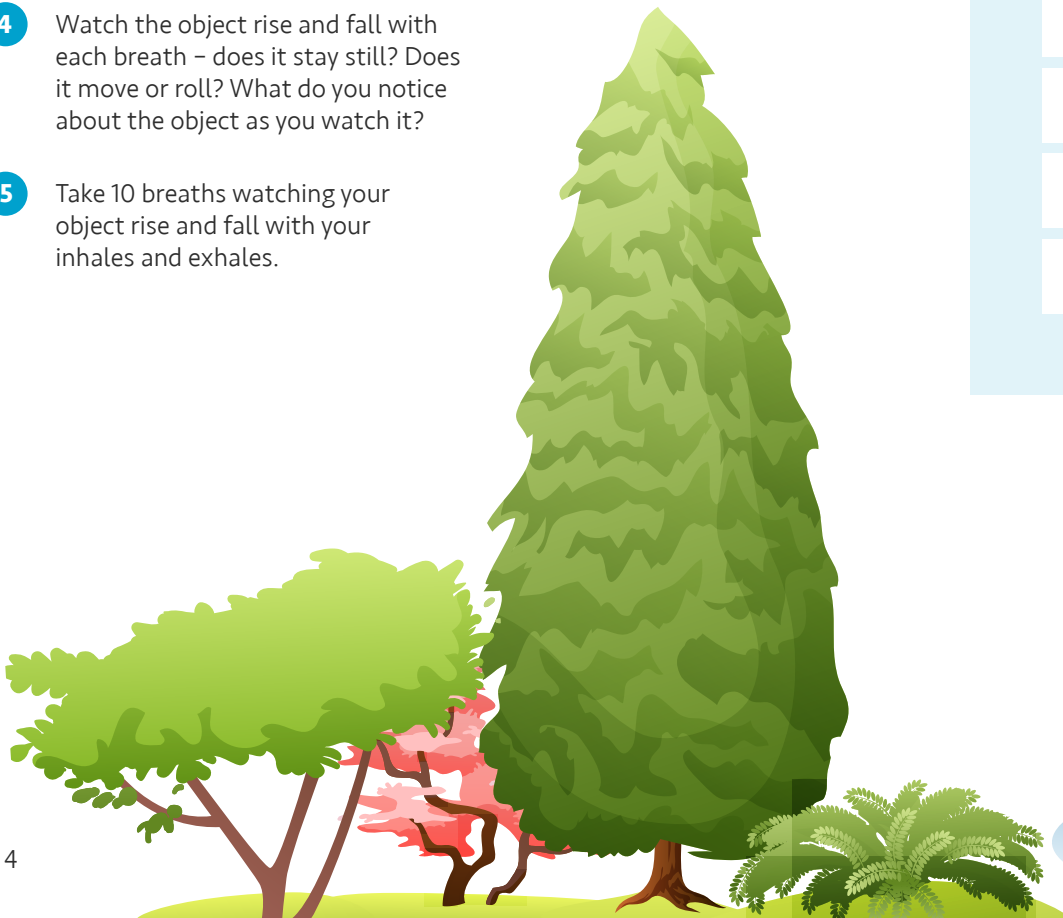


## Activity 2:

# Take 10 Deep Breaths

Plants are awesome! They make the oxygen that fills the air and that we need to breathe. When we breathe air in, this oxygen fills our bodies. Pay attention to how the air moves through your body when you breathe!

- 1 Find an object like a stone or a leaf or a pine cone light enough to sit on your stomach;
- 2 Find a spot to lay down and place the object on your belly;
- 3 Breathe into your belly so it rises and expands every time you breathe in and it lowers every time you breathe out;
- 4 Watch the object rise and fall with each breath – does it stay still? Does it move or roll? What do you notice about the object as you watch it?
- 5 Take 10 breaths watching your object rise and fall with your inhaled and exhaled.



