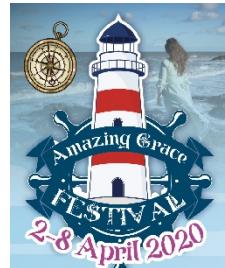




Leaves and Trees



**Leaves and trees make a wonderful contribution to our world!
Here are some of the ways they help us!**

Producing Oxygen

Trees and plants produce their own food by using the sun's energy to combine carbon dioxide and water in a process known as photosynthesis. During this process, trees produce oxygen as a by-product. In some ways, trees are like a vacuum cleaner for the air. Through their leaves and bark, they absorb harmful carbon gases and release clean oxygen for us to breathe. In this way, healthy, strong trees help to reduce the effects of climate change.



Providing Food, Warmth And Shelter

Trees provide timber, which can be used to build homes and shelter, wood to burn for cooking and heating, and food-producing trees provide fruit, nuts, berries, and leaves that feed both humans and animals.



Biodiversity

A single tree can be home to hundreds of species of insects, fungi, moss, mammals, and plants. Depending on the kind of food and shelter they need, different forest animals require different types of habitat. Without trees, forest creatures would have nowhere to call home. Oak trees support more wildlife than any other native trees in Ireland. They provide a habitat for over 280 different species!

Climate

Trees help cool the planet by sucking in harmful greenhouse gases, and releasing oxygen back into the atmosphere. With more than 50% of the world's population living in cities pollution and overheating are becoming a real problem. Fortunately, a mature tree can absorb an average of 48 pounds of carbon dioxide per year, making our world a healthier and safer place to live.

Our Trees

According to the Tree Council of Ireland, our most common native trees include oak, ash, hazel, birch, Scots pine, rowan and willow. Eventually, people brought other trees, such as beech, sycamore, horse chestnut, spruce, larch and fir to Ireland.

What am I? Write in the type of leave under the picture - some are easier than others. Which ones can you see near your home?

