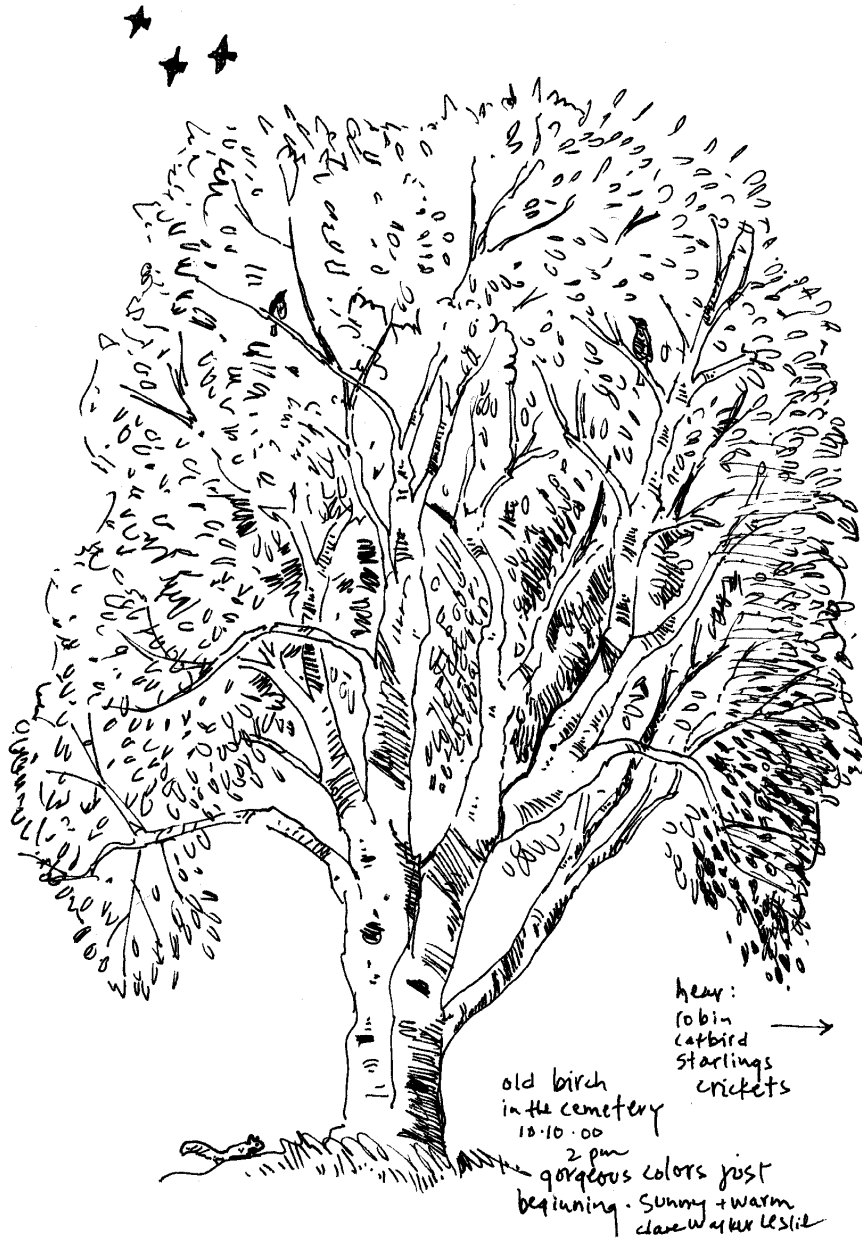




Clare Walker Leslie's Guide to Sketching Trees



Student Nature Journal
Lessons For Hope™

Introduction

This journal will help you to draw trees. You will find directions for drawing blind and modified contours, and deciduous and evergreen trees (see glossary for definitions). For each type of tree there is a corresponding blank page that can be used as a template for your drawings. When choosing a location for the activity, it will be helpful to find a tree far enough away from you to see the entire silhouette. Try to be as accurate as possible, and remember to observe, create and have fun! If at any time the type of drawing exercise seems too hard or confusing, feel free to copy Clare's drawings. Remember, this is how the masters learn to draw!

