

# FACTivity



In this FACTivity, the question you will answer is: **What is the health of the trees around my school?**

The method you will use to do this is the following:

Divide up into pairs or small groups.

Examine Figure 1 and discuss the different parts of a tree.

Get a pencil and the tree health survey and head outside. Each pair should survey 1 tree in the school yard. Assign trees so that trees are not surveyed twice.

Look at the examples pictures of decay, cracks, holes/pest damage, and wounds and injury (see Figures 1-10) so you have an idea of what to look for when you are examining the tree. It would be helpful to have some books on trees available in the classroom as well.

Once you have collected your information, share it with your class and create a class

chart for all the trees in the school yard. Discuss what you found. Are the trees healthy? Why or why not? Look at the Growing Conditions worksheet to give you some help. If they are not very healthy, what can be done to help the trees?

An extension for this activity is to begin by identifying the trees using tree guides and other resources. After you have identified the tree you can create a presentation about your tree.

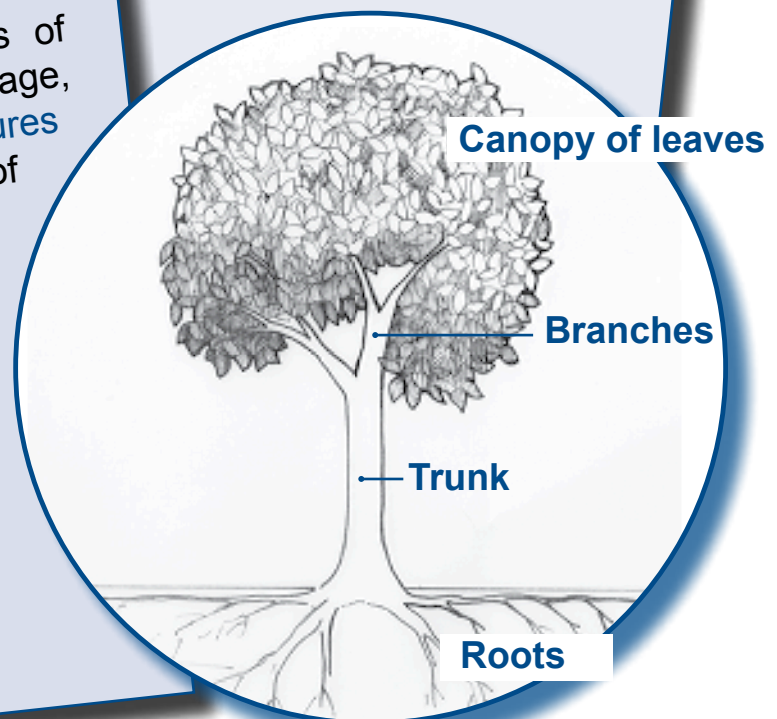


Figure 1. The parts of a tree.



## Tree Health Survey

To survey the health of the tree, make sure you look at the tree carefully. Walk all the way around the tree and observe the tree from a distance and up close. Put a check mark in any column where you see a problem. When you have finished surveying the trees, calculate your total points and circle the tree health rating at the bottom of the sheet.

Problem	Not evident	Very little	Some	A lot
Trunk				
Missing Bark				
Decay				
Leaning				
Cracks				
Holes/ Pest damage				
Wounds/injury				
Roots				
Decay				
Wounds/injury				
Crown				
Dieback (branch tips in the crown that are dead)				
Not much of a crown				
Broken branches				
Lack of balance				
Total # of Checks				
	Total x 0=	Total x 1=	Total x 2=	Total x 3=

Overall Point Total= \_\_\_\_\_

Dead/Dying	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Greater than 20	15-19	10-14	5-9	0-4

## Growing Conditions Survey

Place a check mark in each column where there is a problem. When you have finished surveying the area your tree lives in, calculate the point total and circle the growing condition rating.

Condition	Not evident	Very Little	Some	A Lot
Not much space for the tree to grow				
Tree is close to roadway				
There are a lot of other plants competing for the same space				
There are problems with the ground cover				
<b>Total # of Checks</b>				
<b>Sub-totals</b>	<b>Total x 0=</b>	<b>Total x 1=</b>	<b>Total x 2=</b>	<b>Total x 3=</b>

Overall point total= \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Less than 7</b>	<b>4-7</b>	<b>0-3</b>

(Note: This tree health survey is from American Forests. Please visit <http://www.americanforests.org/productsandpubs/citygreen/school.php> for more information.)



