

Nature Study Week:

Day 1 – Read and Discuss *Can a Tree Be Blue?*

Day 2 – Take a (Nature) Hike:

Find a park or other local green space where you can look for different species of trees. If it doesn't work to go outdoors, find a video that will show the students a forest area. See what colors you can find. Identify the different parts of a tree. Talk about the differences and similarities between trees and various leaves.

Day 3 – Leaf Shapes

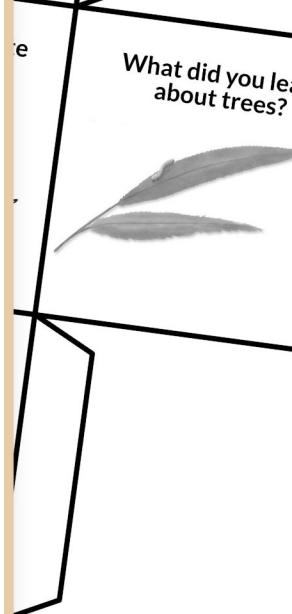
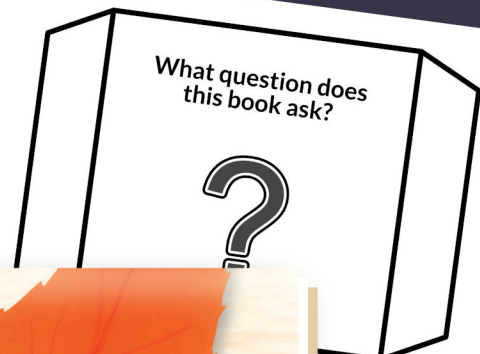
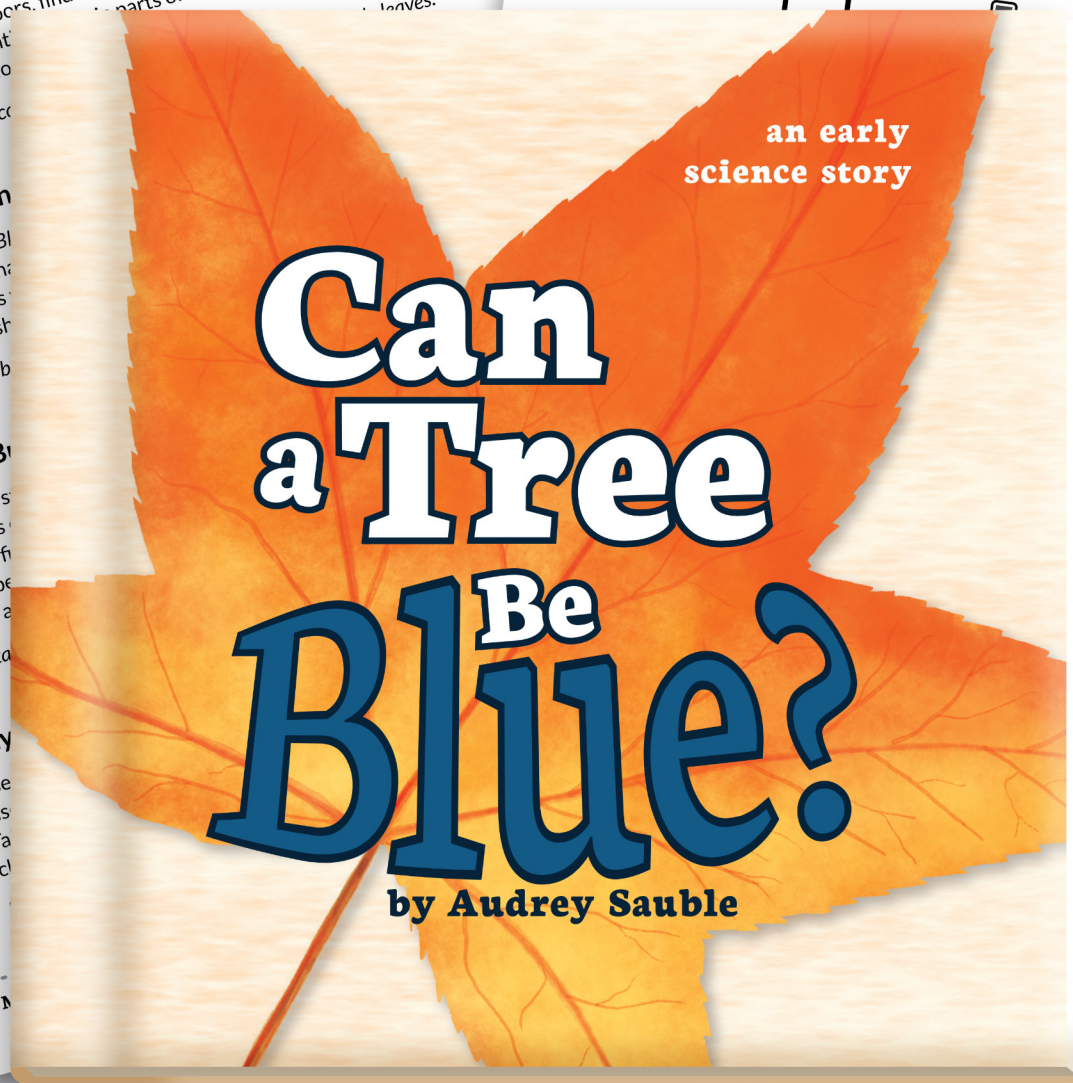
Use *Can a Tree Be Blue?* as a guide to find the names of other leaf shapes. Emphasize the shapes. Important vocabulary:

