

Tu B' Shevat

This is a festival celebrating the birthday of trees, on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat.

In Israel, at least, it is customary to try and eat 15 ("Tu") different kinds of fruits on this day, and especially those mentioned in the Torah – grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.

By tradition no fruits could be picked or eaten during the first three years of a tree's life and by celebrating Tu B'Shevat, farmers were able to keep track of the ages of their trees. The day is marked by ceremonial planting of trees and more recently has become a day of ecological awareness.



- ① Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- ② Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-
Which picture did you like?
Which tree do you like?
What is your favourite fruit?
- ③ Go outside with the children and look at a tree. What are all the things they notice?
- ④ Take bark rubbings with a crayon and paper.
- ⑤ Ask the children to look at different leaves. Compare their sizes, shapes, colours etc.

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Trees celebrate their new year at a different time to humans. Jewish people celebrate their new year at Rosh Hashanah in September.



Trees need lots of water to grow and it's in the winter and early spring that rains come.



**Trees wake up in the spring
and buds appear that will
become leaves.**



Trees have deep roots so that they can draw the water from the ground.



Trees have great branches that reach up into the heavens.



Trees have special fruits that grow and we can pick. Olives, apples, dates, figs, pomegranates and many others.