WHAT IS A TREE

* + A tree is defined according to the following criteria:
  + It must be perennial
  + It must have a self supporting trunk
  + The trunk must be made of woody material
  + A tree usually grows to a height of 5 to 7 metres
  + NOTE: a young tree that has not yet reached adult height is called a sapling.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TREES AND OTHER PLANTS

* All other plants differ from trees in at least one of these ways.
* No plant with a soft, juicy stem is a tree.
* Most plants are much shorter than trees.
* Shrubs, like trees, have woody stems; but most shrubs have more than one stem, none of the stems grow so thick as to be called a trunk.
* Some jungle vines grow several hundred metres long and have a woody stem. However, the stems of vines cannot support themselves.

WHAT IS A FOREST

* A forest is a community of living and non-living things where the predominant (main) species is trees.
* Everything in a forest is connected.
* Everything affects everything else.

DISCUSSION

* Are all forests the same?
* How are they different?
* Why is a forest made up of so many different types and ages of trees?

MORE WHAT IS A FOREST

* A forest is not a community that grows old together.
* A variety of *change agents* cause parts of the forest to change. These include:
  + Fire
  + Floods
  + Storms
  + Insects
  + Disease
  + Human activity
* As a result, the forest is made up of small and large areas of different aged trees, often with a mixture of different species.
* A forest with many trees of different ages and types supports a variety of wildlife.
* Some species of wildlife are best supported by a young forest; others need a more mature forest to survive. Some prefer leafy trees; others prefer trees with needles.
* Without a variety of trees in the forest the variety of animal life would be greatly decreased.

