Forestry Commission England

Early Years Teacher's Pack



A curriculum-linked pack provided by the **Forestry Commission** for Early Years and Key Stage 1

forestry.gov.uk/earlyyears

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All about animals

Aim – to learn about forest animals and birds through a series of hands-on activities

TOP TIPS for teachers

Feel free to use the whole pack, or just individual programmes. Send the family follow-up activities home to help the children to continue learning, and to provide a valuable link between school and family.

Family follow-up

Throughout the pack, there are links to activities for the children to complete with their family.

forestry.gov.uk/familyfollowup

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introduction

Scene setting

Get to know the forest environment



Aim of this section

To enable children to become familiar with the forest

Preparation

- Find your nearest Forestry Commission woodland at **forestry.gov.uk/visit**.
- For health and safety advice and to find out how the Forestry Commission looks after the nation's forests, visit **forestry.gov.uk/learning**.
- If you are planning to visit, or would like more information or advice, please contact the Forestry Commission learning team – visit **forestry.gov.uk/learning** and click on 'contacts'.

TOP TIP for teachers

Some children will be totally unfamiliar with the forest environment – you could show them photos, or have a table with things you have collected e.g. leaves, cones, branches.



Talk about

What is a forest? What is it like? What do you expect to find there?

A forest probably has plenty of trees, but also open space, and maybe ponds or streams. There will probably be puddles, mud and rocks. Some trees might be big and old, but others could be younger and smaller. There might be animals and birds living in or under the trees. There could be man-made things such as paths or picnic tables or car parks.

Where is the nearest forest? Do you know the names of any local or famous forests?

The children may have heard of Sherwood Forest or the Amazon for example.

What sort of animals and birds live in the forest?

Deer, squirrels, foxes, badgers, woodpeckers, owls…

Forests and trees are really important – why?

They provide food for animals and people, homes and habitats, jobs, timber and oxygen; trees store carbon, so they can reduce the effects of climate change; forests are also fantastic places to enjoy and visit.

What about forests in other parts of the world? Children may be aware of the problems facing tropical rainforests for example

Some rainforests are not looked after properly, so that when trees are cut down (felled) it is a bad thing, BUT if forests are looked after carefully and responsibly, and more trees are planted, it is ok to fell trees.

Forestry Commission woodlands are cared for following long term management plans, that ensure that when trees are felled, they are replaced as appropriate.

TOP TIP for teachers

Safety – when you visit the forest, please don't climb on timber stacks and keep well away from forest machinery.

Your forests and woods are cared for by the Forestry Commission for people, wildlife and timber. **forestry.gov.uk**

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Family follow-up

Provide the children with the colouring sheet, and ask them to spot the animals in the picture.

forestry.gov.uk/familyfollowup

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Programme 1

Explore and discover the forest



Aim of this section

To explore geographical features, and use and create maps

Preparation

- You will need to print and laminate the resources for the activities you are going to do.
- Contact your local **Forestry Commission** learning team to ask for advice about where to acquire aerial photos and map leaflets for your local forest. Visit **forestry.gov.uk/learning** and click on 'contacts'.

Resources provided with programme 1

- Geographical features checklist
- Sample aerial photo
- Sample **Forestry Commission** map
- Animal pictures to cut out and laminate

Curriculum links

EYFS

- Mathematics
- Understanding the world

Key stage 1: Geography

- Human and physical geography
  - use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features.
- Geographical skills and fieldwork
  - use simple compass directions and locational and directional language, to describe the location of features and routes on a map;
  - use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key.
- Place Knowledge
  - understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom.

Part 1
Introduction

Talk about

The **Forestry Commission** looks after more than 1500 woods and forests in England – growing trees to provide timber to make things, and ensuring that plenty of habitats are provided for wildlife. Forests are also really important places for people to enjoy, and the Forestry Commission provides facilities and activities for visitors of all ages.

What sort of activities can people do in the forest?

Walking, running, playing, picnics, bike riding, horse riding, birdwatching.

What sort of things do you think the Forestry Commission could provide to help people to enjoy their visit to the forest?

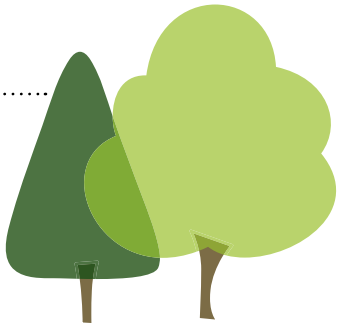
Picnic tables, walking and cycling trails, play areas, cafes, Gruffalo trails and sculptures.