Blind Contour Exercise

Clare's Tree

September 11 2002
Winsor School - 7th grades
Boston, MA
overcast. warm
75° +/-
12 hrs 41 min light
1st quarter moon
drought still

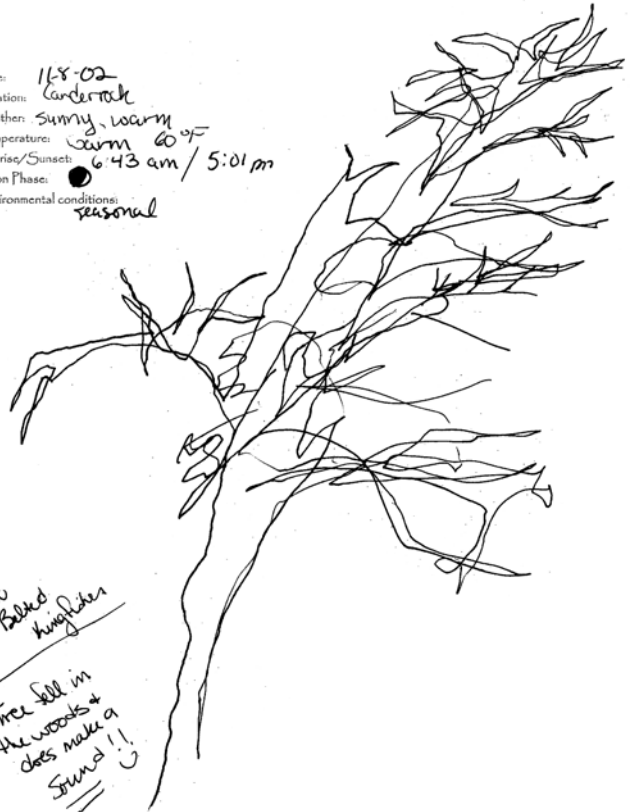


60' Sugar maple in
School yard

Tree with leaves

Student's Tree

Date: 11-8-02
Location: Carderock
Weather: Sunny, warm
Temperature: warm 60 +/-
Sunrise/Sunset: 6:43 am / 5:01 pm
Moon Phase: ☉
Environmental conditions: seasonal



Saw
Balded
kingfisher
Tree fall in
the woods +
does make a
Sound !!

Tree with no leaves

Source: Jacqueline Little

Blind Contour of Tree

Date:

Location:

Weather:

Temperature:

Sunrise/Sunset:

Moon Phase:

Habitat Conditions:

- Blind contours are drawn using one continuous line, without ever looking at your paper.
- Don't peek until you are through the whole tree-leaves, branches, etc.
- Use scrap paper for additional drawings.

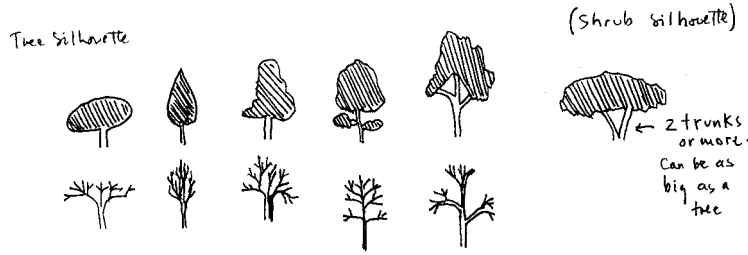
Modified Contour of Tree

- Modified contours are drawn using one continuous line, but you are allowed to look at your paper.
- These exercises are for **SEEING** trees, not for making 'Good drawings!' Share your drawings with each other and laugh. But also look for how well you have described your tree!

