



Tree Bark Investigation

Explore the Arnold Arboretum and investigate trees with distinctive bark.

Use the questions and information below to share with your children while you explore the Arboretum. Ask questions and encourage children to support their answers with evidence based on knowledge they might have and observations. Encourage students to use their sense of touch (no picking or peeling bark off of trees!) and sight to gain as much information as they can about the qualities of the bark.

Print copies of the double sided worksheet for children to use during their visit.

Teacher Background Information

Why do trees have bark?

- Bark protects from temperature extremes.
- Bark protects from intense sunlight.
- Like a scab on a wound, bark protects against disease organisms.
- Bark is somewhat porous, so bark helps the tree breathe.
- Bark prevents the loss of water.
- Bark protects the delicate cambium layer (the layer within the trunk which is the actively growing part of the trunk - live cells) from bumps and cuts.

What are some uses for bark?

- Chemicals can be extracted to tan leather or used as dyes.
- Some bark (depending on the tree) has medicinal values when steeped into a tea or ground.
- Inner bark can be used to make rope, weave baskets, or cane chair bottoms. Also used to make canoes, cloth, and as surface for paintings and map making.
- Some bark is flammable and used to start fires.
- Bark can be used as shingles and wall coverings.

What living things are found on or in bark?

- Lichen and moss; climbing vines and sometimes ferns
- Spiders and webs
- Ants, beetles, larval stage of other insects, and egg sacs
- Other invertebrates
- Fungi, especially on dead wood



Name: _____

TREE BARK

Can you find these basic bark types?



