

# Why learn about forests?

## Forests are an important part of our environment

Approximately two-thirds of our island is covered by forests of varying types and extent. Knowledge about these forests contributes to each citizen's perceptions and judgments about them. It is important that students are able to understand the distribution and nature of these forests in Tasmania and elsewhere.

## Forests provide an ideal environment for scientific study

The forest habitat is an interdependent system of flora, fauna and natural phenomena that responds and adjusts to change – within and external to that system. Students should understand the cyclical and interdependent nature of forest systems.

## Forests make an important aesthetic contribution to our society

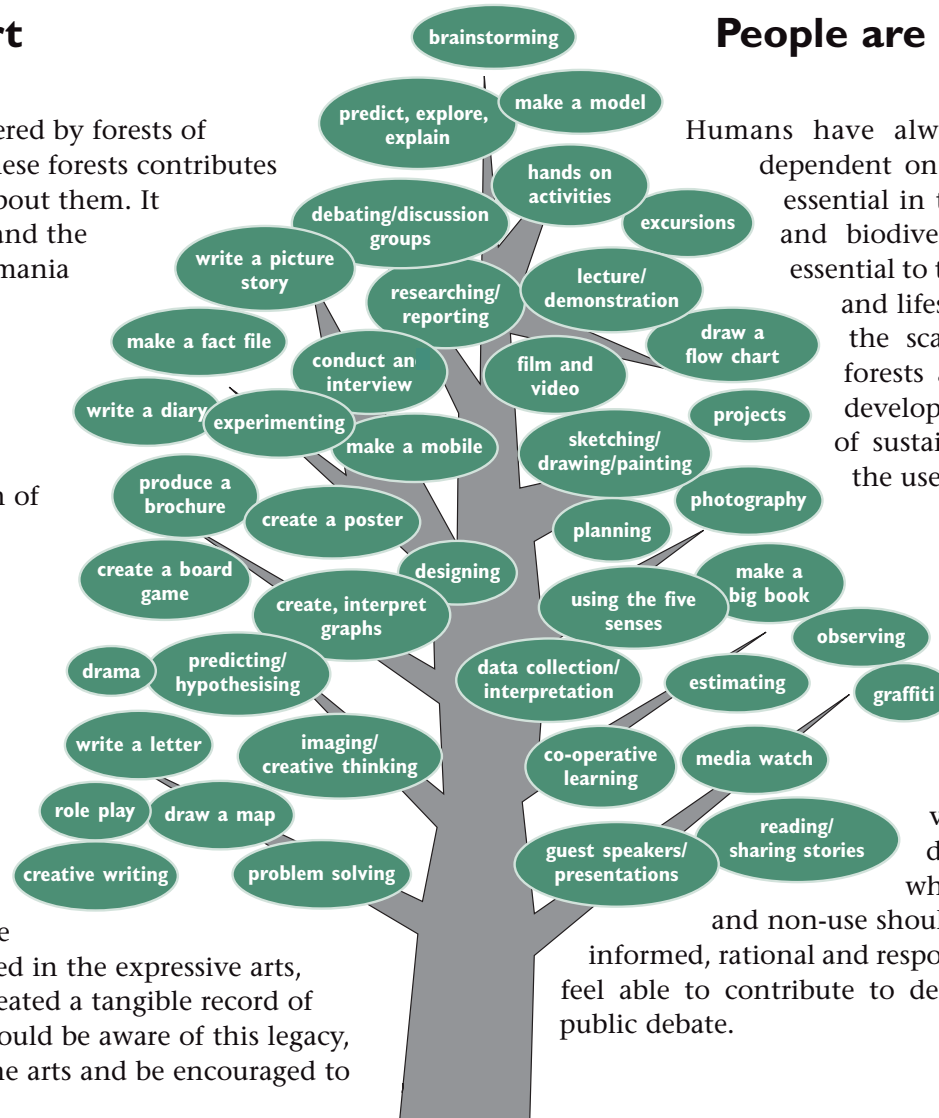
Throughout our history, forest environments have had a profound influence on the emotions and attitudes of the people who interact with them. This is reflected in the expressive arts, crafts and literature which, over time, have created a tangible record of our response to the environment. Students should be aware of this legacy, reflect on the way forests are represented in the arts and be encouraged to make their own creative responses.

## People are dependent on forests and their products

Humans have always been and continue to be dependent on forest environments. Forests are essential in the maintenance of water quality and biodiversity. Many forest products are essential to the maintenance of our well-being and lifestyle. Students should be aware of the scale, diversity and importance of forests and their products. They should develop an understanding of the concept of sustainability and the implications of the use of forests and their products.

## There is continuing public debate about the use and non-use of our forests

Decisions and actions about the degree of use of our forests are being made through a variety of processes. There are diverse, often confusing views as to what an optimum balance about use and non-use should be. Students should develop an informed, rational and responsible position on this matter and feel able to contribute to decision-making processes and the public debate.



**Learning about our forests**  
offers the opportunity to pursue a wide range of teaching approaches