



Growing Native Vocabulary



This vocabulary list is targeted for fourth and fifth grade students.

- **Adaptation:** The special characteristics that enable plants and animals to be successful in a particular environment.
- **Biodegradable:** Substance or object capable of being decomposed by bacteria or other living organisms.
- **Cambium Layer:** A thin cellular plant layer of tissue lying between the bark and the wood. Cambium is responsible for the second layer of growth of stem or bark. Increases the thickness of the tree.
- **Carbon Dioxide:** A colorless, odorless, incombustible gas present in the atmosphere and formed during respiration and by burning carbon.
- **Compost:** A mixture of decaying organic matter used to fertilize soil, usually made by gathering plant material, such as leaves, grass clippings, and vegetable peels, into a pile or bin for decomposition.
- **Conserve:** To save, preserve or protect.
- **Decompose:** Chemical compound break down or cause to break down organic matter into component elements.
- **Drought Tolerant:** Plants that have relatively low water requirements or plants that are well adapted to an arid climate
- **Germination:** The process by which a seed or spore awakens from dormancy and starts to sprout.
- **Heartwood:** the dense inner part of a tree trunk, yielding the hardest timber whose main function is the support of the tree
- **Invasive (species):** An organism (plant, animal, fungus, or bacterium) that is not native and has negative effects on our environment, or our health. Invasive plants and animals are the second greatest threat to biodiversity after habitat loss
- **Native Plant:** A native plant occurs naturally in a particular ecosystem without direct or indirect human actions.
- **Natural Resource:** materials or substances such as trees or water, formed in nature and is necessary or useful to humans.
- **Phloem:** The vascular tissue in plants that conducts sugars and food produced by photosynthesis to all parts of the plant. Phloem is the innermost layer of the bark.
- **Photosynthesis:** The process used by plants, algae, and certain bacteria to harness energy from sunlight into chemical energy.
- **Sapwood:** The soft outer layers of recently formed wood between the heartwood and the bark, containing the functioning vascular tissue and carrying water and nutrients through the tree.

- **Species:** A group of animals or plants that are similar in characteristics and can produce young animals or plants
- **Xylem:** The vascular tissue of plants that carries water from the root to the leaves and gives strength to the stem or trunk.

Learn more at:



This work is supported by the Hispanic-Serving Institution's Education Grants Program, grant no. 2015-38422-24058/project accession no. 1007104, from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.