## Activity 3:

# Caring for Nature

Just like it's important to take care of ourselves to stay healthy, it's important for us to take care of nature so plants and animals have a healthy place to live and grow. Think of some ways you take care of yourself and ways you take care of nature and add them to the lists below.

### To take care of myself, I ...

Brush my teeth every night

### To take care of nature, I ...

Pick up litter

Brush my teeth every night	Pick up litter



## Activity 4:

# Animal Emotions

Talking about our feelings is an important way to stay connected to friends and family. Keeping feelings inside isn't helpful! Sharing them with someone else helps us to process and manage our feelings. Drawing feelings can also be a good way to get them out.

When animals have different feelings, they can't talk or express their feelings like we do. They have special movements, behaviours and sounds to help show what they are feeling. Read about what different animals do below and think about what you do when you have these feelings.

### Frustrated



When a Grey squirrel is frustrated, it flicks its tail in an arc shape. The more frustrated they are the more they move their tail!

### Scared



You might know skunks from their reputation for being smelly! When a skunk is scared or feels threatened, it will stomp its feet and makes a huffing sound while keeping its eyes on the animal scaring it. If the skunk still feels threatened, it will spray its smelly, oily spray all over.

When I feel frustrated, I ...

When I am scared, I ...

What do you think a surprised fox looks like? Draw it here!

## Activity 5:

# Sensitive Scavenger

Imagine you're a crow in the city! What do your five senses tell you about nature around you? Use the chart below to keep track of what your senses tell you about your space.



Three things I can see:



Two good things I can smell;  
two not so good things I can smell:



Three nice sounds I can hear;  
three not so nice sounds I can hear:



Three things I can touch:  
(They might be rough, smooth, squishy, hard or cold.)



This place makes me feel...

## Activity 6:

# Senses Poem

Use what your senses tell you about a place outside to write a senses poem!

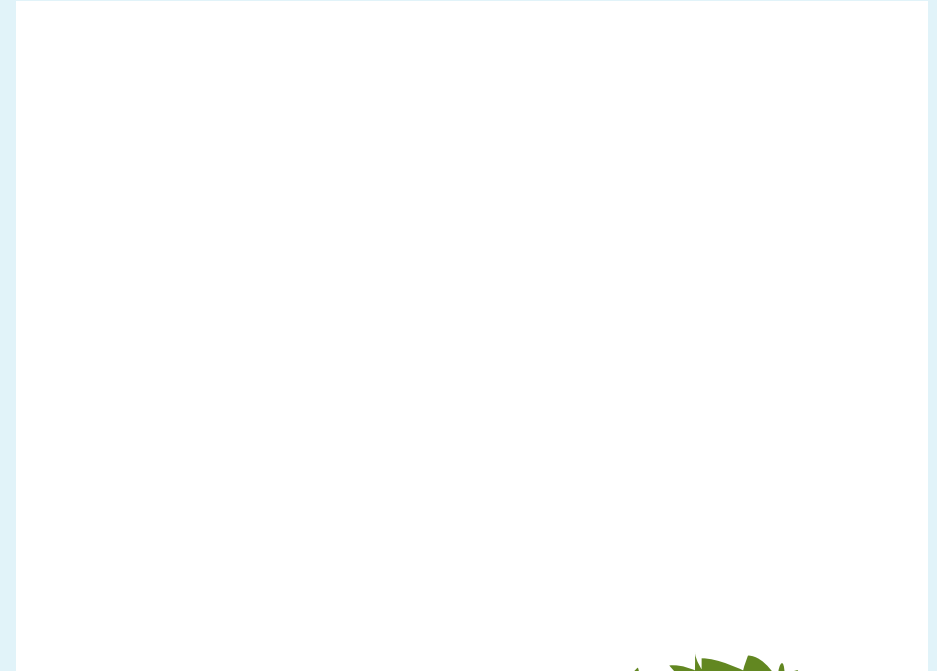
I hear ...	<input type="text"/>
I see ...	<input type="text"/>
I touch ...	<input type="text"/>
I smell ...	<input type="text"/>
I feel ...	<input type="text"/>

What do an animal's senses tell them about this place? Choose an animal that lives nearby and write a senses poem about their experiences. Think about where they live – is it up high? Underground? What do they eat? What are their super senses?

