

# 3D Valley Oak Tree

## Objectives

Teach students about Tulare County's wildlife and habitat.

## Method

Students make 3D oak trees out of lunch bags and decorate them with pictures of local wildlife.

## Materials: Each student gets...

- Brown paper lunch bag
- Scissors
- Glue: Beacon's EZ-Flow "Kids choice glue!" works well
- 1 strip of the "3D Valley Oak: Wildlife Clipart" document
- 2 copies of the "3D Valley Oak: Valley Oak Leaf Images" document
- Optional: crayons or colored pencils

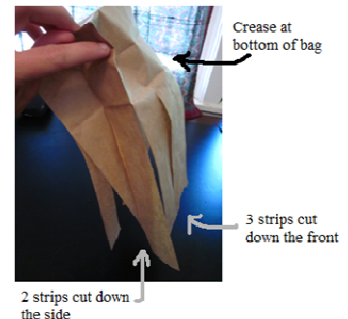
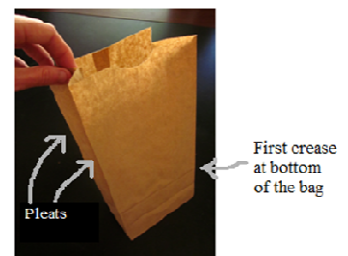
## Background

This is an ideal activity to do before you take a field trip to Kaweah Oaks Preserve. It prepares students for what they will see there and teaches them about the preserve's habitat. Kaweah Oaks Preserve got its name from the gigantic valley oak trees that forest it. The biggest of these trees can be as old as 400 years. When they were young, the only people in Tulare County were the Yokuts Indians.

Valley oaks provide habitat to countless wildlife species. Red tailed hawks build their huge nests high up in the tallest tree branches. They can often be seen circling overhead, looking for prey. The smaller acorn woodpeckers eat the oaks' acorns during the winter and build nests in them during the spring. Bobcats and foxes hunt for rabbits and squirrels in the foliage beneath them. Western fence lizards catch the sun's rays on their trunks and branches, hoping to catch butterflies fluttering by.

## Procedure

1. Optional preliminary activity: show the class the "Wildlife & Habitat" Power Point slide show.
2. Tell the class that they are going to make a model valley oak tree and decorate it with wildlife that is found in our part of California.
3. Hand out the materials to each of the students, but explain that they need to follow your directions before they start making their tree. It is probably going to be easier to do this project step-by-step as a class so that no one gets confused.
4. Open the brown paper lunch bag. Cut down all of the folded pleats on the sides of the bag to the first crease at the bottom of the bag. This will create four strips, two on each side.
5. Cut three strips down the front and three strips down the back of the bag. Cut down to the first crease at the bottom of the bag. Now, the bag will be cut into a total of ten strips.



6. Hold the bag upside down so the strips are hanging down. Grab the bag below the flat base and twist, twist, and twist to form a trunk. Keep patting the bottom of the bag to keep it relatively flat.
7. Flip the bag over so the base is at the bottom. Take each strip and twist it individually and fairly tightly to form each branch. Be sure to twist the branches all the way to the end.
8. For some variety, you may cut the end of the branch strips to form two smaller limbs.
9. Put leaves on your tree. If you would like to use the clipart images of valley oak leaves, begin by cutting out the individual leaves from 2 copies of the “3D Valley Oak: Valley Oak Leaf Images” document. Glue the leaves together so that the image is now on the front and back of the leaf. Next, glue the leaves to the branches of the tree. If you would prefer, you can also cut leaves out of green construction paper.



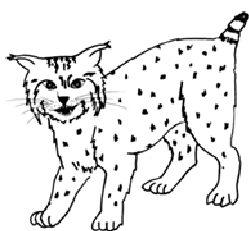
10. Decorate your tree with wildlife. Color the wildlife clipart. Cut out the images, and glue them to the tree.



Reference

This lesson plan was inspired by *Bags, Boxes, Buttons, and Beyond with the Bag Ladies* and by Shelly McCaw’s Pinkham Elementary School class.

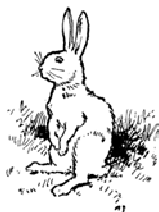
Sample Clipart Images: See “3D Valley Oak\_Wildlife Clipart” document for a full sheet of images.



Bobcat



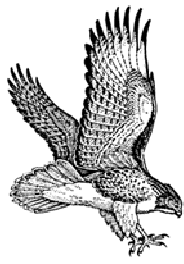
Ground squirrel



Cottontail rabbit



Butterfly



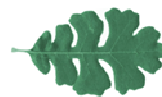
Red tailed hawk



Acorn woodpecker



Western fence lizard



Valley oak leaf