

Editor's Note: What do scientists do? Not all scientists climb trees like the amazing treetop explorer Nalini Nadkarni. But all scientists ask questions, observe, make guesses, and record what they find. I hope this issue inspires your young scientists to do the same. There is so much to discover! I'm thrilled that we'll be spending this year discovering together.

—Erin Kelly

Reading Objective: Students will identify steps scientists use to conduct investigations as they read about a scientist of the rainforest canopy.

Reading Level: Lexile®: 410L; GRL: K

Next Generation Science Standards:

Practice 3: Planning and Carrying Out Investigations
2-LS4-1: Observe Plants and Animals and the Diversity of Life in Their Habitats

Vocabulary: rainforest, canopy, observe, record

Fun Facts to Share

- ★ Nalini helped design a treetop explorer Barbie that looks like her. She did it to get kids excited about treetop science.
- ★ To climb tall trees, Nalini invented a tool she calls the Master-caster. It shoots ropes to high tree branches so she can pull herself up!



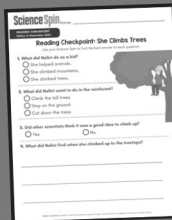
Attention, Teachers!

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VIDEOS



SKILL SHEETS



Hands-On STEM Activity

Be a Scientist: Observe a Tree!

Materials: A tree you can observe, pencils, clipboards, copies of the skill sheet (Optional: hand lens)

Overview: Kids become tree scientists like Nalini as they observe and record their observations of a tree.

Directions:

1. Before you leave the classroom, tell students they'll go outside to be tree scientists like Nalini. Remind kids that Nalini **observes** trees to learn about them.
2. Give each student a clipboard, a pencil, and a copy of the skill sheet. Head outside and find a tree.
3. At first, students can just stand in front of the tree and soak up impressions with all their senses.

4. Now make specific observations: Is the tree large or small? What are the leaves like? What about the bark?
5. Look for signs that animals live in the tree. Do students see a bird or an insect—or perhaps a nest or hole where an animal might live?
6. Record observations on the skill sheets. If there's time, students can share them with others—real scientists do that too!



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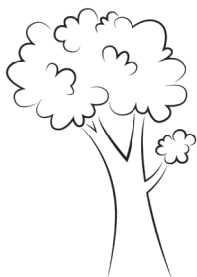


My Tree Observations

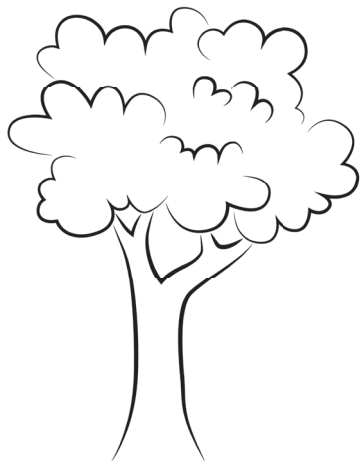
The size of my tree is:



Small



medium



Large

There is a hole in my tree.



yes

no

I think an animal lives in my tree.



yes



no

The TOPS of the leaves are:



pointy



rounded

I also noticed this about my tree:

The bark of my tree is:



rough



smooth