

● American Linden (Tilia americana)



The densely pyramidal crown and large heart-shaped leaves make the American linden an attractive street or lawn tree. The seed bracts have a parachute-like leaf attached to each cluster of seeds, allowing the wind to disperse the seed some distance.

● Black Walnut (Juglens nigla)



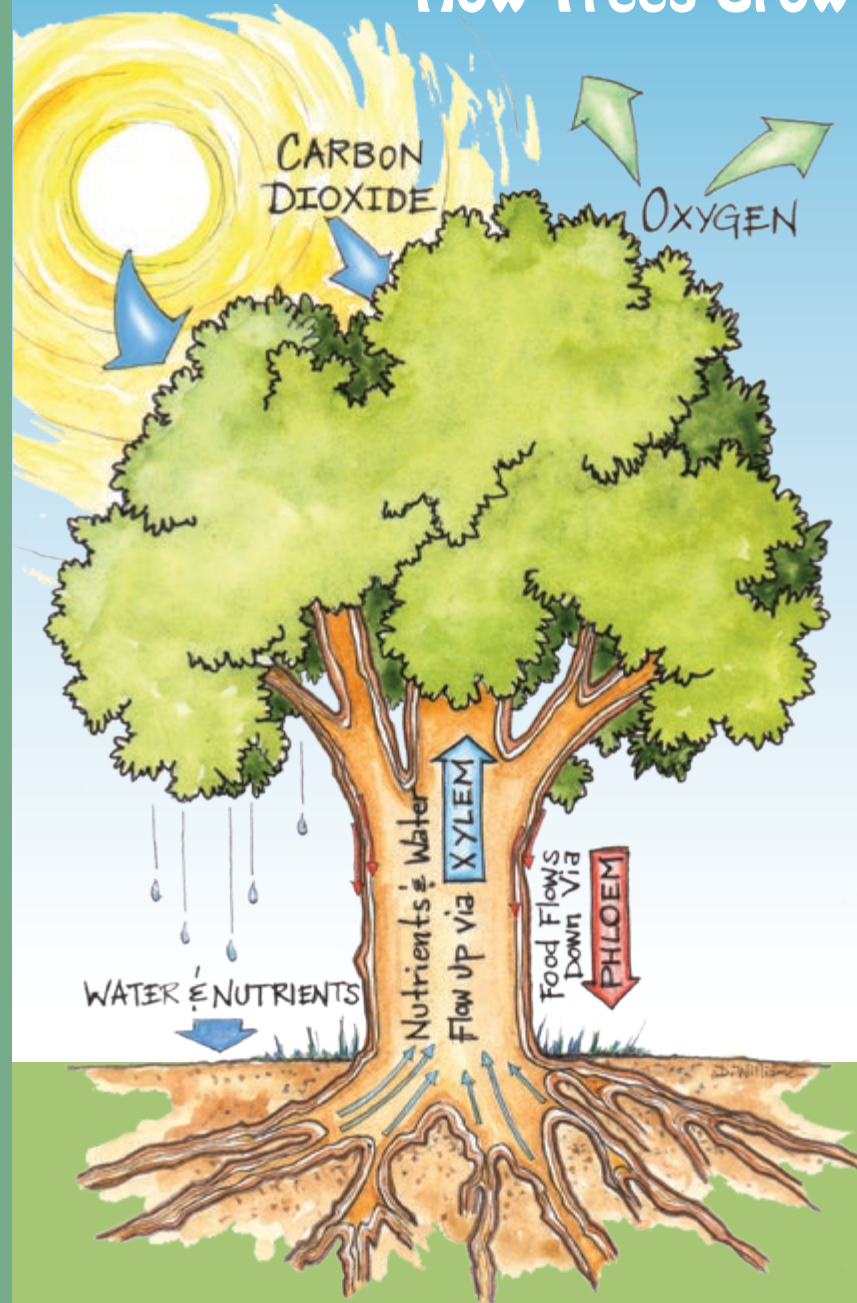
Black walnut trees grow best with lots of water and sunlight. They have dark brown or blackish bark and **compound leaves** (many leaflets on one stem). The nuts fall from the tree in autumn and are a favorite food of wild animals and humans alike, though removing the nut from the husk and shell is a rather messy and difficult process. Black walnut is also prized for its timber.

● Cottonwood (Hibiscus tiliaceus)



Cottonwood is the largest and fastest growing tree in South Dakota. The tree is native to moist soils along streams and wetlands throughout the state. In South Dakota, it is primarily used as a massive shade tree in riverside parks or other low, moist areas. Native Americans ate the young sprouts and inner bark because of its nutritive value and sweetness. The wood is used for making boxes, crates and pallets.

The Need to Know: How Trees Grow



Plants and trees have the ability to make their own food in a process known as **photosynthesis**. They do this by sucking water and nutrients from the soil up through their xylem and into their leaves. The water and nutrients are combined with carbon dioxide and sunlight to make a sugary food called **glucose**. This food then travels down through the phloem to the rest of the tree, so it can grow.

Illustrations by David Williams, Wingin' it Works

● Eastern Red Cedar (Juniperus virginiana)



The Eastern Red Cedar is actually in the juniper family and is not closely related to other cedars. Its tough, stringy bark and waxy, scaly needles are designed for survival in very dry conditions. The berries of the red cedar are an important food source for many songbirds. The wood is prized by builders for its rich red color, sweet smell, and weather-resistant properties.

● Green Ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica)



A medium-sized tree with compound leaves, the green ash grows well in many areas of Custer State Park and the Black Hills. The winged seeds last through the winter and attract birds, deer and rabbits. Native Americans used green ash wood to make bows, arrows, tipi pegs, drums and meat drying racks. If you have a wooden tennis racket or baseball bat, it might be made from green ash.

