

Issue tree

A visual way of structuring an enquiry while supporting critical questioning.

Aims

- Structure an enquiry exploring cause, effect and solutions
- Support the development of critical questions around an issue

What you need

- This is best run as a group activity.
- Large pieces of paper and pens.

What to do

Learners draw the outline of a tree to include roots, trunk, branches and leaves. **See diagram here on the right.**

They then label the trunk with the issue to be explored, the roots with the causes of the issue, the branches with the effects of the issue and the leaves with any possible solutions. Alternatively you can use the leaves to think of actions that they can take to raise awareness about the issue.

This activity can be carried out either before learners research an issue, as a way of representing what they know already, or at the end of their research as a way of presenting their findings.

It can also be used to support local / global connections and identify ways local actions within their school and community can impact on an issue. For example, if the issue was climate change, they could identify action they could take to help mitigate the impact of climate change.

Reflection and evaluation

If you complete the tree as a pre-learning task, revisit the trees and ask pupils to add any further ideas to their original ideas. Encourage them to reflect on new learning.

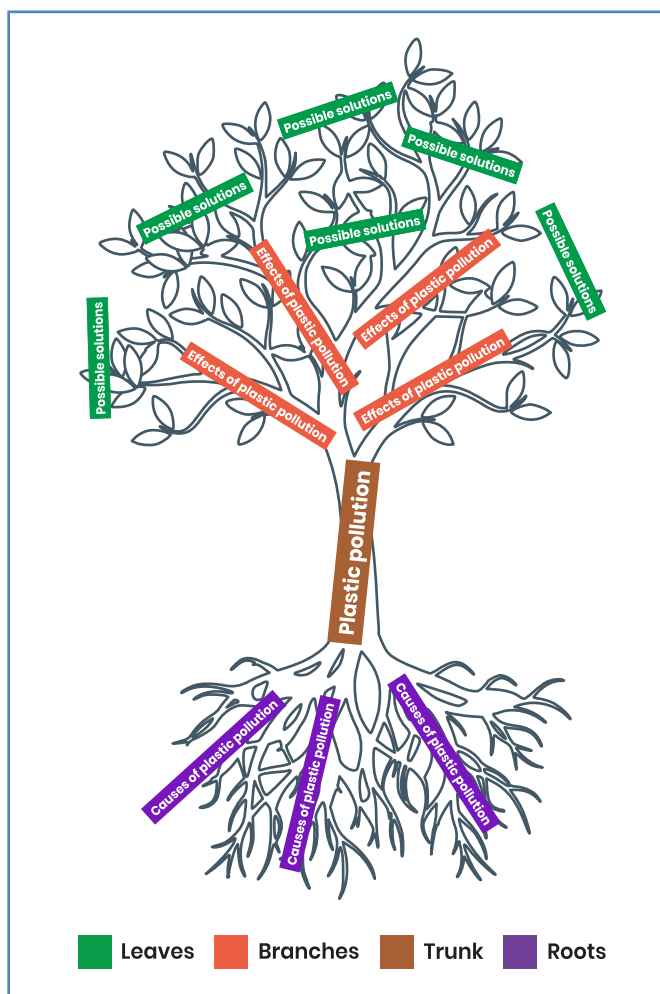
Once the pupils have complete the trees, you can use the following reflective questions:

What cause and effects link together?

What local to global connections can they make about the issue?

Which part of the tree will their solutions or actions impact on?

Which action or solution will have the biggest impact?



For further examples of Issues Trees and a short animation demonstrating the method please visit [here](https://www.stridemagazine.org.uk)