Smooth



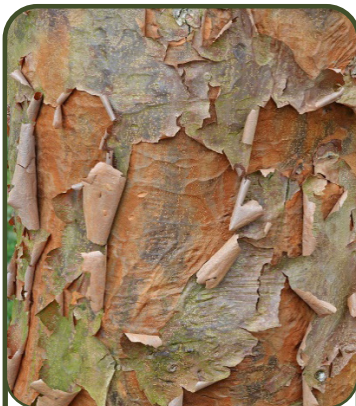
Scales



Plates



Shaggy



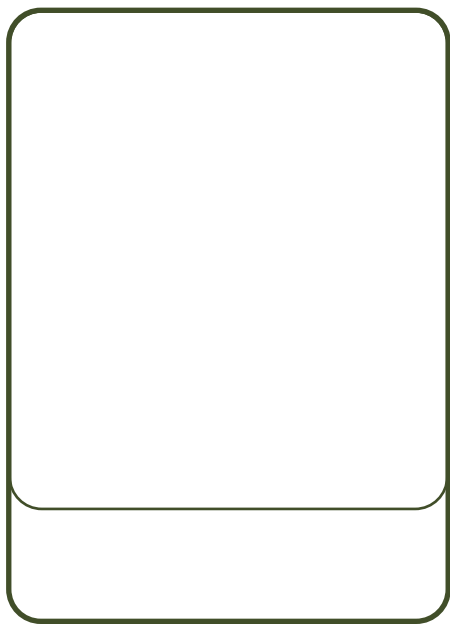
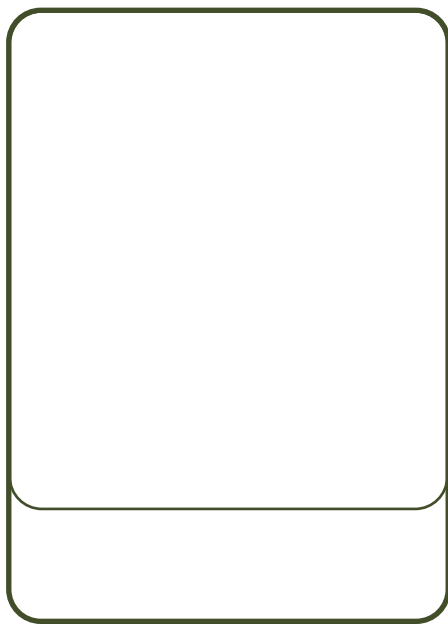
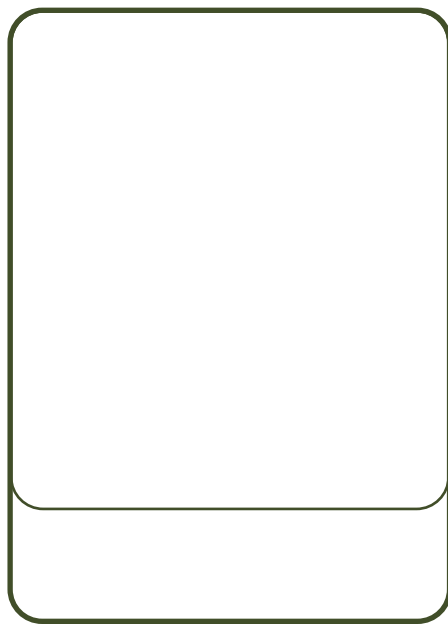
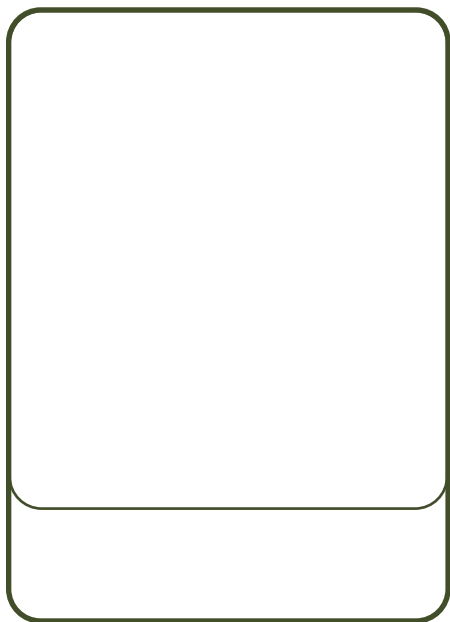
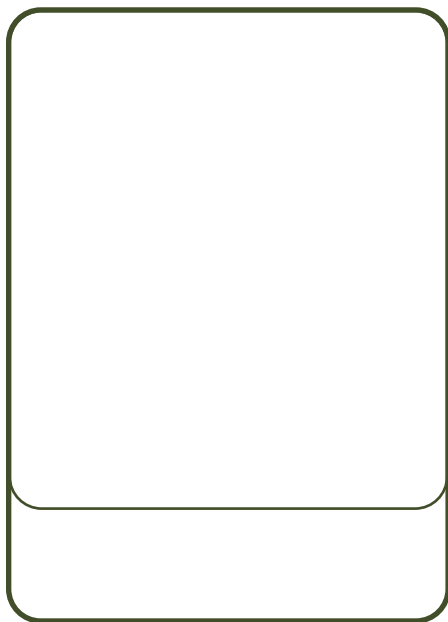
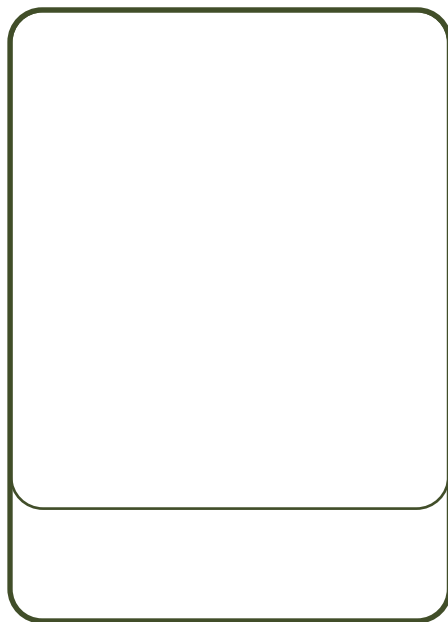
Papery



Furrowed

Did you find any new bark types? Draw them and name them like the images above.

What living things did you find on the bark? Draw and label some of them:

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, designed for a student to draw and label organisms found on bark. The box is divided into two sections by a horizontal line near the bottom.A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, designed for a student to draw and label organisms found on bark. The box is divided into two sections by a horizontal line near the bottom.A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, designed for a student to draw and label organisms found on bark. The box is divided into two sections by a horizontal line near the bottom.A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, designed for a student to draw and label organisms found on bark. The box is divided into two sections by a horizontal line near the bottom.A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, designed for a student to draw and label organisms found on bark. The box is divided into two sections by a horizontal line near the bottom.A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, designed for a student to draw and label organisms found on bark. The box is divided into two sections by a horizontal line near the bottom.