Family follow-up

Watch the 'Day Out' video clip for inspiration – then ask the children how many fun forest activities they can remember from it

www.bit.ly/gruffalovideo

Part 2
Aerial photo of the forest



Talk about

Look at an aerial photo of a forest:

Can the children identify any human settlements, physical features or landmarks?

Can they see areas that are planted with trees?

Are the trees all the same colour, or can they see any differences between the tree covered areas?

Why do they think there are differences?

There could be different species of trees, or different ages of plantation; some trees might be evergreen and some deciduous; some could be conifers and some broadleaves (see 'Tree Words' on page 6).

Can they see any open spaces or roads?

Part 3
Physical and human features of the forest



Look around – what can you see?

Which things are natural or physical features, and which are man-made or human features?

Natural features might include hill, stream, valley, soil or rock.

Human features might include house, fence, path, road, visitor centre, car park, play area or trail post.

Discuss how trees could be described as natural features, BUT that most have probably been planted or have grown from seeds from trees planted nearby, so they are in fact human features.



A mouse's adventure

- Give each child or pair of children a one metre length of string. Ask the children to decide where to lay their string to create an adventurous route through the forest for a tiny mouse. A puddle can become a huge lake to cross, a stone is a cliff face. Ask the children to include as many physical and human features as they can (they can create their own, using soil, cones, leaves etc if they want to), then describe their route to the rest of the group.

Extension

This activity could be extended to create an adventurous route for other animals. Different groups in the class could have a different animal to work with.



Encourage the children to complete the Forestry Commission's spring wordsearch

forestry.gov.uk/familyfollowup



Locational and directional language

- Walk through the forest, looking for the physical and human features on the checklist.
- Give the children one of the forest animal cut-outs (page 11), and ask them to place it on, in or near various features. Next, encourage the children to use locational and directional language to describe where the picture is e.g. The picture is on top of the picnic table, or to the left of the rocks; it is behind the fence which is around the car park, or it is balancing on the trail post, next to the path on top of the hill.

Extension

If you have a map of the forest, with the route you are following on it, you could ask children to mark the features on it as you go.

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Part 4
Vegetation – what types of trees are there?

Talk about

The Forestry Commission plants and looks after the trees in the forest:

- so that they provide homes and food for animals and birds – discuss what kinds of wildlife live in, on or around the trees;
- to provide a sustainable supply of timber for people to make things – discuss what sort of everyday objects are made of wood;
- to create beautiful forests for people to visit and enjoy.

  Different types of trees provide wood for making different things, and a variety of tree species provides habitats for different wildlife.

Hands on activities

Ask the children to have a look around the area and investigate the trees. Challenge them to lean their chosen picture of an animal or character against:

- an evergreen tree, then a deciduous tree, then a conifer and then a broadleaf;
- a tree with big flat leaves, then a tree with needles;
- a tree with rough bark, then one with smooth bark, then ones with nuts, seeds, flowers or catkins;
- the tallest and the shortest tree they can find, then the fattest and the thinnest.

Extension

You can also use keys to identify the species if appropriate to the ability of your group.

Cross-curricular links

Science – plants



Tree words:

Conifer
A tree with cones and needles e.g. Scots pine, Douglas fir; usually evergreen.

Broadleaf
A tree with broad flat leaves e.g. oak, silver birch; usually deciduous.

Evergreen
A tree which keeps its leaves all year round; mostly conifers (but not all e.g. holly is evergreen, but not a conifer).

Deciduous
A tree which loses its leaves in autumn; mostly broadleaves (but not all e.g. larch is a deciduous conifer).

Part 5
Maps – keys and symbols

Talk about

Look at the **Forestry Commission** logo, which is made up of two trees – one conifer and one broadleaf. Symbols like these can be used on maps to represent the different sorts of trees in a forest area.

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Talk about

As well as symbols to show the types of trees in an area, maps show other features represented by symbols in a key.

- Give out copies of the **Forestry Commission** site map (either the site you are visiting, or the sample one on page 13).
- Look at the key and discuss how the features are shown e.g. a 'P' to represent a car park or a man and woman to represent toilets.

Hands on activities

Symbols on Signposts

On **Forestry Commission** sites, similar symbols are often used on signposts. Look around the site to find some.

Extension

You could also look at an Ordnance Survey map of the forest, to see how features are represented by different symbols.



Part 6
Compass directions

Hands on activities

Locate north using a map or compass.

