

# Tree Planting Activity

## *An Imagination Station Activity*



**Age:** Preschool and up

**Time:** 2-3h

**Type of Activity:** Backyard science

### Plant a Family Tree

Plant a tree with a child and you're likely to also seed a fond memory that will grow into a deep connection with the tree as both child and tree mature. Planting a tree is a gift, not only to yourself and your family, but to those in decades to come who may enjoy its springtime flowers, summer shade, colorful fall leaves, evergreen branches, or winter silhouette.

### **Materials needed:**

- One tree (oak, maple, or any other type of tree or bush)
- Shovel
- Bucket of water
- Measuring tape
- Journal
- Pen or pencil
- Camera (optional)

### **Planting Norway Spruce**

**1.** Plant it in marshy soil and it will thrive. You can plant Norway Spruce in sun, shade or partial shade and it grows just the same. It is tolerant of poor soil but also grows in rich, fertile soils. At maturity they can be 100 feet tall and have a life span of centuries. It is not invasive and rarely starts new seedlings near established plantings. Norway spruce requires no site

preparation. It is a shade tolerant conifer that can survive dense grass cover. Norway spruce is an evergreen tree species. The Arbor Day Foundation says that these trees are found in USDA Hardiness Zones 3 through 7. Norway spruce grow to 60 feet high with an average width being half the height of the individual tree. These trees can grow rapidly when given the space. Because of its size, the Norway spruce has been considered one of the more useful trees through history.

2. Pick a suitable spot in your yard to plant your tree away from the house and other building structures, electrical line and other trees. Be sure that the tree has the amount of space to spread.

3. Dig a hole and set aside the soil, sod clumps, and rocks. You want the hole large enough that the roots fit in without being crowded.

- For bare-root trees, the hole should be a few inches deeper than the length of the root and wider than the spread of the root.
- For the ball-and-burlapped tree, you will want to measure the height of the root ball and the depth of the hole before planting it. Remove the twine or wire before putting in the hole.

4. Put the tree in the hole and fill it 2/3 of the way with the dirt. Fill the rest of the hole with water. Once it has settled, fill the rest of the hole with dirt.

5. Make a saucer-like circle around the tree using the leftover rocks and dirt clumps. Water thoroughly and then mulch.

6. Stake the tree so that it does not get knocked over by strong winds, lawn mowers, and other hazards. Water thoroughly once a week in dry weather.

Variation: Bring a tree indoors! Some trees may be grown in large pots or other containers.

### **How does your tree grow?**

At the beginning of each month, take a look at your tree. Record in your journal the following observations:

- Measure the height.
- Measure the circumference of the trunk.
- What does the bark look like?
- How many branches does it have?

- Does it have leaves? If so, how many? What color are they?
- Does it have buds?
- Does it have fruit or seeds, like apples or acorns or pinecones?
- Draw a picture of your tree.

Variation: Take a picture or selfie by the tree. Find out who has grown more in the past month/year! Name your tree 😊 Have fun and be safe!