## Examples of Different Problems with Trees.

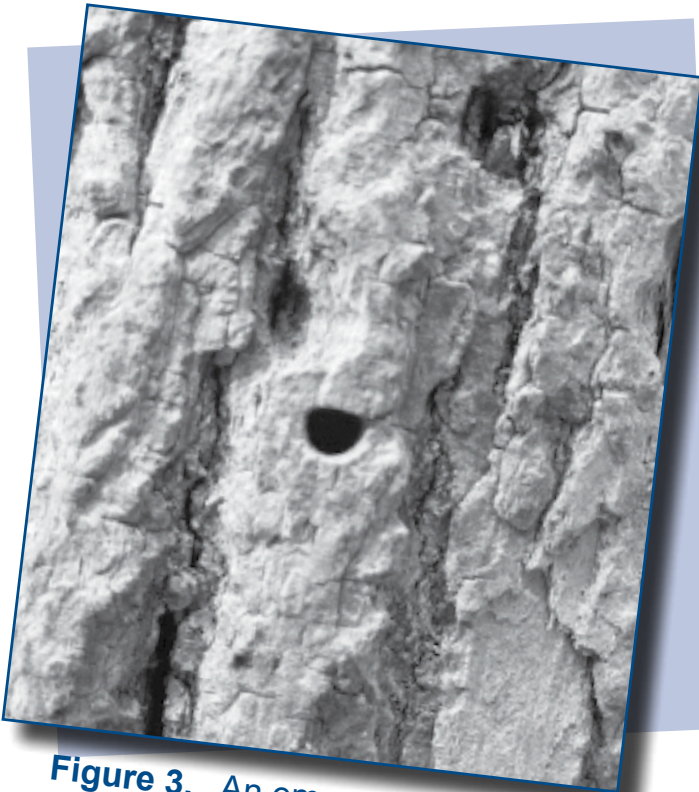
(Note: All photos courtesy of bugwood.org and forestpests.org)



**Figure 1.** A tree with a canker.



**Figure 2.** A tree with damaged bark.



**Figure 3.** An emerald ash borer's exit hole in the bark.



**Figure 4.** A tree with peeling bark.

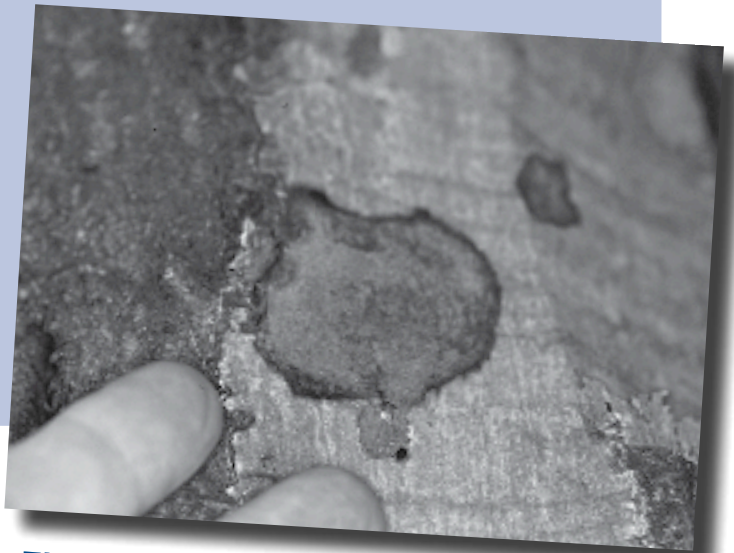




**Figure 5.** A decaying tree.



**Figure 6.** A tree with a gall in the crown.



**Figure 7.** A tree with sudden oak death.



**Figure 8.** A tree with crown dieback.





If you are a PLT-trained educator, you may use #77  
"Trees in Trouble" as an additional resource.



**Figure 9.** A tree with root rot.



**Figure 10.** A tree with root disease.