

object as it is passed round. Depending on the group you could also try to build a story about the object. The adult starts with the first line of the story and as it is passed from one person to the next, one sentence of the story is added by each person, each one picking up where the last left off.

A variation is to have all the children in the circle blindfolded, give one child an object and ask them to describe it and then pass it round the rest of the group so they can feel it and decide if it was what they expected from the description. Ask them to guess what it is when they have all handled it. A new object is introduced to the left of the first child and so it continues till they have all had a turn with a mystery object.

KS2 Activity Programme 2

Learning Outcomes

After this activity programme the pupils will have a clear understanding of key ecological principles that operate in a woodland. They will be aware that human societies and individuals are having a detrimental effect on the natural world and will be taking steps personally to reduce their impact on the natural world.

Earth Guardians

A short earth education programme introducing woodland ecology and sustainable living.

A map and letter arrive at school from a mysterious character, Greyleaf, the Guardian of the Wood. The request is for the pupils to join in a most important task to protect the green wild places of the world, from the harm that people are causing. To do this they must undertake a quest, solve problems and uncover secrets in order to prove themselves worthy apprentice guardians. The map will guide them on their trail of discovery. Greyleaf leaves clues and messages on their route. Once they determine how the natural world works and reveal the harm that people can cause they make a pledge to alter their lifestyles, in a number of easy ways to do less harm to the environment of which they are a part.

Activities (see Section 3)

- Sunshine Pyramid
- Box of Life
- Leaf Funeral
- Missing Woodlander Hunt
- Pollution Pyramid
- Magic Spot

Preparation

Familiarisation with:

- Food chains
- Photosynthesis

Some knowledge of global environmental issues would be useful particularly:

Carbon dioxide and sulphur emissions from power stations, and how that relates to our use of electricity,

Water pollution e.g. the problems of the North Sea and how that relates to their own use of domestic water supplies (e.g. household chemicals)

Over-use of natural resources and the need to recycle e.g. recycling of aluminium, paper, plastics etc

Follow-up work suggestions

Work on getting rid of those environmentally bad habits they have pledged to do something about.

Investigate other ways in which we are damaging our environment and look for alternatives.

Investigate renewable energy sources such as wind, water and solar power.

Set up a recycling depot at school.

Build a compost bin and see how the minibeasts and fungi turn it into soil.

Investigate the ways in which people are threatening other animals with extinction.



For all these activities it is important you contact the site manager to book and discuss your visit. See contacts for sites in the introduction.

Learning Outcomes

After this activity programme the pupils will have used a range of their senses to explore woodland in a number of different ways; they will be familiar with what a woodland is and what it contains.

Getting to know a woodland

A) An Earthwalk

An Earthwalk is a special adventure to experience the richness and wonders of the natural world. It is a light refreshing way of discovering nature. The emphasis is upon awakening individual senses and sharpening perceptions.

An Earthwalk is made up of a series of special sensory activities. The activities present a new way of looking at familiar things and an interesting introduction to the unfamiliar.

It provides a wonderful introduction to the natural world, breaking down the barriers that so often exist between people and their environment. All of the following activities can be found in "Earthwalks" published by the Institute for Earth Education. Camera can be found in "Sharing Nature with Children" by Joseph Cornell.

- Leaf Slides
- Whiffs
- Colour Dabs
- Wind Dancers or Camera (from Cornell)
- Symphony

B) Duplication Game

You will require:

- Two large cloths
- A paper bag each for collecting the objects

Collect a selection of ten or more natural objects that are representative of the location. Place them on a large cloth and cover them over with another cloth. Pull the cloth back and allow the children to look at the objects for 30 seconds before covering them over again.

The children go off and see how many they can remember and find. When they have finished collecting pull the objects out one at a time and tell them a little bit about each one (e.g. this is the feather from a bird that was a good meal for a fox).

To add a spark of magic pull out the objects in a given sequence and tell a full woodland story using the objects as props.

C) Scavenger Hunt

You will require:

- A list of twenty or more natural things from the area for the children to find
- A collection bag for each child
- A collection jar if a minibeast is to be collected

A sample scavenger list

Only collect things that you can return safely and without damage. You can only use each thing once; you need a different thing for each "find" on the list!

- A feather
- One seed spread by the wind

A pine needle
 A thorn
 A bone
 Three different kinds of seed
 One camouflaged animal
 Something round
 Part of an egg
 Something fuzzy
 Something sharp
 A piece of fur
 Something very straight
 Something beautiful
 Something that is of no use in nature
 A chewed leaf (not by you)
 Something that makes a noise
 Something white
 Something important in nature
 Something that reminds you of yourself
 Something soft
 A sun trap
 A big smile

D) A woodland picture with a difference

You will require:

Permission from the site manager and a location where no harm can be done
 An A3 sheet of white card per child (plus a few spares just in case!)
 A few jars with water
 A few "Pritsticks"
 Disposable gloves

Paint a picture using natural woodland colours. Most things will yield up a colour when rubbed on to the white card if they contain any moisture. Dry soil etc can be moistened slightly to produce a colour. Using common flowers will produce a great deal of variety of colour. A wonderful three dimensional effect can be achieved by sticking on leaves, grass stems and flowers etc.