Day 4 – Book

Have each student use paints to create a landscape in the middle, and a tree on the sides. Important vocabulary:

Day

Use
ins
Ta
cl



© 2019 Audrey Sauble

A Nature Study

for parents and teachers

Lesson Outline:

Grade(s): Pre-K – 2nd

About this book & nature study:

Can a Tree Be Blue introduces children to trees, their colors, and the way they change through the year. It focuses on one key question--can a tree be blue?--but explores other concepts as well, including seasons and the difference between conifers and deciduous trees.

On the following page, you will find a script to help you introduce this book to your students. This script will give you questions and discussion topics for a 20-30 minute lesson based on *Can a Tree Be Blue?*

In the bonus material, you will find suggestions for additional lessons than you can use to teach a week-long nature study on trees.

Objectives:

- Students will respond to the text's prompts to identify colors.
- Students will learn about the different colors trees can be.
- Students will learn how some trees change through the year.

Materials:

The following materials are meant for this lesson only. Additional materials may be listed in the supplementary activities.

- *Can a Tree Be Blue* picture book by Audrey Sauble
- Copies of the "Where Are the Leaves?" coloring page for students
- Colored pencils/markers/paints/paper scraps and glue for collage
- Story Cube (optional)

Read Aloud Time:

Script to Introduce the Book:

Today we are going to read a book called “*Can a Tree Be Blue?*” written and illustrated by Audrey Sauble.

This book is a nonfiction book. Nonfiction books tell us about something that really happened or that really exists. This book is going to tell us about something that really exists—TREES!

This book is also going to answer a really important question for us.

Can you tell me what that question is?

[The question is in the book’s title—can a tree be blue?]

I want you to keep this question in your brain while you listen to the story. If you think you know the answer to the question, keep that in your brain too. Then, at the end of the book, we’ll see if you guessed right!

Lets get started!

Reading Suggestions:

Can a Tree Be Blue? uses a series of questions to ask readers what color a tree might be. Be sure to leave time for children to respond to the prompt.

As you read, point out the leaf shapes for each tree.

On the page with different colors of maple leaves, point out that different species of maple trees have different shapes, but they all have five main points.

After reading the page on leaves in the spring, ask the children what season you are in right now. Ask if they’ve noticed any trees changing recently.

After reading that larch trees turn yellow in the fall, point out the pinecone. Turn back to the Douglas fir and ask how that tree’s pinecone is different. Ask if anyone can think of a different kind of tree seed (maple seed, acorn, walnut, coconut, sweetgum pods).

After reading:

Review Questions:

- What question was the book was trying to answer?
- What is the answer—can a tree be blue?
- When we started reading, did you think that trees could be blue?
- Have you ever noticed a tree that was a different color (not green)?

For more questions, use the story cube activity page.

