

A STORY IN TREE RINGS



We all know trees grow taller, but did you know they also get wider around the trunk? As a tree grows, it produces new layers of wood just under the bark. When the tree is cut, these periods of growth show up as rings. We can use the rings to date the tree and find clues about past environments.

Early wood – light in color
Late wood – dark in color
Alternating gives the
appearance of “rings”

We can also see big events
like droughts and fires in
the tree rings.

During a year with lots of
water, the tree will grow more,
and the ring will be wider.

During dry years, the ring will
be narrower.

Dendrochronology, also known as tree-ring
dating, is the method of dating based on the
study of patterns of tree rings.

MY LIFE AS A TREE

Tree Ring Activity

Every year, a tree adds a layer of growth just beneath the bark. This growth shows up as rings. **What would your life look like in tree rings?**

To make your own, you need:

- Paper Plate
- Colored Pencils or Markers

Draw a ring for each year in your life. Start with the heartwood, the center of the tree. You can label the years with important events from your life.