The Basics

Tree Silhouette

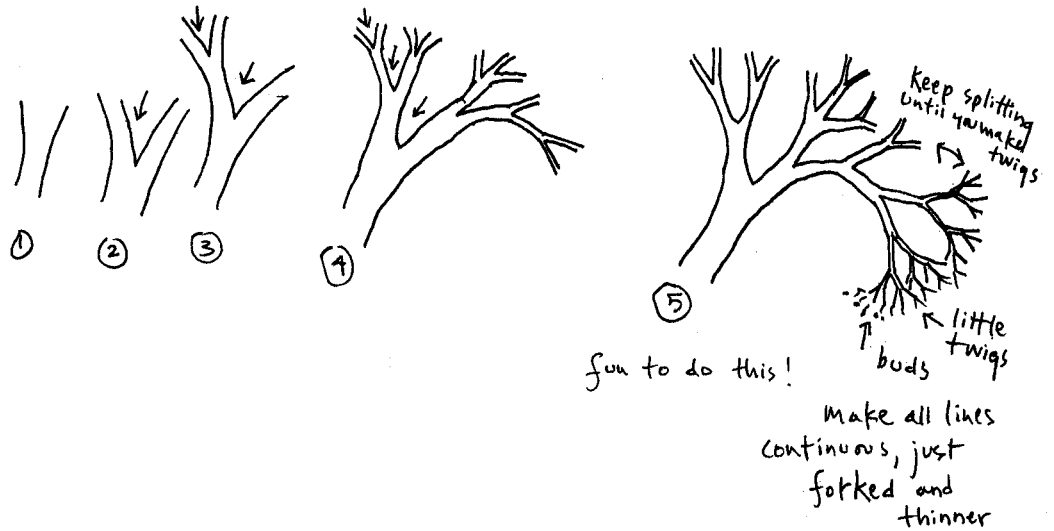
Trees come in different shapes. Note the basic shape of the tree crown and forking of the branches.



Drawing Tree Limbs

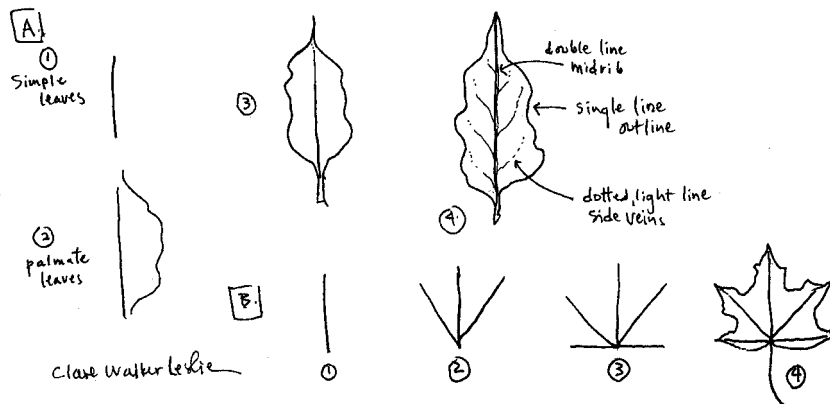
Branches grow out from the trunk, getting thinner and thinner until they finally become twigs to hold leaves.

Practice splitting and forking of tree branches, like highways splitting!



Drawing Leaves

1. Draw mid vein first.
- 2 & 3. Draw leaf outline.
4. Fill in the side veins.



Source: Clare Walker Leslie

The Basics

Tree Silhouette

Draw silhouette of your tree.
Note the basic shape of the tree crown
and forking of the branches.

Drawing Tree Limbs

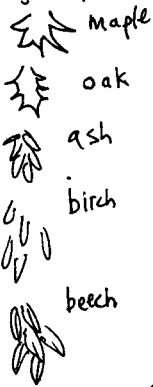
Draw forking of branches.
Remember, branches grow out
from the trunk, getting thinner
and thinner until finally become
twigs to hold leaves.

Drawing Leaves

1. Draw mid vein first.
- 2 & 3. Draw leaf outline.
4. Fill in the side veins.

Summer/Fall Deciduous Tree Exercise

leaf shapes:



1. Mark off edges of your drawing to limit tree shape and so it won't go off the page!

2. Draw trunk up to where branches begin

3. Draw in bark texture if you want as well as tree holes, nests, any birds or animals you see

4. Draw major branches as they split. (This varies by species.)

5. Now draw the tree's canopy - as if cutting out of a background

6. Put in branches as you see them through the leaves.

7. Put in symbols of leaf shapes - going around tree's canopy

8. Put in shaded areas and puffy shapes to show leaf masses

9. Draw individual leaf and seed(s)

10. Label tree etc

11. Sugar Maple in my front yard Granville, Vermont 10.13.02

tree canopy

leaf arrangement out from center

Draw major branches as they split. (This varies by species.)

