

2025 Wisconsin AITC Essay Contest
4th Grade State Winner

"Maple Trees"

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When you take a bite of a pancake, do you think, "I wonder where this maple syrup comes from?" If so, then the answer is, maple trees! The most important maple tree in Wisconsin is the Sugar Maple. They produce syrup and furniture. Money from maple tree products, like the syrup and furniture, bring \$34.9 billion dollars to Wisconsin's economy each year.

The Wisconsin State Tree is the Sugar Maple. Authentic Wisconsin said that it became the state tree in 1949. It's known for the vibrant orange, yellow, and red leaves in the fall. The Sugar Maple can be found all over Wisconsin. A Sugar Maple can have a lifespan of two hundred to three hundred years in the wild. In the summer I like to sit under my maple trees for shade. In the fall, I like to go for a drive and see their beautiful colors.

A Sugar Maple produces maple syrup! According to Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom, Wisconsin ranks 4th in maple syrup production. The Wisconsin Historical Society said Wisconsin is ranked 3rd in the United States for maple syrup. The maple syrup process starts in the fall when the tree starts to store starch in its trunk. During the winter when the tree is still asleep, the starch turns to sugar. In the springtime when the nights are cold and the days are mild, moisture from the ground is pulled into the tree's trunk and the sugary sap rises through the tree. Then a tap is placed in the tree. Sap is collected and then boiled to evaporate the water and the sugar turns to syrup.

Besides syrup, maple trees can be used for furniture. The furniture that maple trees are most commonly used for are chairs, tables, and cabinets because of how durable the material is. Maple trees are hardwood.

Maple trees are important to Wisconsin because of what they produce and how much money it brings to the economy of Wisconsin. The next time you sit down to eat pancakes, you will know where your syrup comes from and how it got there. The next time I have pancakes, I am going to sit in my chair and add extra maple syrup to my pancakes because I know I can help Wisconsin.

References

Agriculture in the Classroom- Maple Syrup

<https://cdn.agclassroom.org/wi/wiag/wigrown/14maplesyrup.pdf>

Forestry and the Wisconsin Economy

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestbusinesses/factsheets>

Wisconsin County Forests Association: Products Made from Trees

<https://wisconsincountyforests.com/education/products-trees/>

Wisconsin Historical Society

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS1821#:~:text=Wisconsin%20ranks%20third%20among%20the,the%20state's%20earliest%20agricultural%20products.>

Authentic Wisconsin

https://www.authenticwisconsin.com/tree_2.html