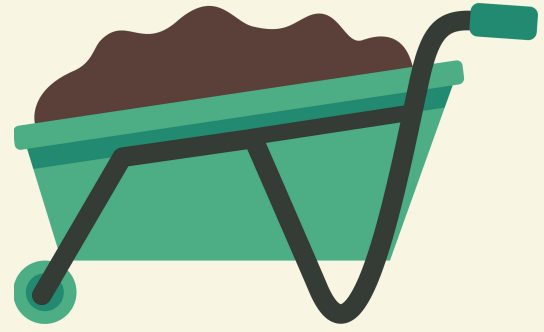




Why Mulch?

Suggestion: Place bales of pine straw near your trees prior to the start of the lesson.

Materials

- Mulch for your trees around campus
- Mulch reading passage and question set
- Highlighter

Objectives

- I can restate and answer questions.
- I can use evidence from a text to answer questions.
- I can follow directions as they are written to successfully complete a task.

Anticipatory Set

Ask your students to share what they do to get ready for bed? They may share that they put on their pajamas, brush their teeth, and tuck themselves in.

Now ask your students if they know what **mulch** is. Have them share their ideas.

Share with your students that just like we get cozy under our blankets for bed, we help our trees get cozy by adding mulch.

Introduction

Tell your students that today they will be mulching trees around their campus. Tell them that before they get started they will first learn about the benefits of mulch. They will also learn how to mulch properly.

Distribute and read the “Why Mulch?” handout? Ask students to share their biggest takeaways from the passage.

Guided Practice

Call on a student to read question 1 out loud. Ask your class how that question could best be restated. Next have your students highlight the evidence in the text that provides the answer. Share with your students how they can best restate and answer that question. Have your students write their answers.

Repeat these steps for Questions 2 and 3. (Do not complete Question 4)

Reread the section of the text under the subheading “But how to make sure you do it correctly?”

Explain to students that we will now head outside to mulch trees around campus. Once outside, review what proper mulching looks like with your whole group.

Independent Practice

Students should now be broken into small groups. Each group should mulch their own tree, following the directions that were included in the passage.

After returning to the classroom, have students complete question 4 on of their “Why Mulch?” handout.

Closure

Have students share their illustrations with their classmates. Have students

Ask students to think about the trees they see on their way home and report back on whether their community has more deciduous or evergreen trees.



Why Mulch



Mulch is a super helper!

When we put mulch around trees, it helps them in many ways:

1. **Keeps the Soil Moist:** Mulch helps keep the soil around the tree wet. This is super important because trees need water to grow big and strong!
2. **Stops Weeds:** Weeds are pesky plants that can take water and nutrients from the tree. Mulch helps keep these weeds away, so the tree gets all the food it needs.
3. **Protects the Roots:** The roots of a tree are like its feet! Mulch keeps the roots safe from too much heat or cold. It helps keep the roots comfy.
4. **Adds Nutrients:** As mulch breaks down over time, it turns into food for the tree. This helps the tree grow healthy and tall!
5. **Makes it Look Nice:** Mulch can make the area around the tree look pretty and tidy, making our yards more beautiful!

But how to make sure you do you do it correctly?

Now that we know mulch is great for trees, let's learn how to mulch the right way:

1. **Don't Make a Mulch Volcano!**



- A mulch volcano is when mulch is piled high against the tree trunk. This is not good for the tree! It can trap too much moisture and make the bark rot. Yuck! It can also invite unwanted bugs and animals to stick around.

2. Make a Mulch Donut Instead!



- A mulch donut is a circle of mulch around the tree with a hole in the middle—just like a real donut! The mulch should not touch the bark of the tree. The open center lets the tree “breathe” and stay dry right where it needs to.
- A good mulch donut should be about 3 to 4 inches thick—not too much and not too little.

So, Let's Remember!

Mulch donut = GOOD



Mulch volcano = BAD



When we mulch trees the right way, we help them stay happy and strong!

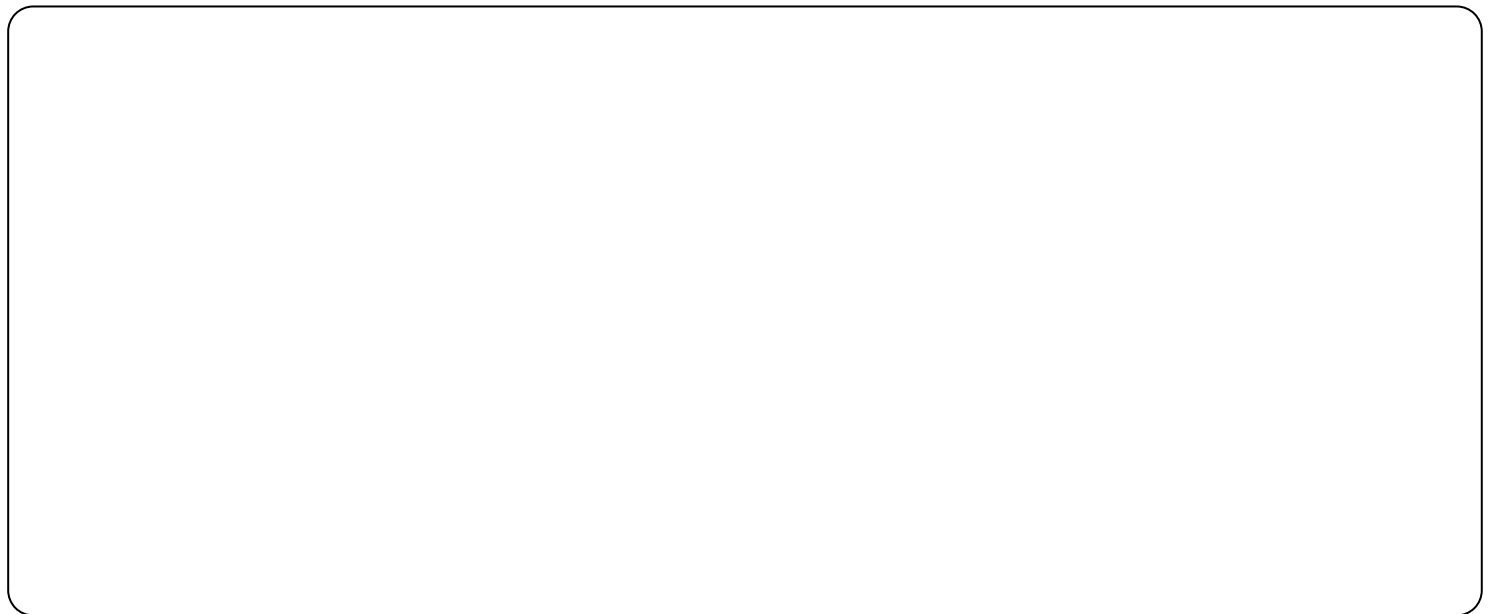
Directions: Use information from the passage to answer the questions below. Be sure to restate and answer for each question.

1. What is one reason you would want to stop weeds from growing around your tree?

2. How does mulch help a tree get food?

3. Imagine you see someone making a mulch volcano. What would you say to them? Why?

4. Draw your best mulch donut.



Thanks for downloading!

Please check out batonrougegreen.com/programs/canopy_kids
for more awesome tree related information and lessons.