- Point to north and then ask the children to work out where east, south and west are, with the aid of a rhyme if appropriate (e.g. naughty elephants squirt water).
- Ask questions about which direction you would have to walk to get to particular features e.g. rocks or hill.
- Explain that north is usually at the top of a map, and is often shown by an arrow with a capital N.
- Ask the children to walk ten paces north, do five skips to the west or twenty hops to the south, or to place their picture of an animal to the north of the picnic site, or the south of the rocks, or the east of the conifer tree.
- Ask the children to hide their animal picture at a certain number of paces in a direction; the other groups then look for them having been given the direction and number of paces.

Extension

This can be extended from four to eight compass directions for older or more able children.

Cross-curricular links

Mathematics

Part 7
Making maps

Hands on activities

Divide the children into groups to create ground maps of the woodland from natural materials.

- Choose an area that is fairly flat, and gently sweep the leaf litter aside to create a bare space;
- Collect four or more sticks to make a frame;
- Next, use twigs, small sticks, stones, leaves, pine cones etc to represent features on the map, including:
  – rocks
  – stream
  – lake



  – any other features that they want to include
  – a key to show how each feature is represented

Conclusion

- You have investigated some of the features that are found in a forest.
- You have learned that trees and forests are really important places for animals and birds to live, and for people to do all sorts of activities.
- The **Forestry Commission** looks after lots of woods and forests in England. Trees are planted and cared for, so that they grow big enough to be cut down to make things, then more trees are planted. This means that there will always be a forest for wildlife to live in, and for people to enjoy.

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Geographical Features checklist

Natural

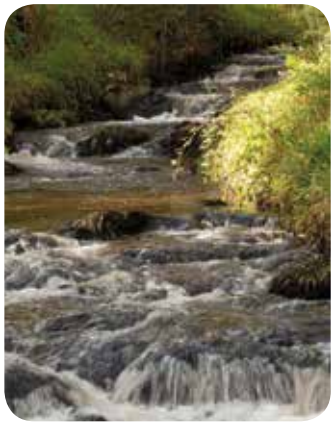
Physical

Human

Man-made



Hill or Valley



Stream, river or pond



Mixed Vegetation (plants)



Play area



Path or track



Rocks



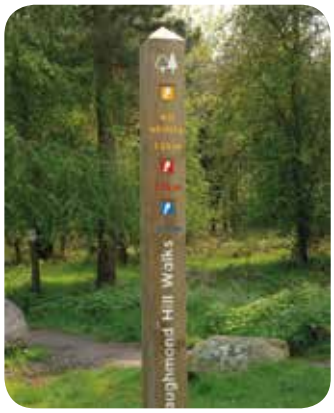
Forest



Picnic table



Soil



Trail post



Building



Bridge

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TOP TIP for teachers

Cut out or stick these on card to stand up!





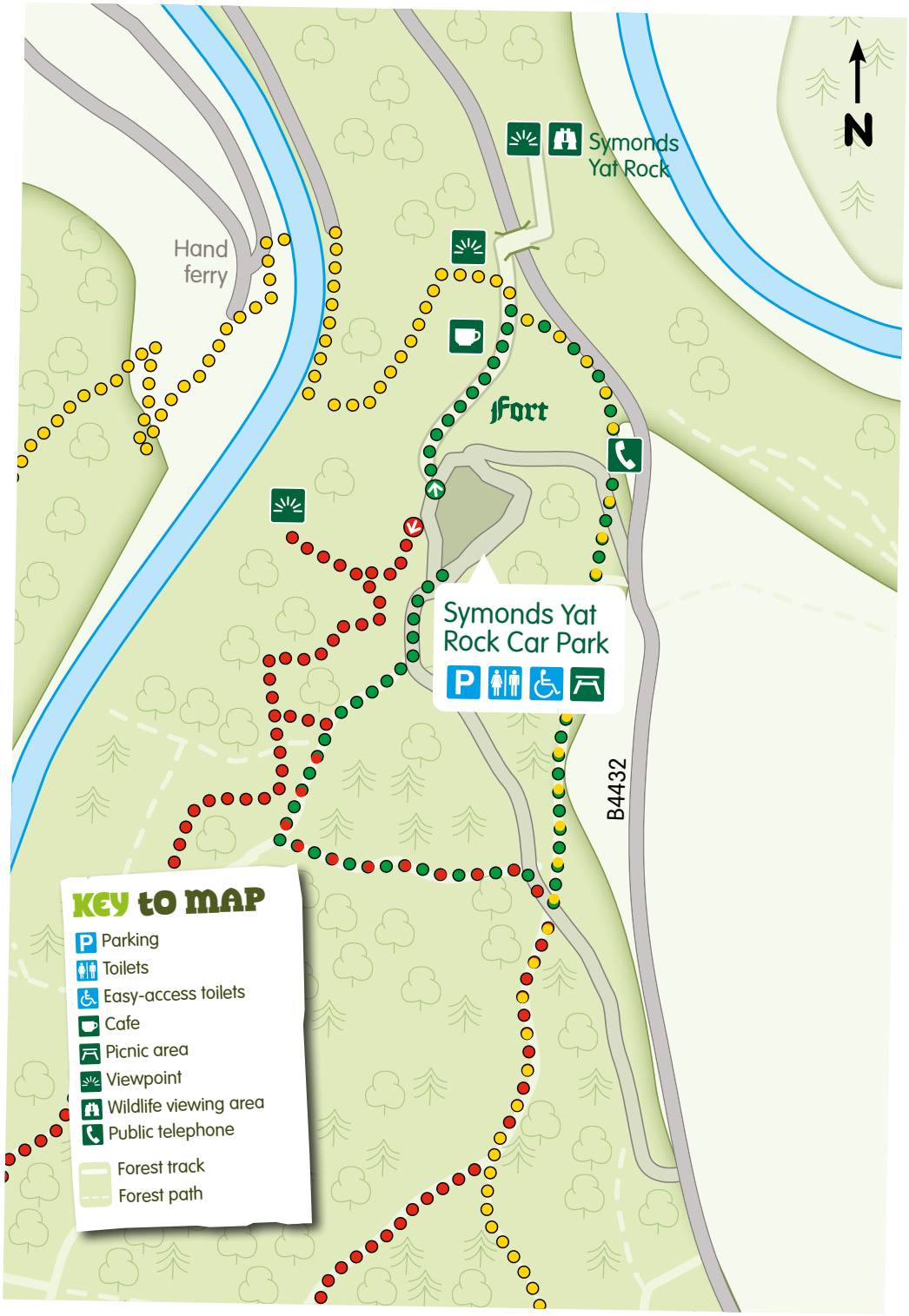


Sample aerial photo



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Sample Forestry Commission map



This map is from Symonds Yat in the Forest of Dean.

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Programme 2

Design, make and evaluate



Aim of this section

To design and make a variety of products using natural materials

Curriculum links

EYFS

- Physical development
- Expressive arts and design

Key stage 1: Design Technology

- **Design**
  - design purposeful, functional, appealing products based on design criteria;
  - generate, develop, model and communicate ideas.
- **Make**
  - select from and use a range of tools and equipment to perform practical tasks;
  - select from and use a wide range of materials according to their characteristics.
- **Evaluate**
  - evaluate ideas and products against design criteria.
- **Technical knowledge**
  - build structures, exploring how they can be made stronger, stiffer and more stable.

Teacher instructions

Prepare

- Select which product(s) you are going to make, from the list on the right.
- Read and understand the design criteria.
- Organise children into groups.
- Discuss the questions in orange.
- You could look at existing products and discuss how they are made.

Choose a product to make

The same process (prepare, plan, make, evaluate, improve) is used to make the following different products from natural materials:

1. a picture frame
2. a musical instrument/ sound-maker
3. a nest
4. a shelter
5. a bridge

Plan

Generate, develop and communicate ideas by discussing:

- What sort of materials are available and which are you going to use?

  In the forest, you could use sticks, stones, leaves, mud, pine cones, seeds or logs.

  Please respect the forest – use only materials found on the ground, and don't pick plants or break branches off trees.

- Do you need to join materials? How will you do this?

  We suggest that you use string made from natural fibres, but don't recommend providing glue or sticky tape; elastic bands can sometimes be useful for children who cannot tie knots, but please ensure that elastic bands are all taken back to the classroom with you after your visit.

- Do you need to cut materials? What tools are available and will they do the job?

Make

- Work in groups to select and collect the materials, cut them and join them to make the product.

TOP TIP for teachers

Only use tools if you are confident with them and have done a robust risk assessment.

Evaluate

- Give the children the opportunity to show their product to the rest of the group and to explain their choice of materials and method.
- Discuss whether the design criteria have been met and whether the making went according to plan? Which bits were more difficult than expected?

