

Hello Trees Resource Sheet



KS1 Y1 Science Diary Item

Tree Bark, rabbits and teeth

OBJECTIVE: learn

- more about tree bark,
- about what rabbits eat,
- about rabbits' teeth

WHAT YOU NEED

1. All set up to watch videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGMeKrp-AuQ> tame rabbit eating bark

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jquDFqjWxQk> bark eaten to heart wood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zof2TioWxvs> ways to protect tree bark

2. If any pupils keep rabbits, ask for a sample of the food they give their rabbits.

Rabbits eat bark

- ✓ Use secondary sources of information:
- ✓ Curiosity and questioning [all suggestions acceptable] ✓ Develop scientific language
- ✓ animals in their habitat ✓ how to take care of animals ✓ body parts including teeth
- ✓ common names of mammals, including those that are kept as pets.
- ✓ grouping animals according to what they eat



Share video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGMeKrp-AuQ> tame rabbit eating bark

What were the rabbits gnawing at? [logs of wood, bark around the wood]

Where do logs of wood come from? [cut from tree trunks]

Do you think the trees were young or old? [young (we know because tree trunks are narrow)]

Why were the rabbits gnawing the wood? [to eat the bark]

Do you think pet rabbits usually get bark to eat? [probably not]

What do rabbits like to eat? [hay, carrots, lettuce, other vegetables ...]

What do we call animals that eat only plants? [Rabbits are **herbivores**]

Why rabbits eat bark: 1. To wear down their teeth

Here is an amazing fact about rabbits' teeth:



Rabbit teeth grow continuously throughout their lives, much as our fingernails do.

Also, rabbits have **two pairs of upper front teeth, one pair behind the other!**

To help keep rabbit teeth properly worn down, a rabbit *must use them almost constantly*, munching on hay *all day*, as well as frequently munching at branches, twigs and dried leaves.

Back teeth are kept short by the *grinding* action.

Front teeth are kept short by *chewing* on pieces of wood and other objects.

Rabbits *in the wild* chew on bark and twigs to *wear down their teeth*, as well as for nutrients.

What would happen if rabbits' teeth were not worn down? [Their top and bottom front teeth *wouldn't meet to bite*.]

Rabbits must eat hay and other hard food to wear down their teeth.

Do we have to wear down our teeth? [We have 2 sets of teeth, but our teeth do not keep growing.]

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Why rabbits eat bark: 2. To get nutrients



Share video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jquDFqjWxQk> bark eaten to heart wood
The rabbits only seem to be gnawing the outside layer of the wood.

Do you think rabbits eat bark only to wear down their teeth? [no, bark is good food]

Just under the bark are *tubes that carry food* made in leaves to other parts of the tree and separate *tubes that carry water and minerals* from the roots into the rest of the tree.

The liquid in the tubes is called '*sap*'.

This is excellent food for rabbits, deer, voles, insects – and humans.

It is from these tubes that we get maple syrup [which we get by tapping into the tubes, *not* by eating bark!]

How to protect tree bark

What would happen to a tree if an animal ate all around its bark? [tree would starve]

How can we protect *young* trees from having their bark eaten? [fences, tree guards ...]



Share video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zof2TioWxvs> ways to protect tree bark

Which method would pupils use? Which method easiest, most effective, cheapest ...

From which animals would you have to protect trees in the school grounds, in woods ...

What is the name for animals that eat only plants? [herbivores]

What naturally prevents animals from eating tree bark? [thick bark]

Bark gets thicker and thicker each year, and more and more difficult to bite through.

And the trunk of the tree gets wider and wider as, each year, new sets of tubes form around the outside edge of the trunk, immediately under the bark.



When we did bark rubbings, we:

Thought of how different trees have developed different patterns of bark.

Thought how each year a *new set of tubes* is added around the outer edge of a tree trunk.

Thought how, as it gets pushed outwards, the *bark splits and thickens*.

Thought whether the bark on our tree was thick enough to *protect* the tree.

We observed that bark rougher and thicker lower down the *trunk*, smoother higher.

There was *thicker bark on older trees*?

POSSIBLE SCIENCE DIARY ENTRY [alongside drawings of rabbits]

Today we watched videos of rabbits and other animals eating tree bark.

Rabbits' teeth keep growing. If their teeth grow too long, they wouldn't meet and the rabbits couldn't bite. Rabbits must eat hard food like bark and hay to stop their teeth getting too long.

People put plastic around young trees to stop rabbits and other animals eating the bark. If animals eat the bark all around a tree, the tree will die.