Activity Prep:

Get out the coloring pages and other materials. Explain that the children will be drawing their own trees. They can either color it based on one of the trees in the book, or they can use their imagination to create their own tree.

If you are using paper scraps to make a collage, show the children how to cut or tear the paper into small pieces to glue onto the branches for leaves.

Tell the children how much time they have, and let them start working!

If you want, when the time is up, you can go around the room and ask the children to share what kind of tree they colored and why.

Notes:

Either the booklet activity “Draw a Tree” or the writing exercise “Tell Me About a Tree” can be substituted for the coloring page activity.

Font credit: I used **KG Primary Dots** and **KG Primary Penmanship** for the tracing activities in this packet.

For more activity pages for *Can a Tree Be Blue?*, visit bit.ly/canatreebeblue

Feel free to share photos of your class’s work on Instagram and tag me in it, @audreysaublekidsbooks. I’d love to see what you create!

Nature Study Week:

Day 1 – Read and Discuss *Can a Tree Be Blue?*

Day 2 – Take a (Nature) Hike:

Find a park or other local green space where you can look for different species of trees. If it doesn't work to go outdoors, find a video that will show the students a forest area. See how many colors you can find. Identify the main parts of a tree. Talk about the differences and similarities between trees and various species of trees.

Important vocabulary: conifer, deciduous, roots, trunk, branches, bark, leaves.

Day 3 – Leaf Shapes:

Use *Can a Tree Be Blue?* to look at the different shapes of leaves. Then use a leaf identification guide to find the names for these shapes. Either go on another nature walk and see how many other leaf shapes you can identify or use the Negative Painting Template to create a negative painting that will emphasize the shape of the leaf.

Important vocabulary: lobes, palmate, serrate and dentate edges, alternate and opposite.

Day 4 – Building a Forest:

Have each student draw a tree, a bush, a grassy area, or something else they might find in a forest. Use paints or markers, or cut paper into leaves and branches to create a collage. When the students finish, add their pictures to a bulletin board or tape them onto a wall to create a forest landscape. Try to arrange the forest to show how the different heights of plants create an upper, middle, and lower canopy.

Important vocabulary: tree, shrub, undergrowth, shade, canopy.

Day 5 – Bugs in the Forest:

Use the forest the students created in the previous activity. Now ask the students to draw an insect on a sticky note and add it to the part of the forest where they think that bug might live. Talk about how the insects interact with each other and the forest. See if you can create a food chain showing these interactions.

Important vocabulary: pollinator, herbivore, predator, shelter, hibernation.

Story Cube

Cut out and glue into a cube to use with a class.

What question does
this book ask?



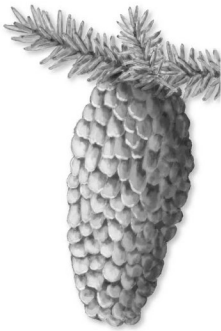
What is your favorite
kind of tree?



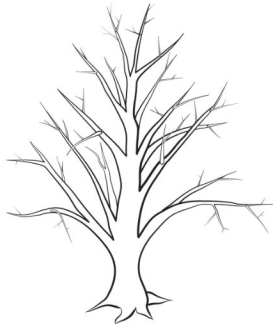
What did you learn
about trees?



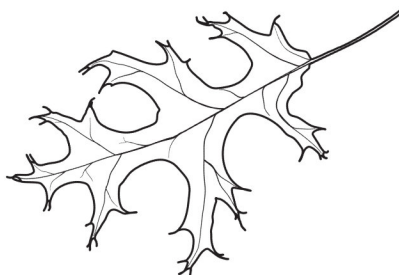
Which tree is blue?



What kind of tree
stays green all year?



