



Activity 2 – Identify and plot British trees

Identify British tree species, plot them on an Ordnance Survey map and work out their grid references.

Use this geography activity to help fulfil the **Wild trails** platinum challenge.

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/your-school/green-tree-schools-award/platinum-projects/

Worth five points on the award (platinum challenges are unlocked when you reach gold).



Curriculum requirements KS3

Students should have the opportunity to:

- interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs, and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Learning outcomes

After completing this activity, students will:

- be able to identify five native British tree species
- understand how to use an Ordnance Survey map, what symbols represent, and how to work out a 6-digit grid reference
- understand that there are different kinds of maps. They will describe the difference between a digital map, OS map and aerial photo of their local area, local woodland or of the school grounds
- have printed off a tree identification guide or downloaded the Woodland Trust app (on school devices)
- have had the opportunity to visit the school grounds or a local woodland
- have used the tree identification guide to identify at least five trees and then marked out where those trees are located on their map
- have had the opportunity to photograph the trees they identify.



Preparation and resources

The following materials will help you deliver this activity successfully.

Outdoors – in a local woodland, park or your school grounds

- risk assessment
- health and safety equipment
- outdoor clothing and footwear suitable for all weathers
- paper, clipboard, pen, pencil
- printed tree identification guides [treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=tree_id](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=tree_id)
- Woodland Trust tree identification app downloaded into school devices www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app/
- tips for identifying trees www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/how-to-identify-trees/
- further tree information www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/a-z-of-british-trees/
- a map of the area for each student
- an Ordnance Survey map of the local area, plus a digital map of the local area and aerial photos of the area

Location

Different parts of this activity can be carried out in different places.



On a woodland visit

Students can carry out this activity in their local woodland. They will spend time locating individual trees, identifying them, and plotting them on their map.



In your school grounds or a local park

Students can carry out this activity in their school grounds or a local park. They will spend time locating individual trees, identifying them, and plotting them on their map.



In the classroom

If you are unable to visit a wood or utilise your school grounds/



local park, students can use the Young People's Forest at Mead as an example www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/woods/young-peoples-forest-at-mead/

Starter activity (10 minutes)

What is an Ordnance Survey map?

- In pairs, give students an Ordnance Survey (OS) map of their local area (or a photocopy).
- Ask students to choose 10 symbols and try to work out what they represent on the map.
- Discuss with the class the meanings of OS map symbols, contours and scale.
- Show students how to work out a grid reference using the school as a location on the map.

Main activity (40 minutes)

Students will use an OS map of their local area (or a photocopy) for this activity. They will also have a digital map and an aerial map, along with the Woodland Trust tree identification guides/app.

- Students should have the opportunity to visit the school grounds, local park or a local wood.
- While outside, students should use the tree identification guides/app to identify the trees on the site and then mark out where that tree is located on their OS map and aerial photo.
- Students can work out 6-digit grid references for five trees on their OS map.
- Students should have the opportunity to photograph the trees they identify.



Plenary/evaluation (10 minutes)

To end the lesson, students should discuss these two questions in pairs and feed back to the whole class:

- How is a British woodland valuable for wildlife?
- How is a British woodland valuable for people?

Extension

Students can further develop their skills by identifying local areas around the school, or within the school grounds, that would benefit from more trees and a planting day could be organised.

For more information on free trees and planting advice, visit our Tree Tools for Schools website [treetoolsforschools.org.uk](https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk).