

My Amazing Family Tree

Materials Needed

- Large sheet of brown construction paper (for the tree trunk)
- Several sheets of green, red, and yellow construction paper (for leaves)
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue stick or white school glue
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- A pencil
- Optional: Photos of family members that can be cut, stickers, glitter glue

Learning Objectives

- The student will be able to identify and name key members of their immediate and extended family.
- The student will verbally describe one simple fact or characteristic about at least three family members.
- The student will create a visual representation of their family (a family tree), demonstrating an understanding that families are connected.

Alignment with Standards (Early Learning Frameworks)

- **Social Studies:** Understands personal identity, family roles, and relationships. Recognizes that families are diverse and structured in different ways.
- **Fine Arts:** Uses a variety of art materials to express ideas and create original work. Develops fine motor skills through cutting, gluing, and drawing.
- **Language Arts:** Uses language to describe people and experiences. Follows multi-step oral directions.

Lesson Activities and Instructional Strategies

1. Warm-Up: "Who's In Your Family?" Chat (5 minutes)

Start with a simple, engaging conversation. Sit together and ask open-ended questions to spark curiosity and connect the lesson to the child's life.

- "Let's think about all the special people in our family. Who comes to your mind first?"
- "What is something fun you like to do with [family member's name]?"
- "Families are like teams that love and help each other. What is one way our family works like a team?"

2. Introduction: What is a Family Tree? (5 minutes)

Introduce the concept of a family tree in a simple, visual way. Draw a very basic tree on a whiteboard or piece of paper.

Teacher Script Example: "Just like a real tree has a trunk and many branches and leaves that are all connected, a family does too! The trunk is like the base of our family, and each leaf can represent a special person. Today, you are going to be the artist and builder of your very own family tree to show how amazing and connected your family is!"

3. Main Activity: Create Your Family Tree (25-30 minutes)

This is the hands-on, creative part of the lesson where the student applies their knowledge.

1. **Build the Trunk:** Have the student draw a large tree trunk and some branches on the brown paper and cut it out. Help them glue it onto a background sheet (or directly onto a wall/door for display).
2. **Make the Leaves:** Ask the student to draw and cut out several leaf shapes from the green, red, and yellow paper. The variety of colors makes the tree more vibrant and visually interesting.
3. **Add Family Members:** This is the most important step. On each leaf, the student will represent one family member. Give them choices on how to do this:
 - Draw a picture of the person.
 - Write their name (or you can write it for them to trace).
 - Glue a small photo of the person onto the leaf.

Start with the student, placing their leaf somewhere prominent on the tree.

4. **Tell a Story:** As the student adds each family member's leaf to the tree, ask them a question. For example: "You're adding Grandma! Tell me your favorite thing about Grandma." or "What is something special that you and your brother do together?" This integrates storytelling and oral communication.
5. **Connect the Family:** Help the student glue the leaves onto the branches. Talk about connections as you place them. "Let's put Mommy and Daddy's leaves on a branch together, and your leaf can be growing from their branch!" Use language that fits your unique family structure. Don't forget pets—they are often considered family!

4. Wrap-Up and "Gallery Walk" (5 minutes)

Once the tree is complete, celebrate the student's creation. Stand back and admire the work together.

- Ask the student to be a "tour guide" for their family tree. Have them point to each leaf and name the person.
- Display the family tree proudly in your homeschool space. This reinforces the value of their work and the importance of family.
- End with praise: "You did an amazing job showing all the wonderful people in your family! Your tree is beautiful and full of love."

Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support:** Pre-cut the trunk and leaf shapes. Provide letter stencils or dotted-line names for the student to trace. Focus on a smaller number of family members to keep it manageable.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Encourage the student to write the names independently. Have them add more family members (cousins, aunts, uncles). They could also draw a small symbol on each leaf representing that person's hobby (e.g., a book for someone who loves to read, a ball for someone who loves sports).
- **Inclusivity:** The activity is naturally inclusive. Emphasize that "family" includes anyone they feel is their family. This can include grandparents who live in the home, step-parents, guardians, close family friends, or pets. The tree structure is flexible to accommodate any family configuration without being restrictive.

Assessment Methods

- **Formative (Observational):**
 - Listen to the student's answers during the warm-up chat and the main activity. Are they able to name family members?
 - Observe their ability to follow the steps of the craft and their fine motor skills (cutting, gluing).
- **Summative (Product-Based):**
 - The completed Family Tree serves as the primary assessment. Does it accurately represent the members of their family?
 - During the "Gallery Walk," assess if the student can successfully point to and identify the family members they included on their tree, meeting the core learning objective.