Chose your area carefully. Check with the site manager first. Care must be taken to choose an area where there is nothing important and that has a good selection of very common plants and flowers eg rosebay willowherb etc. Avoid areas with ragwort as this is poisonous and can be absorbed through the skin (although large quantities of sap are needed). Also avoid areas with hemlock which has a white umbrella shaped flower with very distinctive purple-red blotchy spots on the stem. Giant hogweed is unlikely to be found but is unmistakable for it's size and waterside location.

If in doubt issue the disposable gloves.

KS1 Activity Programme 2

Learning Outcomes

After this activity programme the pupils will have compared and contrasted the invertebrates in two different habitats. They will be familiar with the body structure and function of a range of physical characteristics of a number of different invertebrates species. They will have a basic understanding of food chains, adaptations and habitat as they apply to woodland.

Minibeasts

Compare the minibeasts:

In leaf litter
 In a sunny glade or from trees and bushes

Using pooters and white trays in the leaf litter, pooters and beating trays in the trees and bushes or pooters and sweep nets in the glades, find and describe the minibeasts in both habitats.

In the leaf litter gather a small handful of litter and spread it out in the white tray and look to see what moves. Collect with a pooter or direct into a jar.

A 75cm x 60cm sheet of white cloth with a bamboo cane fixed at either end makes a good beating tray. Hold this open using the canes under a branch and tap or shake the branch. Minibeasts will fall into it and can then be collected in pooters or magnifier jars. Hawthorn usually gives good results.

Use sweep nets through vegetation, two or three sweeps is enough. Try different groups of plants as some attract more minibeasts than others e.g. nettles are excellent.

Pooters, sweep nets and magnifier jars are readily purchased from educational supply catalogues.

Use the minibeast dial included in this pack to find out more about the minibeasts. Get the children to take note of the following:

Colours and camouflage
 Shape, structure (appendages etc)
 Movement
 Food and ways of eating (the minibeast dial will help you to find out what eats what)

KS2 Activity Programme 1

Learning Outcomes

After this activity programme the pupils will be familiar with the component parts of a woodland and how they fit together to make a habitat. They will have developed an appreciation for a natural environment from an aesthetic point of view.

Getting to know a woodland

A) Recipe for a woodland

You will require:

A rope ring for each group
 A recipe sheet
 A sit upon for each person if the ground is wet

The children are split into groups of four or five and explore the surrounding woodland noting structure, habitats, plants and animals present. Use the recipe tick list included with the pack to ensure everything is included that is needed for a good woodland for wildlife.

Large rings of rope giving a diameter of at least two metres are placed on the woodland floor to represent the boundaries of woodlands.

In groups of fours or fives, the children work to create a woodland of their own using their observations and the recipe guidelines. With imagination and a bit of creativity, using the natural materials in the woodland, they produce sculptures/models to represent all the things that a good wildlife woodland contains. Indicate to them that a fox, an owl, a stoat and some butterflies need to be able to live there. There must be a way of recycling dead plants and animals.

B) Meet a Tree

You will require:

A blindfold for each pair

Find an area within the woodland that has a fairly clear woodland floor, few low branches and readily accessible tree trunks. Tell the group you would like to introduce them to an old friend of yours. Take them over to your tree and tell them that the first time you met this friend you couldn't see it; you were led to it blindfolded, you got to know it by touch from the roots to as far up as you could reach. Then you were led away twirled

around a few times like in blind man's buff, so you didn't know where your tree was. Once your blindfold was removed you set off to find your tree by touch. It took you a while but you did it and now whenever you come to the wood you pay a visit to see how your special tree is doing. Now it's their chance to meet a tree.

Get the class into pairs. Show them how to guide each other, carefully walking side-by-side with one arm round the blindfolded person's shoulder the other holding their forearm to steer them carefully in a wandering path, with twirls and circles to confuse them. Then lead them to meet a tree. Take it in turns to be blindfolded.

C) Poe-tree

You will require:

A pencil and piece of paper for each pair
 A clipboard and paper for the poets
 A sit-upon for each person (Square of carpet or similar)
 A selection of natural objects for the fill in activity in a bag

Select a particularly striking tree and arrange the children in their pairs at different vantage points around the tree so that they get very different views and impressions of it. Some distant, some close to the bark, some looking along a the length of a long branch, some on their backs looking straight up through the crown etc... Each pair chooses two words that best describe what they feel looking into the tree or what it reminds them of or what it looks like and so on.

Once the words are selected choose two poets who will take the words away and re-arrange them into a special poem about the tree. Allow about 10 minutes for the poets. Tell them only to use conjunctions etc. not to add new nouns and adjectives. When they are ready get the whole group together sitting on the ground on sit-upons facing the tree. Standing behind them read our their poem slowly while the class views the tree. Encourage a round of applause for the poets and the class itself and then tell them that it was so good that it deserves an encore. Read it again so that they can appreciate the poem they have helped create to the full.

You will need a fill in activity while the poets are at work. A useful activity is to get the smaller groups back together sitting in their circles with an adult. The adult then produces a series of natural objects to pass around the group. Each person in the circle describes or says one thing about the