I start at the base of the tree and draw up, noting how trunk comes up from roots and ground

Clare Walker Leslie suggests:

1. Make your drawing small → 5x7 or 6x8
2. Don't spend more than 30 min. so you don't get discouraged or have too much detail!

Summer/Fall Deciduous Tree

Date:

Location:

Weather:

Temperature:

Sunrise/Sunset:

Moon phase:

Habitat Conditions:

1. Keep your drawing no bigger than 6 x 8. Mark edges as in Clare's drawing.

2. Begin at base, as tree curves up from roots.

3. Carefully see how tall trunk is.

4. Draw major branch separations.

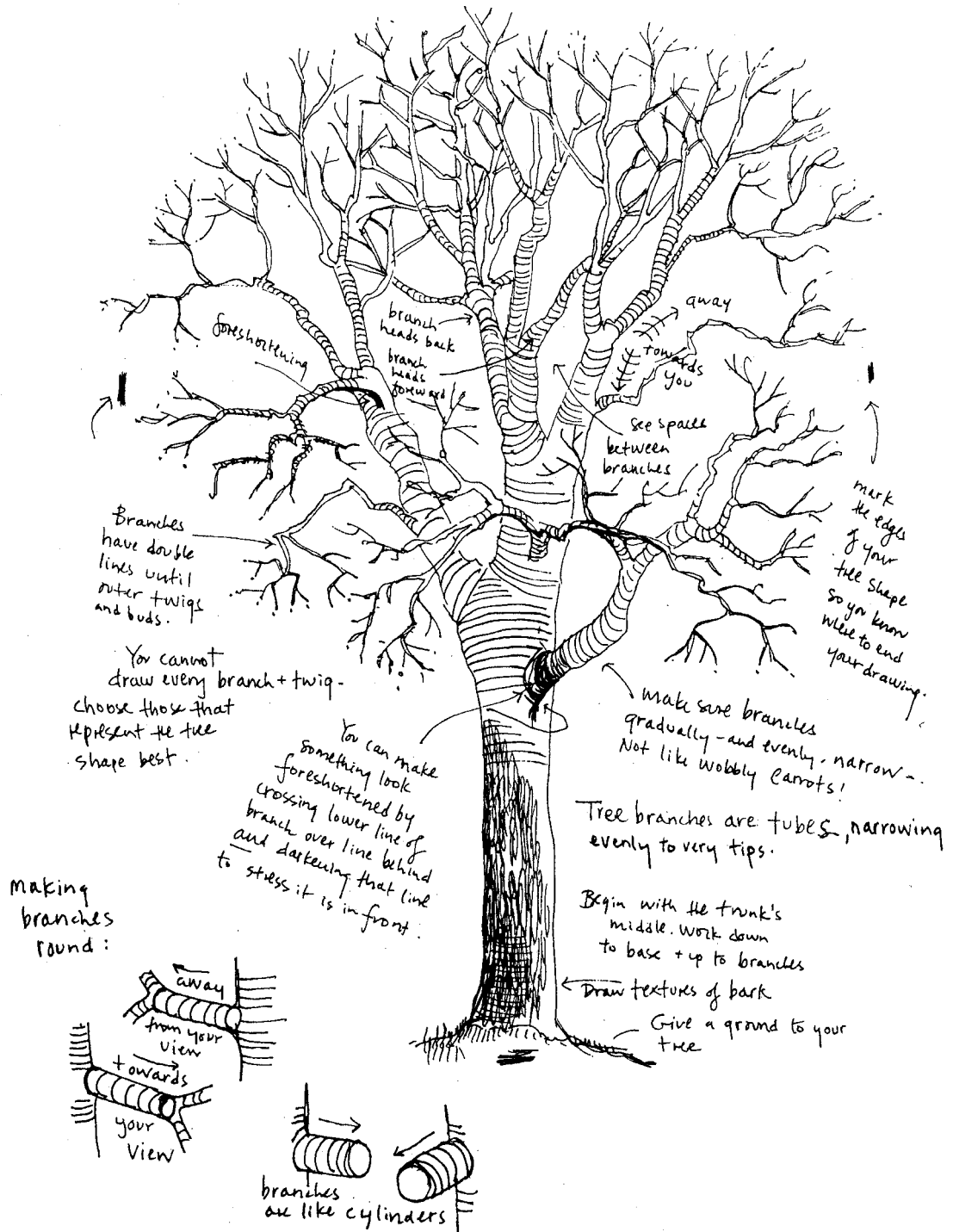
5. Draw in canopy, as if cutting tree from sky.