My animal:

The <input type="text"/>	hears ...	<input type="text"/>
The <input type="text"/>	sees ...	<input type="text"/>
The <input type="text"/>	touches ...	<input type="text"/>
The <input type="text"/>	smells ...	<input type="text"/>
The <input type="text"/>	feels ...	<input type="text"/>

Draw a picture of the animal in your poem in the box below:



# Leaf Textures



Raccoon's paws are super sensitive! They are always touching and picking up things they come across. Use your raccoon paws for this activity.



**1** Collect four different leaves – how do they feel? Do both sides of a leaf feel the same? Lay out your leaves with the bumpier side facing up.

**2** Cover the leaves with a piece of paper. Using a pencil or a crayon, rub the side of the crayon or pencil tip across the paper, over the leaves. You should see the texture of the leaf starting to appear. Do this for each of the leaves you collected.

How do the leaves look the same? How are they different?

## Activity 8:

# Soundscapes

Deer have amazing hearing! Use your deer ears for this activity.

Listen to what is around you, and draw or describe what you hear! What do you think is making the sounds?



What do you hear very close to you?

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for a student to draw or write their observations about sounds very close to them.

What do you hear 20 steps away from you?

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for a student to draw or write their observations about sounds 20 steps away from them.

What do you hear a soccer field distance away from you?

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for a student to draw or write their observations about sounds from a soccer field distance away.

How does the weather change the different sounds? What would be different if it was rainy? Windy? Snowy?

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for a student to draw or write their observations about how weather changes sounds.

## Activity 9:

# Make a Suncatcher

The sun is the most important energy source on Earth! Plants need sunlight to grow, humans and animals need plants for food and oxygen. Without the sun's heat, the Earth would freeze. Look up into the sky and say a big thank you to the sun!

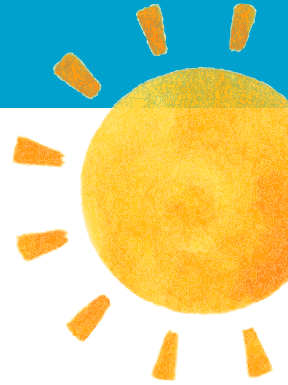
Create a suncatcher using colourful leaves and petals you find in nature to celebrate the sun!

### Materials:

- Clear contact paper, wax paper or parchment paper
- Marker
- Scissors
- Glue
- Mason jar lids
- Twine or string

### Steps:

- 1 Collect fallen leaves, flower petals, blossoms or tree bark. (make sure they have fallen off the plants already)
- 2 Using your marker, trace the outside of the jar lid to make a circle on a piece of the paper you are using.
- 3 Arrange the items you found inside your circle and glue them down once they are in a pattern you like.
- 4 Lay another piece of paper over top and glue it down so your leaves and petals are secure in between the pieces of paper.
- 5 Use the scissors and cut around the circle you traced.
- 6 Tie string around the jar lid in a loop. (so you can hang your finished suncatcher)
- 7 Take your cut out circle and fit it into the jar lid. (add tape or glue if you think it might fall out)
- 8 Hang in front of a window to catch some sun!



