

# Connecting Kids to Nature

Engage children in learning about the environment and the world around them with this hands-on activity from Project Learning Tree® - it's fun and educational!

## What Tree Should I Plant?

Planting trees around your home can improve how it looks, plus trees provide important environmental benefits. But what tree should you plant? In this activity you will use **i-Tree Species** - a free online tool by the US Forest Service - to select the best trees to plant near your home.

Ask children to picture trees that they remember from other places (on the street, in their school yard, at the home of friends, or even while on vacation.) How are trees alike or different? Explain that not all tree species live in every geographic area. Some trees thrive in colder locations, while others need warmer climates.

Environmental benefits provided by different tree species also vary. Benefits include improving air quality, reducing energy costs, and absorbing gases that contribute to climate change.

Next, go to <https://species.itreetools.org/> and follow the instructions for selecting tree species best suited to your location.

**Hint!** Identify trees that already exist near your home by completing the activity "Name that Tree" available at [www.plt.org](http://www.plt.org).



Under the "Functions" tab on the webpage, ask children to rank how important each environmental benefit is to them. Use the blue question mark buttons to explore the meaning of each benefit before ranking it.

When finished, look at the results on the website for which tree species are the best match.

Once you know which trees are most appropriate for your region and needs, you can enjoy planting trees with your family!

### Encourage Your Child's School to Incorporate Environmental Education

For more activity ideas and materials:

- Attend a PLT workshop: [www.plt.org/louisiana](http://www.plt.org/louisiana)
- Contact your Louisiana PLT State Coordinator:  
Ricky Kilpatrick, [rkilpatrick@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:rkilpatrick@agcenter.lsu.edu), 318-965-2326
- Visit [shop.plt.org](http://shop.plt.org)



Project Learning Tree® (PLT) is an initiative of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

# [www.plt.org](http://www.plt.org)