



SIMPLE FORESTRY:

TREE COOKIES

Did you know that you can not only tell the age of a tree by counting its rings (once it is cut down), but also tell the story of its life?

When you look at a “tree cookie” you can see that not all the rings are spaced the same. Where there are wide spaces there were probably wet and warm years which gave the tree the nutrients it needed to grow. Narrower rings can indicate drought, cooler summers, and other environmental changes. A vertical line can be an indication of damage to the tree. Sometimes there is a bubble-like scar that is a sign of insect infestation. A burn scar will show if a fire went through and scorched but did not kill the tree. In this activity, we will make our own “tree cookie” of our life events that tell our story just as the tree’s does.

MATERIALS:

Paper Plate

Marker or other drawing materials

PROCEDURE:

1. Look at a tree cookie, can you identify any events that the tree went through while living? How old was it?
2. Use the paper plate to draw the story of your life –
 - a. Put a dot in the center for when you were born.
 - b. Draw a ring for each year of your life, if your parent tells you that you grew a lot one year and not so much another, make the width between rings show that.
 - c. Write in the different events for each of the years of your life on the rings – you may have to ask questions especially for the first few years that you do not remember.

- d. Decorate however you like – and now you have a story of your life.
- e. Journal about what you discovered about yourself, or write an autobiography using the tree cookie as a reference.