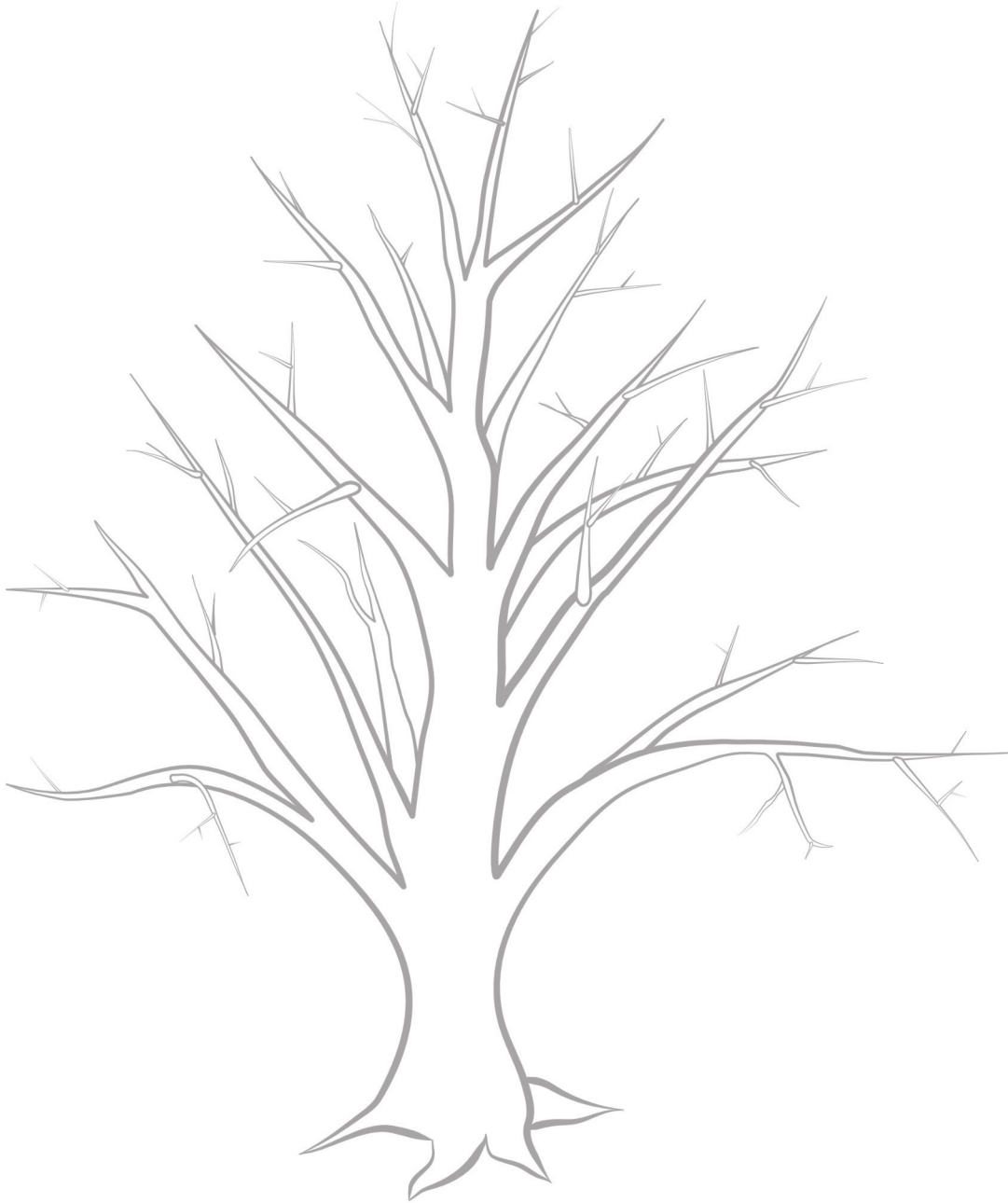
What happens to many
trees in the fall?



Name: _____

Date: _____

Where Are The Leaves?



This tree needs leaves! Can you add them? You can color it to look like a tree in *Can a Tree Be Blue?* or you can draw a tree from your imagination!

Negative Painting Template



Cut out this leaf and use double-sided tape to fasten it onto a blank piece of paper. Then paint over the leaf out to the edges of the paper. Be careful that the paint does not get under the leaf!

When the leaf is dry, remove it to show the shape of the leaf underneath.

(Or - use real leaves instead of a paper cut out! Just make sure the leaves will lay flat against the paper to keep the paint from getting underneath them.)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Tell Me About a Tree

This image shows a blank sheet of handwriting practice paper. It features four identical sets of horizontal lines arranged vertically. Each set includes three lines: a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is white, and the lines are black.

Draw a Tree:

Use this space to draw your own tree! Think about all the colors that trees can be, and pick one of these colors for your own tree.