Family follow-up

For a family follow-up activity, see **page 21**



Improve

- How could you improve the product / make it more fit for purpose? How could you make it stronger? Are there any other designs or materials that you would like to try to use?
- Extend the work, by giving more specific design criteria if appropriate.

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Product 1

Design criteria: design and make a picture frame from natural materials, for a picture of an animal or character from a story

Prepare

What materials are picture frames usually made from?

Wood, metal, plastic.

How many other products can you think of that can be made from wood?

Where does the wood come from?

Plan and make

Measure the picture – how long and wide does the frame need to be?

What shape does it need to be?

How are you going to make it?

- sticks tied together with string to make a square or triangle?
- a shape on the ground made from leaves, mud or cones?
- sticks hanging from a branch?

Evaluate and Improve

Which frame design does your picture look best in and why?

Try more specific design criteria:

- the frame has to stand up;
- the frame has to hang up;
- the frame has to be square.



Cross-curricular links

Key Stage 1: **Mathematics**

- Geometry – recognise and name common 2-D shapes.
- Measurements – measure and begin to record lengths and heights.

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Product 2

Design criteria: Imagine you are a mouse, design and make a sound maker (or percussion instrument) that you can use to warn your friends that a predator is coming

Prepare

How many musical instruments can you think of that are made of wood?

Violin and other string instruments, drums, xylophone (comes from the Greek meaning 'wooden sound'), piano, claves…

Where does the wood come from?

Plan and make

How are you going to make it?

- two sticks scraped or knocked together?
- a stick tapped on a tree stump?
- a bunch of leaves or pine cones tied to the end of a stick and waved around so that the leaves rustle or the cones clatter together?

This could be a fairly quick activity, so it might be as well to ask groups to come up with at least two different sound-makers.

Evaluate and Improve

Which sound-maker design would be best at enabling you to communicate with your friends and why?

Try more specific design criteria:

- you need to be able to change the volume on the sound-maker;
- you want to play a tune or tap out a rhythm on the sound-maker.



Cross-curricular links

Key Stage 1: **Music**

- Pupils should be taught to experiment with, create, select and combine sounds.

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Product 3

Design criteria: design and make a nest to keep a forest bird warm

Prepare

What kind of birds live in forests?

Woodpecker, blackbird, woodpigeon, jay, thrush, great tit...

Where do they make their nests?

In trees or bushes; some birds make nests on the ground; woodpeckers make their nests in hollow trees; the Forestry Commission puts up nest boxes for birds in some forests.

What features make a good nest?

- Shape – eggs must not roll out;
- Shelter – under branches of a tree;
- Insulation.

Why are forests good homes for birds?

- Food (nuts, seeds berries, insects);
- Shelter;
- Trees for nesting.

You could explore the forest looking for nests, and discussing where and how they have been made.

Please remember not to touch nests or to disturb them in any way.

Plan and make

How are you going to make it?

- sticks placed in a circular shape on the ground?
- sticks tied together with string to make a nest that can be picked up?
- bendy sticks e.g. hazel or willow could be bent into a circular shape then woven together?
- wet mud, shaped and allowed to harden?
- lined with moss or feathers for warmth?



Evaluate and Improve

Which nest design would be best at keeping an owl's chicks warm and why?

Try more specific design criteria:

- Nest must be lined (insulated);
- Nest must be off the ground.

Cross-curricular links

Year 2: Science

- Living things and their habitats
  - identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited.
- Animals, including humans
  - find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food, air and shelter).



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Product 4

Design criteria: design and make a shelter or house for a forest animal.

Prepare

What kind of animals live in the forest?

Mice, foxes, snakes, badgers, squirrels.

Where do they make their homes?

Many are underground, some are up in trees, some live on the ground and make homes in undergrowth.

What do all animal homes have in common?

They all need to be warm, dry and safe.

You could explore the forest looking for animal homes and discussing how and where they have been made.

Plan and make

Which animal is the shelter going to be for?

What are you going to do to make it warm, dry and safe?

How are you going to make it?

- sticks leant up against a tree?
- a pile of logs covered with fallen leaves?
- sticks and leaves placed in the fork between two branches?

Evaluate and Improve

Which shelter would be best at keeping an animal warm, dry and safe, and why?

Try more specific design criteria:

- Give the children a cuddly toy which has to be able to live in the shelter;
- Using the small shelter as a prototype, re-make it much larger, so that it is big enough for the children to get into (you can test it for 'waterproof-ness' by throwing water over it at the end).



Cross-curricular links

Year 2: **Science**

- Living things and their habitats
  - identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited.
- Animals, including humans
  - find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food, air and shelter).