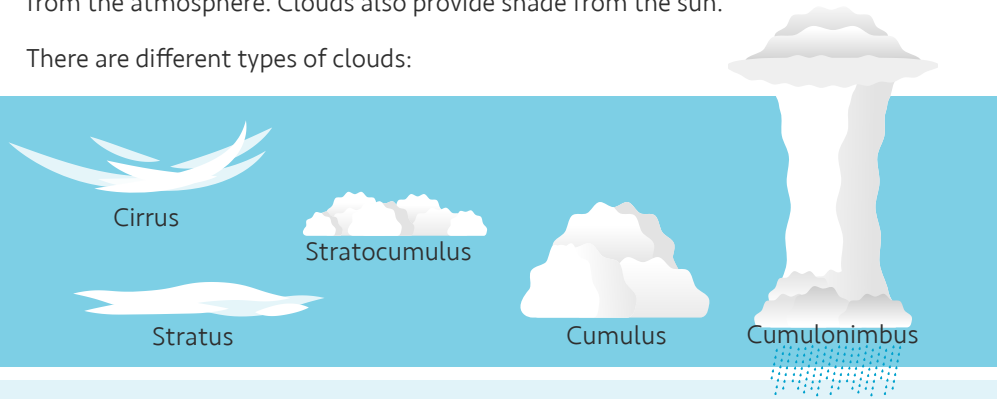
## Activity 10:

# Cloud Watching

All plants and animals need water to survive! The water cycle connects all of the water on Earth – it joins the water in the oceans, on land and in the atmosphere.

Look up in the sky. Do you see clouds? Clouds help to bring water back to Earth from the atmosphere. Clouds also provide shade from the sun.

There are different types of clouds:



Find a comfy spot to sit or lay down looking up at the sky (make sure you're not looking right into the sun!). Watch the clouds go by – what kind of clouds do you see? Are any animals or shapes showing up in the clouds?

Draw or describe the different shapes or creatures you saw in the clouds:



## Activity 11:

# Animal Stretches

Movement keeps our bodies healthy! Use some of these stretches inspired by the way animals move.

**Remember:** You know your body best! If there's something that you can't do or that doesn't feel right, don't worry! You don't need to do that move or you can create your own stretch. Move in a way that feels good to you!

### Coyote Breath

Coyotes have a really great sense of smell – they breathe through their noses so they can use this sense.

- Take a big deep breath slowly in through your nose – put your hands on your belly to feel it expand with your breath in
- Breathe out through your nose – put your hands on your belly to feel it fall as you exhale.



### Chickadee Crunch

Chickadees puff up their feathers to help keep themselves warm during the winter!

- Inhale and shrug your shoulders tight up to your ears;
- Exhale and let your shoulders drop.



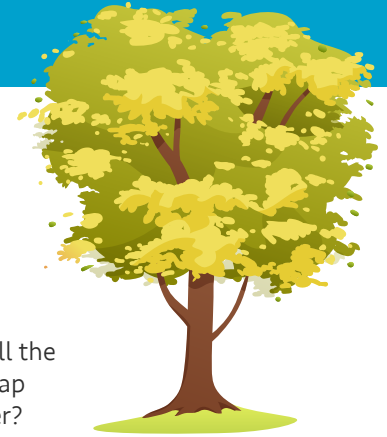
### Woodpecker Nod

Woodpeckers get their food by using their beak to make holes in wood and prying insects from the holes they make.

- Nod your head up and lift your chin to the sky (feel the stretch in your throat);
- Nod your head down and squish your chin in (feel a stretch in the back of your neck).



# Time with Trees



## Heron Standing

When herons are fishing, they often stand on one leg so they can keep the other leg warm.

- Lift your left knee up as close to your body as you can and balance on your right leg. Hold this position and take one breath in through your nose and out through your nose. Slowly lower your left leg;
- Lift your right knee up as close to your body as you can and balance on your left leg. Hold this position and take one breath in through your nose and out through your nose. Slowly lower your right leg;
- Have a chair nearby or stand near a wall if you need some help balancing!



## Bat

Bats are important to biodiversity because they are one of the main predators of the mosquito. They also love to eat nectar from flowers, and while they eat, they help those flowers pollinate and re-produce! To get their food, they use their wings to fly around. To stretch you bat wings:

- Reach your arms way up to the sky;
- Hug them down to your sides like you're trying to squeeze into a tiny hole in a tree.