6. Put in branch clusters
If they appear through canopy.

7. Are leaves jagged or round?

8. Draw individual leaf and seed and label. Record evidence of animal activity.

Winter/Spring Deciduous Tree Exercise



Winter/Spring Deciduous Tree

Date:

Location:

Weather:

Temperature:

Sunrise/Sunset:

Moon phase:

Habitat Conditions:

1. Keep your drawing no bigger than 6 x 8. Mark in edges as in Clare's drawing. You can make a box if you want.

2. Begin at base, as tree curves up from roots.

3. Carefully see how tall trunk is.

4. Draw major branch separations.

5. Notice direction of branches.

6. Draw roots, they reflect the canopy shape.

7. Look at drawing for additional tips.

Evergreen Tree Exercise

① ② ③ Practice "squiggles"

connected or separate lines

needles follow branch direction

Trunk with evergreens

Denser spruce, hemlock, balsam let you use a continuous line, all the way down from top spur to tree base. Make Sure needles sweep up, following natural growth + not as we were taught

Draw the "roundness" of the tree.

See overall SHAPE of tree. How is pine different from hemlock etc?

Draw the needles (and cones if you can find them.)

white pine

red spruce

spruce fir

hemlock

pine

cedar

How I begin with the top of the tree, working needles, trunk + branches all together

Cones are hard to draw. Try a blind contour of one:

red pine cone

(start at top or bottom + move around whole form)

Don't try to draw every leaf! Get the general sense of leaf shape and canopy shape and where lights and darks are. Squinting helps.

Southern magnolia 50'

town library lawn

Clare Walker Leslie

BROAD-LEAVED EVERGREENS

Keep leaves through the winter and drop them individually throughout spring + summer. What broad-leaved plants are in your area? Many live in southern or dry habitats.

Rhododendron (a shrub)

Evergreen Tree

Date:

Location:

Weather:

Temperature:

Sunrise/Sunset:

Moon phase:

Habitat Conditions:

