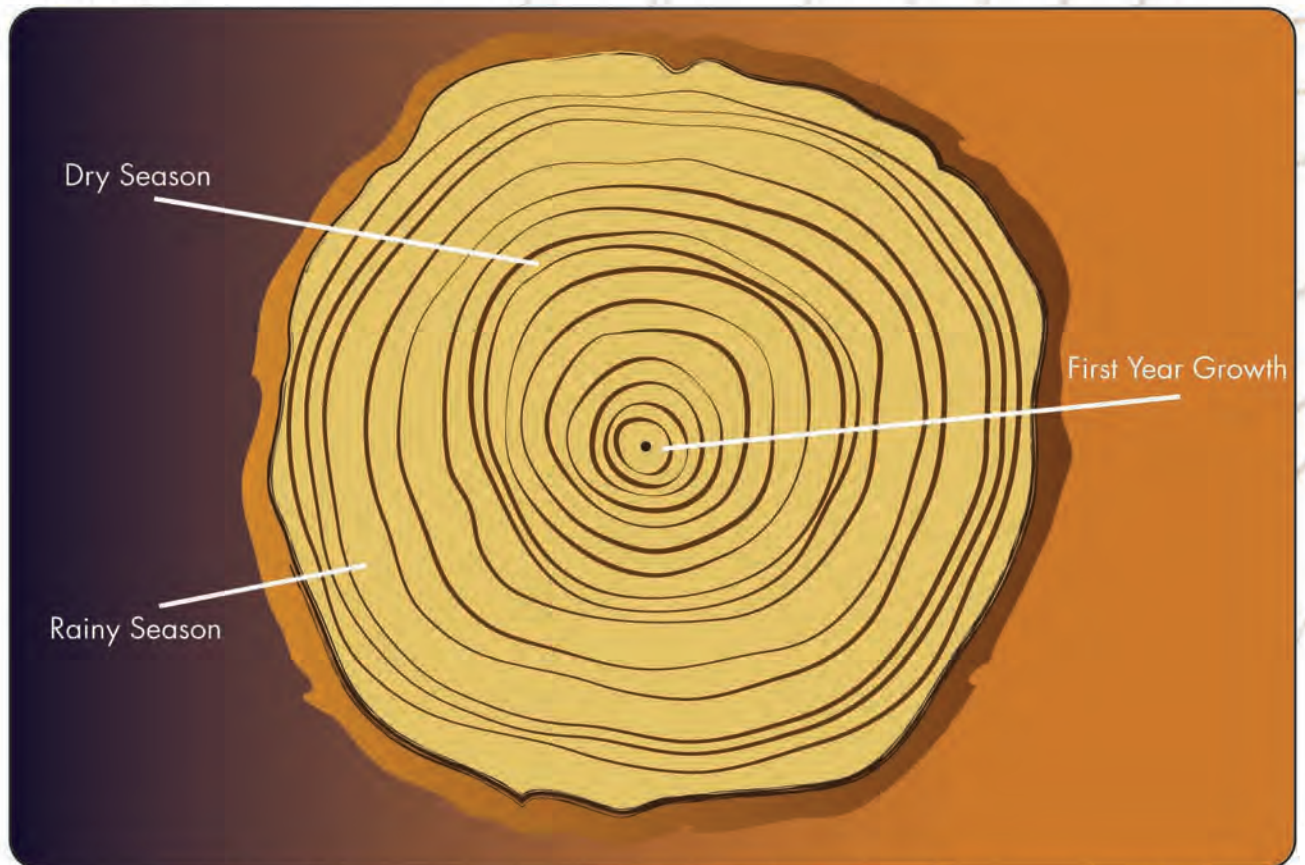


## READING TREE RINGS

Every year a tree grows, new layers of bark are formed. For each year the tree has been alive, a ring can be seen in the cross-section of the trunk. New bark grows in the spring and summer months. In the spring, wood grows faster and is lighter because the bark is made of larger cells. In the summer, wood grows slower, darker, and is made up of small cells. This is seen in the cross-section of a trunk; there are light and dark rings!

The rings may appear larger on one side of the tree; this is because there might have been something next to the tree, causing it to lean to one side. The tree had to grow extra bark on the side being leaned on to compensate for the extra weight. Lastly, you can see how good the rainfall and sunshine was for the tree in a given year by inspecting how the rings are spaced out. If the rings are far apart from each other, then the tree was well-nurtured that year.

Below is a diagram of a tree who has seen a few years. Can you tell how old it is?



## READING TREE RINGS

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Use what you've learned to create a set of tree rings with a history of your own. Consider what you've learned about telling how old a tree is, what kind of weather it received, and whether or not it leaned to one side or another.

