

Science Story Adventures



African Plants

Learning outcomes

» Students know animals eat plants or other animals for food and may also use plants or even other animals for shelter and nesting. (Life sciences - Grade 1)

» Students know rock, water, plants, and soil provide many resources, including food, fuel, and building materials, that humans use. (Earth sciences - Grade 2)

» Adaptations in physical structure or behavior may improve an organism's chance for survival. (Life sciences - Grade 3)

From: California's Science Content Standards

Books we read

Whistling Thorn by Helen Cowcher

This is the Tree by Miriam Moss

Activities we did

» We looked at a protea and learned about the different part of the flower.

» We learned about the ancient continent of Gondwana and watched a video showing how the different parts of it started drifting apart 150 million years ago to form the continents of the southern hemisphere:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtlS9WGfcEc>

Today's craft: Making a baobab tree



You will need:

- » Toilet paper roll
- » White cardstock: 6" x 4 1/4"
- » Crayons
- » Hole punch
- » 2 green pipecleaners cut into 4
- » Shredded green paper - such as from a gift basket.
- » Scotch tape

Directions:

1. Color card for the bark of the tree and tape it onto the toilet paper roll - this makes the trunk of the tree.
2. Punch 7-8 holes around the top of the trunk.
- 3.. Thread the pipecleaners through the holes and secure them to the top of the trunk - these are the branches.
4. Flatten the branches a little, like the baobab's, and drape the shredded paper over the branches to make the leaves..

Want to find out more?

Here is a selection of further resources to explore in the Naturalist Center, in the public library or at home. Please ask if you can't find what you're looking for.

Books

Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai by Claire A. Nivola. Nat. Ctr. Juv. SB63 .M22 N58 2008

Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa by Jeanette Winter. Nat. Ctr. Juv. SB63 .M22 W56 2008

Two stories about Wangari Maathai, who founded the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, which later spread across Africa. This movement encouraged women's groups to plant trees in order to conserve the environment and improve their quality of life. Wangari Maathai won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004.

Tree of Life: The World of the African Baobab by Barbara Bash. Nat. Ctr. Juv. QK495 .B7 B37 1989.

Documents the life cycle of this amazing tree of the African savannah and portrays the animals and people it helps to support.

Websites

African Plants

A bunch of webpages about different African plants including the baobab, aloes and acacias.

http://www.wildwatch.com/living_library/plants-1

Bats and Baobabs

Baobabs provide food and shelter for bats – this website tells you all about this, as well as having a lot of other information about baobabs.

<http://www.batplants.co.uk/baobab3final.htm>

A Close-up View of the Pincushion Protea

A fascinating article with many gorgeous photographs, looking at the structure of a protea.

<http://www.microscopy-uk.org.uk/mag/indexmag.html?http://www.microscopy-uk.org.uk/mag/artdec05/bjprotea.html>

South Africa's Plant Life

Looks at the different habitats of South Africa and the plants that grow in them.

<http://www.southafrica.info/about/animals/flora.htm>