1. Keep your drawing
no bigger than 6 x 8.
Mark in edges as in
Clare's drawing.

2. Start at top;
work around
outer shape.

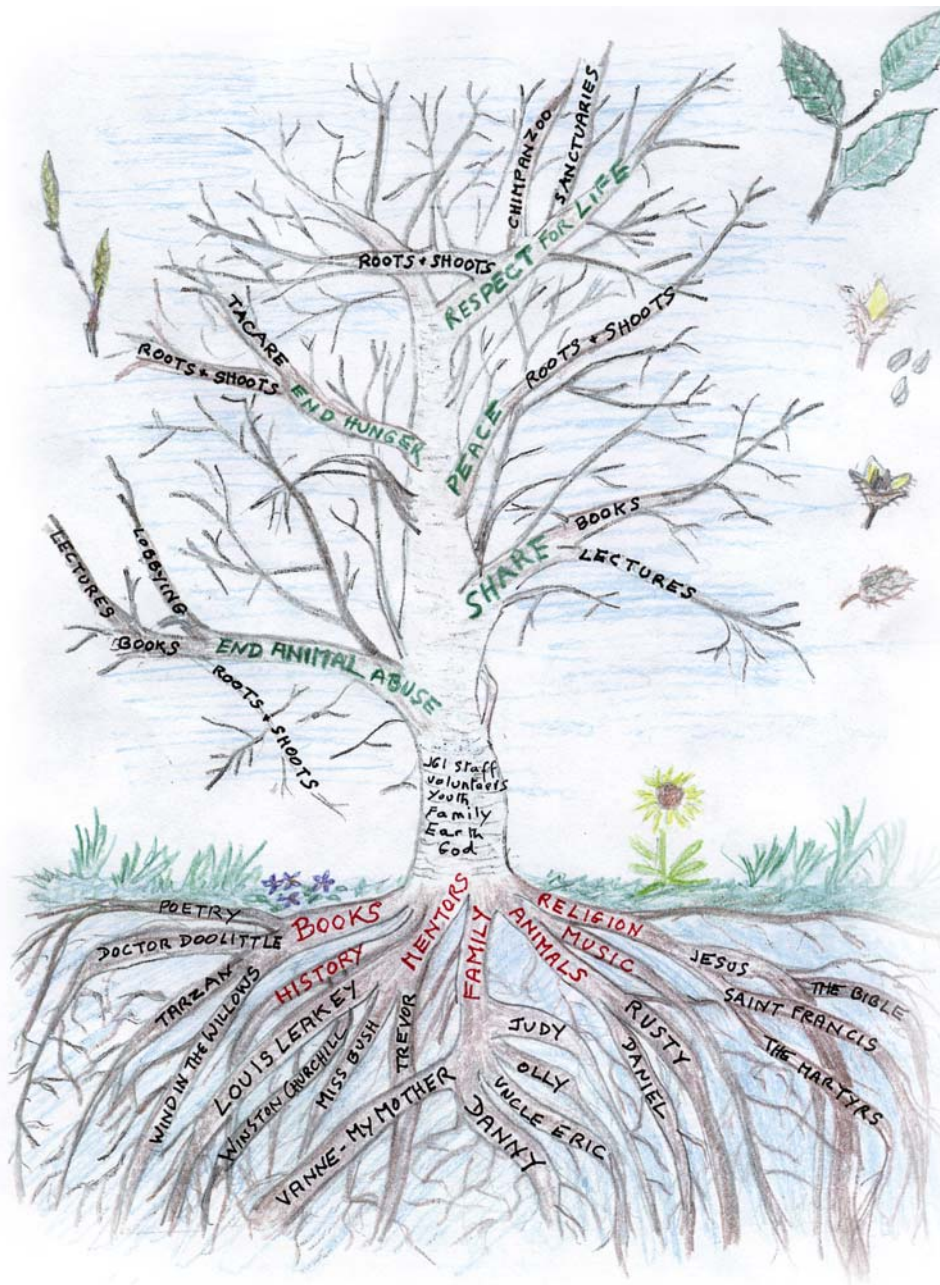
3. Fill in
needle details.

4. Blind contour
of pine cone.

Roots & Shoots Tree Exercise

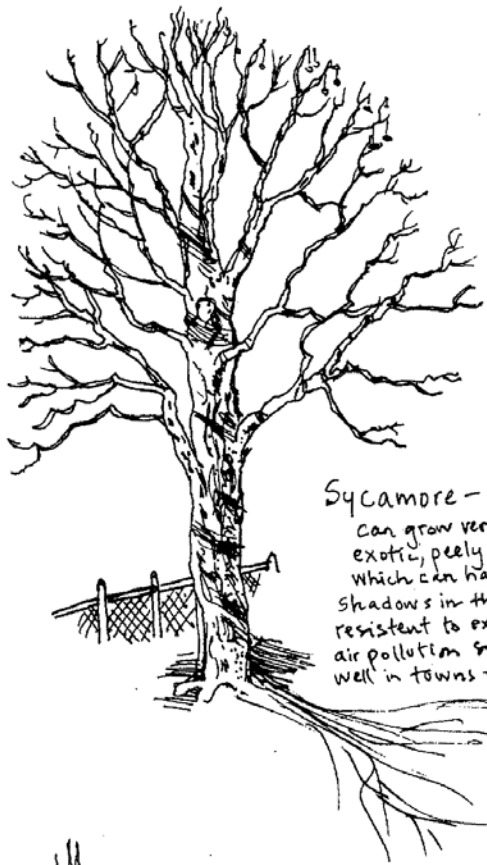
Now that you have practiced sketching trees you are ready to choose and draw a tree that most represents who you are! Be sure to use your imagination and include the root structure underneath the ground. Leave enough space in the roots to label the people who support you and in the branches to label your hopes and dreams. Review Roots & Shoots Tree Exercise in Lessons For Hope. www.lessonsforhope.org/student/Unit1/unitone_activity1.asp