Trees help clean the air and make oxygen we all need to breathe! They also purify the air by filtering out pollutants. Healthy trees keep humans, animals and the earth healthy! When you see a tree, you can stop and say "Thank you!"

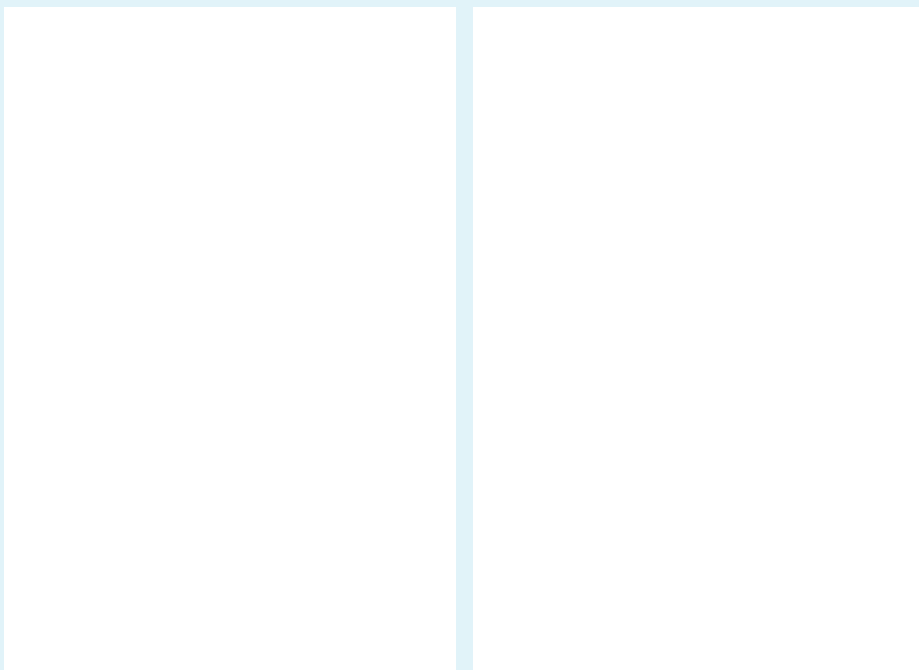
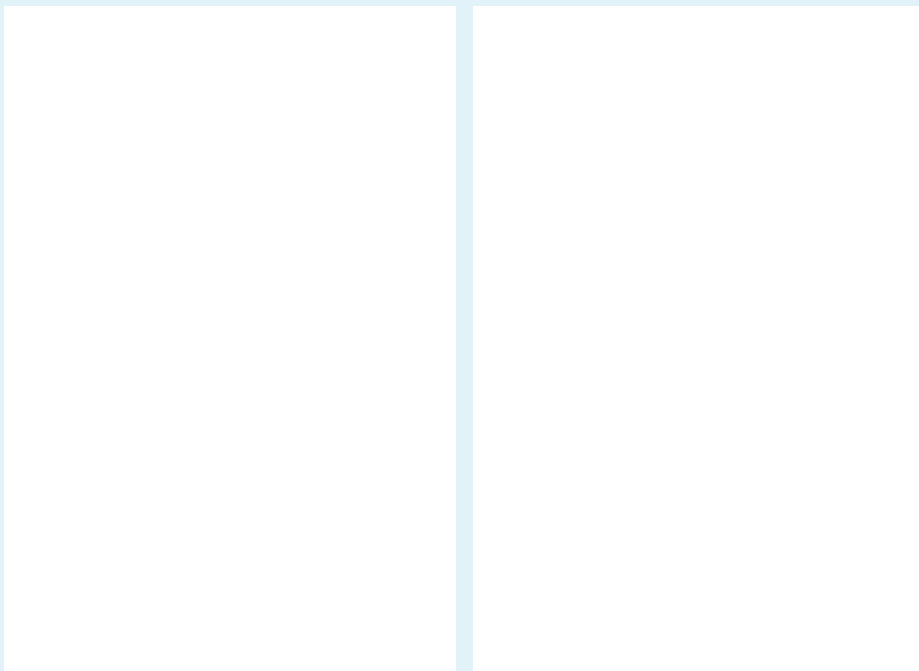
Can you find a tree that you can wrap your arms all the way around? Can you find a tree that you can't wrap your arms around? Which one do you think is older?

