



THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMANE EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 260
SURRY, MAINE 04684
207.667.1025
info@HumaneEducation.org
www.HumaneEducation.org

FIND YOUR TREE

Grades: 3 and up

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Outdoor space with trees; blindfolds for each pair

Relevant Subject: Science and Language Arts

Preparation: To do this activity you'll need to find some woods or a park where there are many trees.

1. Have participants pair up, and ask one person in each pair to put on a blindfold. Invite the others to carefully lead their partner on a roundabout journey to a tree they pick out for their partner to "meet." Tell the blindfolded partner to feel the tree thoroughly, as high as they can reach, down at the base of the trunk, and around the perimeter. When they think they know their tree, have the partners lead them, also in a roundabout way, back to where they started.
2. Have the participants remove their blindfolds and go look for their trees.
3. Have the partners reverse their roles and repeat the activity.

Pertinent Information: Participants feel an enormous sense of accomplishment when they find their trees (and most do on the first guess) and realize how much they know from their senses! Some participants report that they knew which direction they were going because, despite the blindfold, they could tell where the sun was by the warmth on their skin. Others share clues they got from their feet as they traversed the terrain, and explain that they recognized where their tree was by a log they had to step over. This activity not only helps participants to appreciate trees (it's difficult not to appreciate a tree one has touched and explored so carefully), but also boosts their self-confidence as they recognize their capacity to know things in ways that are different from typical academic classroom learning.

Activity from *The Power and Promise of Humane Education*