

Make a Print of an Imaginary Tree

You Will Need

- A few different colors of tempera paint
- Paintbrush
- Water
- Paper
- A collection of plant pieces gathered from outside
- A pencil, marker, or crayon



Abel Rodríguez (born 1941), *The Tree of Life and Abundance*, 2019. Watercolor on paper (2020.026).

COLLECT! Take a walk outside. Look around you, noticing all the different plants you see. Respectfully collect a few different parts of the plants you see to take home with you. If you're not sure whether you're allowed to pick a certain plant, ask an adult! Pay special attention to texture—leaves with patterns on their surface work best. Try to find 5 to 10 different plant pieces.

PREPARE! Bring your plants back to your art-making station. Take a moment to look at the things you found. What is special about each thing you found? Are any of the things you found from the same plant? Are any of the colors similar or different? What kinds of textures do you notice?

DRAW! Use a pencil, crayon, marker, or paint to create a trunk for your tree. It can be any kind of trunk—wide or thin, wiggly or straight.

PRINT! Apply a thin layer of paint to one of your plants, and press it into the space above the trunk. Make sure to press onto all the different parts of the plant, smoothing it into the paper. Using different colors of paint and different parts of your plants, fill in the leaves and branches of your tree.



Challenge Yourself!

Look at the artwork at the top of this page. Can you notice the different types of leaves in each section of the branches? These are modeled after real plants! Can you recognize any of the leaves or fruit? See if you can figure out what plants the artist included!

Be inspired by things you noticed on your nature walk to add elements like animals, fruits, and seeds to your tree. Do any birds live in your tree? Does any fruit grow there? What creatures live around the base of the tree? You can use your imagination to make something up that might not exist in real life!