The tree you can't fit your arms around is a very old tree! Maybe even over 100 years old! Lots of different things have changed around that tree during its life. The tree's roots help support it to live a long and healthy life. Its strong root system and trunk let it grow and change as the world changes around it.

Draw how a tree changes in life:

1 year old	25 years old
50 years old	75 years old

You've probably changed a lot too!  
Draw yourself in four different stages of your life.



## Activity 13:

# Powerful Plants!

Plants have powerful nutrients that can help us heal when we are hurt or make us feel better when we are sick. Look for the plants below that grow in your average park, schoolyard or greenspace and try out some of their uses for yourself!

### *Remember:*

- Have an adult with you when you are looking for these plants.
- If you aren't sure that you're looking at the right plant, don't pick it. You need to be 100% sure before eating or using any wild plants. Some plants can be harmful if they are eaten and we want to make sure you are staying safe.
- Only take what you need – we want to make sure the plant can still grow and be healthy.
- Be careful where you pick the plants – make sure no one has sprayed pesticide to get rid of weeds in the area.
- Say thank you to the plant as you pick from it.

### **Dandelion**

Even though some people think of dandelions as weeds, the flowers and leaves are full of things to keep us healthy. Try making sun tea out of the flowers and leaves:

- Place about two cups of dandelion flowers and leaves into a big jar or container;
- Cover the dandelion with about four cups of water and put the lid on your container;
- Let it sit in the sun for a few hours to steep;
- Strain the dandelion from the tea;
- Enjoy!



### **Plantain**

You might think of plantain as a weed that grows in the grass but it can help with bug bites! If you have itchy bug bites, look for plantain in the grass in your backyard or at a park nearby. Crush the leaves then rub them on your bites. Hopefully you'll feel some relief!



# Stargazing Gratitude

## Yarrow

If you want to avoid getting those pesky bug bites in the first place, try planting yarrow!

Yarrow naturally repels bugs like mosquitoes, ticks and fleas. If it's planted in your garden or nearby in a park, there won't be as many bugs around! You can also check out how to make all-natural bug spray using yarrow with your family's help!



## Cedar

Indigenous peoples have been making tea and medicines from nature since before we can remember. Cedar is a sacred medicine important to Indigenous culture. It is high in vitamin C and can help when you have a cold. Don't drink more than three cups of cedar tea per week!

- Collect fresh cedar leaves; (available year-round)
- Place the leaves in just boiled water;
- Steep the leaves until the water turns a golden-brown colour;
- Remove the leaves and add some honey or maple syrup if you want to sweeten your tea;
- Enjoy!



When you look up in the night sky you might see stars! There are millions and millions of stars in the Milky Way galaxy. The sun is just one of the stars in our galaxy! You might also see satellites, airplanes, meteors and planets. People all over the world look up to the sky and see stars too. They might be different stars, but they are all part of the same universe.



Find a star in the sky and take a look at it. Can you see it twinkle?

While you are looking at the star, think about something you are thankful for. It could be something that helped you, something from nature or a family member.

Share what you're thankful for with the star you are looking at.



We're working to create cities that  
are livable, green and prosperous.

[evergreen.ca](http://evergreen.ca)



EvergreenCanada



EvergreenCanada



evergreencanada

This activity book is generously funded by:

Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation



Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario