LENS Project
Our Family Tree

Ages  All Ages!

LENS Skill  Sense of Self and Negotiation

Why?  Working together to create a three-dimensional representation of our family unit helps us understand our family better and develop deeper relationships to one another.

Materials  Get creative with the supplies you already have at home!
☐ Leaf Stencils (print or trace our stencils, find your own leaf shapes online, freehand it)
☐ Cardstock (11x17 if possible), cereal boxes or other thin cardboard
☐ Blank paper
☐ Glue or glue sticks (No glue? Make your own with flour and water!)
☐ Scissors
☐ Coloring utensils (markers, crayons, colored pencils, sharpies, pens, pencils)
☐ Tissue paper in different colors
☐ Construction paper

Summary
This LENS activity is designed to encourage the whole family to work together and collaborate. You will all be able to explore how you relate to each other, reflect on your strengths, emotions and how you communicate. Your family will collaborate to create a family tree highlighting the activities and traditions that make your family “flourish”.

Warm-up

1.) Individual Scribble
   Each family member will choose a crayon and take a blank piece of paper. Set a timer for 30 seconds, during which time, everyone scribbles without stopping.
   - This is your chance to warm-up your creative muscles. You don’t have to be a visual artist to participate.
   - Scribbling means you aren’t trying to draw anything on purpose, just don’t lift your crayon.

   OPTIONAL: Consider closing your eyes while scribbling or try using your non-dominant hand.

2.) Joint Scribble
   Now take a new piece of paper, just one for the whole family. If you have a larger piece of paper you can use it now. During this round everyone will be scribbling on the same page. Each family member can keep their crayon or choose a new color. Set a timer for another 30 seconds (or 45 seconds if you want more of a challenge).

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• Remember, don’t lift your crayon and don’t try to draw anything on purpose.
• Decide as a family if your lines can cross.
• How does it feel to share the paper?

3.) Speed Sketch
Using the back of your individual scribble pages or a new blank page, get ready to sketch. Set the timer for 3 minutes now, during which time each person will sketch a tree that reflects your family in some way.
• This is just a warm-up to get your first idea down on paper. Don’t overthink or plan too much, it’s just a sketch.
• Consider the type of tree, size, or shape. Consider any distinguishing features on your tree that can reflect your family.
• Once everyone is done, take a few minutes to share your trees.

Directions
1.) Create the Roots
At the base of the 11x17 cardstock (or equivalent material) list the names of each family member, thinking of each person as one of the roots of the tree. Utilize whatever writing utensil(s) your family would like.
• Where is each family member placed in the root system? How do they connect?
• What writing style will you use to write each name? Will everyone’s name be in the same style or will you choose a different style for each person?
• Include any relatives or pets who are considered important family members.

2.) Create the Trunk
Each family member should choose a color of tissue paper that reflect their Sense of Self. Use each family member’s tissue paper to “paint or sculpt” the trunk of the tree. You can cut and tear your tissue paper into any shape or size or into multiple pieces. Collaborate to create and shape the trunk of the tree by combining everyone’s tissue paper.
• You could layer the pieces of tissue paper or combine them into a mosaic. Or brainstorm your own method!
• If you don’t have tissue paper at home, that’s ok, get creative with what you have! You could use construction paper, napkins or paper towels. Consider using markers or paint to add some color.

Be sure to negotiate with your family to determine how much time to take for each step
• Are you someone that works quickly? How can you support those who need more time?
• Are you someone who likes to take your time? Consider how your family might be feeling as they wait.

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3.) Create the Leaves
Create the leaves using the leaf templates included (or freehand your own leaf shapes) and construction paper. On each leaf, add drawings or words that represent activities your family does together, places you’ve been, traditions, routines, special memories, etc. Then work together to layer your leaves onto the tree.
- What makes your family flourish? What activities, traditions, and places are special to your family?
- As your family is decorating the leaves, you can also create branches extending from the trunk, using tissue paper, construction paper, paper bags, markers or any other way your family creates together.

4.) Reflect & Celebrate
Once your family has completed your tree you’ll want to consider where to display it! Be sure to also take some time to reflect together on the following questions. *(You could discuss as a family or journal individual reflections.)*
- What is your favorite part of your family’s tree?
- Were they any challenges when putting together your tree? How did your family work through them?
- How did you reflect your **Sense of Self** during this activity?
- What was a moment your family had to **Negotiate** to complete your tree? How successful was that process?
- How did you develop stronger connections to one another during this activity?

**Fun Additions!**
- Consider connecting with extended family on a virtual platform for their input. They can contribute ideas for the leaves, or add to the trunk and roots.
- Does your family tree reach to other countries? How can your tree represent your family’s cultural heritage?

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Leaf Stencils

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