● Silver Maple (Acer saccharinum)



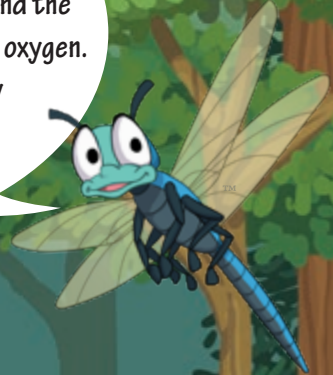
Silver maple is a fast-growing tree with scaly gray bark and leaves with deep, pointed lobes. Like other maple trees, it has winged seeds (called **samaras**) that spin when they fall. Due to its rapid growth, silver maple is popular as a landscaping tree and for wind-breaks on farms. The sap was used by Native Americans as a remedy for various physical ailments.



The Need for Trees

Trees are very important to people, animals, insects, fungi, and even other trees. This is because trees provide so many things for people and the forest, including shelter, habitat, food and oxygen. This adventure will help you identify six of the most common trees found along this trail

For your safety, stay on the trail and be aware of your surroundings. Poison ivy climbs up the trunks of trees, too... so if you see a hairy vine, don't hug that tree!



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All trees start out as seeds that will sprout into seedlings.

A sapling is the next stage of a tree's life. Seedlings become saplings when they reach four feet tall.

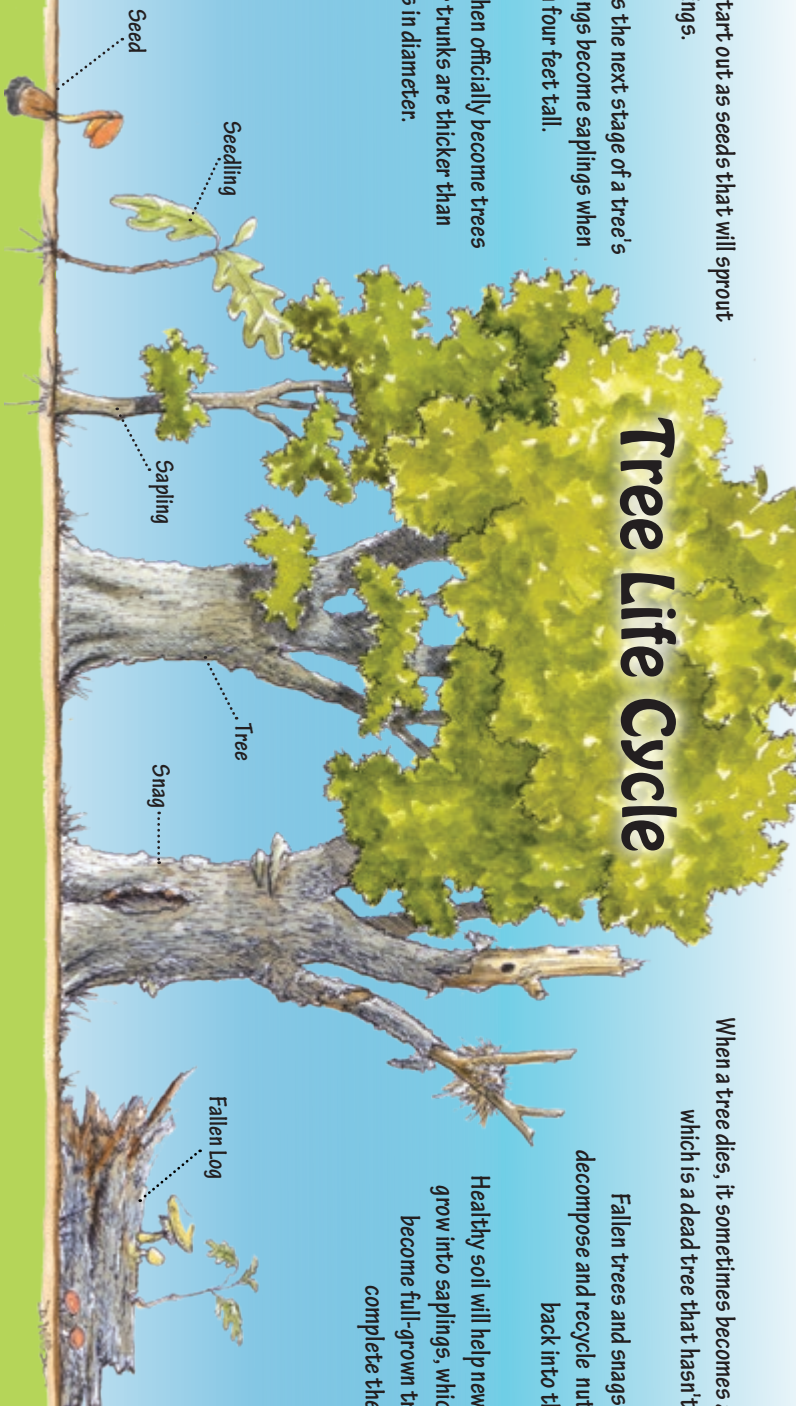
Saplings then officially become trees when their trunks are thicker than four inches in diameter.

Tree Life Cycle

When a tree dies, it sometimes becomes a snag, which is a dead tree that hasn't fallen.

Fallen trees and snags slowly decompose and recycle nutrients back into the soil.

Healthy soil will help new seeds grow into saplings, which then become full-grown trees to complete the cycle.



Can you find a...

Seed? ___

Seedling? ___

Sapling? ___

Tree? ___

Snag? ___

Fallen Log? ___