Dr. Jane's Roots & Shoots Tree



Source: Dr. Jane Goodall

Extension Activity

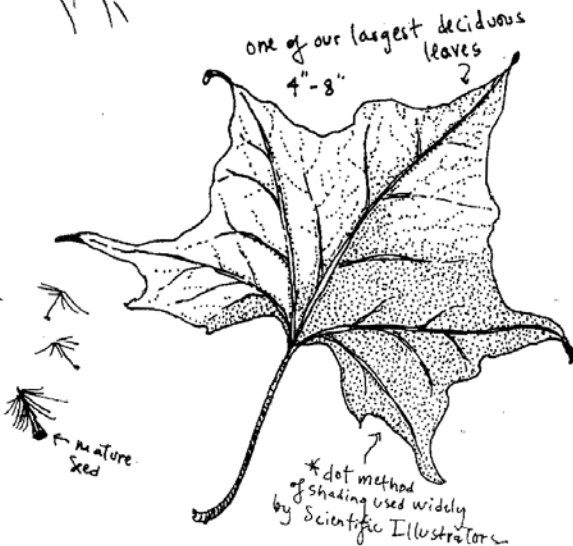
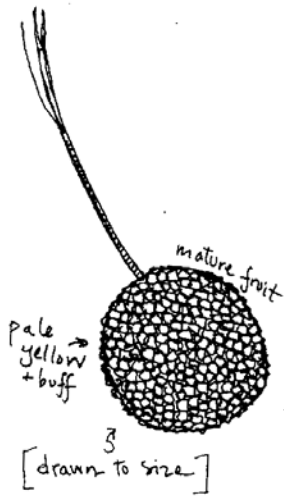


Sycamore -
 can grow very large.
 exotic, peely bark
 which can have great
 shadows in the winter.
 resistant to exhaust +
 air pollution so does
 well in towns + cities -



Make an inventory of the trees that grow in your area. Write descriptions of each; measure the leaves, fruit, and buds; draw a map indicating where each type of tree is located; draw full-tree silhouettes, and details of the twigs, buds, seeds, and dried leaves as best you can.

Observe the activity in one of your trees. What creatures are spending the winter in your special tree? What roosts in your tree and why? Which trees in the area are healthy; which are being adversely affected by human activities? What activities have various effects?



Glossary

Blind Contour A sketch which is drawn using one continuous line, without looking at your paper.

Canopy The outline of an individual's tree shape, comprising the leaves and branches.

Deciduous Tree Trees that have leaves that fall off each autumn to save water loss in winter and to prevent extra weight in ice or snow storms.

Evergreen A tree which is in leaf throughout the year. Semi-evergreen is a tree which loses some of its leaves in autumn, retaining some until new leaves form in the spring.

Habitat Conditions Ongoing conditions, such as a drought or long periods of rain.

Modified Contour A sketch which is drawn using one continuous line, looking at your paper occasionally.

Shrub A tree which has more than one trunk.

Resources

The Jane Goodall Institute. www.janegoodall.org

Lessons For Hope. www.lessonsforhope.org Lessons For Hope is a web-based curriculum written by the Jane Goodall Institute. High school students learn about Dr. Jane Goodall's life and explore the sources of her optimism and hope for the future. Activities are designed to empower students to make a positive contribution in their community.

Roots & Shoots. www.janegoodall.org/rs/index.html Roots & Shoots is the Jane Goodall Institute's environmental and humanitarian program for youth.

You can find the following resources and other good books about drawing and nature at your school, local library, and bookstores.

Leslie, C.W. and Roth, C. *Keeping a Nature Journal: Discover a Whole New Way of Seeing the World Around You*. North Adams, Massachusetts, Storey Books, 2000.

Leslie, Clare W. *Nature All Year Long*. Dubuque, Iowa, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2002.

Credits

Editors: Susan Frey, Director of Education, Roots & Shoots

Stacy Wolff, Roots & Shoots Education Intern

Special thanks to Clare Walker Leslie whose drawings and expertise in the area of nature journaling was instrumental in the design of this pamphlet. As an artist, educator and naturalist, she draws inspiration from nature and uses her talents to help others develop skills in observation and sketching. She accomplishes her goal of encouraging and enhancing our appreciation for nature through teaching and the publication of six books. To learn more about Clare Walker Leslie, visit www.clarewalkerleslie.com