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Product 5

Design criteria: design and make a bridge that is tall enough tall enough for a cuddly toy to walk underneath, wide enough for it to lie down under, and strong enough for it to balance on top

TOP TIP for teachers

You will need a cuddly toy for each group.

Prepare

What are bridges for?

Why might there be a bridge in the forest?

To cross a stream or valley.

What are bridges made of?

Metal, wood, stone.

Why are they made from different materials?

It depends on where they are and what their purpose is e.g. carrying cars or people.

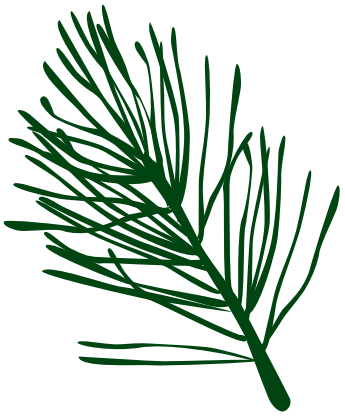
Why is wood a good material for a bridge in the forest?

Cheaper and easier to work with than concrete or metal; easy to join; easy to cut; more appropriate to the surroundings; more flexible and can bend under weight without snapping.

Plan and make

How are you going to make it?

- two tree stumps or logs, with sticks laid across their tops?
- forked sticks pushed into the ground with other sticks placed in the two forks to make the top of the bridge?
- three sticks lashed together with string to make a tripod at each end, with other sticks laid across the top between the two tripods?



Evaluate and Improve

Which design allows your toy to walk and lie down under the bridge, and balance on top of it?

Would your bridge be suitable for a bigger animal?

Try more specific design criteria:

- Bridge must be freestanding i.e. not joined to a tree or tree stump;
- Bridge may not use sticks any thicker than a pencil;
- Your toy must be able to balance on top for at least ten seconds;
- Using the small bridge as a prototype, re-make it much larger, so that it is big enough for a child to crawl under and strong enough for them to sit on top.



Cross-curricular links

Year 1: Science

- Everyday materials
  - identify and name a variety of everyday materials.



Conclusion

- You have made products from natural materials found in the forest.
- Wood (timber) comes from trees which grow in forests, and is used to make all sorts of everyday products, including picture frames, musical instruments, bridges and homes.
- You have also learned that trees and forests are really important places for animals and birds to live.
- The **Forestry Commission** looks after lots of woods and forests in England. Trees are planted and cared for, so that they grow big enough to be cut down to make things, then more trees are planted. This means that there will always be a forest for wildlife to live in, and for people to enjoy.

Family follow-up

Encourage children to do more designing and making, by providing the Forestry Commission's 'Cone bird feeder activity sheet'.

Can they think of any other ways to design a bird feeder?

They can bring their finished products to school to compare techniques used and end results.

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Programme 3

All about animals



Aim of this section

To learn about forest animals and birds through a series of hands-on activities

Resources provided with programme 3

- Forest animal information for teachers
- Set of animal pictures
- Word cards
- Animal fact cards
- Diet fact cards

Family follow-up

Encourage children to complete these fantastic fun activity sheets at home, or when visiting a local forest with their family:

Evidence challenge

Animal food hunt

Forest sensory challenge

forestry.gov.uk/familyfollowup

Curriculum links

EYFS

- Understanding the world
- Communication and language

Year 1: Science

- Animals, including humans
  - identify and name a variety of common animals including amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals;
  - identify and name a variety of common animals that are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores;

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

- Pupils should use the local environment throughout the year to explore and answer questions about animals in their habitat.
- Pupils might work scientifically by: using their observations to compare and contrast animals at first hand, describing how they identify and group them and grouping animals according to what they eat.

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Introduction/ discussion



Talk about

What sort of animals and birds live in forests in England?

Choose a few examples of animals and birds and discuss what they eat and where they live.

Background Information

- The Forestry Commission looks after more than 1500 woods and forests in England.
- When we cut down trees, or plant new ones, it creates lots of different habitats and places for animals and birds to live.
- Some creatures prefer dense woodland with mature trees, while others prefer newly planted areas.
- Some favour conifers (e.g. pine and spruce) and others broadleaves (e.g. oak and beech).
- Management plans ensure that we consider all sorts of animals and birds to make sure that they have their preferred habitat and a variety of tree species.
- Remember also, that the forest is not just the trees – there are often open spaces, ponds, streams, rocks and even heathland, all of which provide other habitats for wildlife.



Preparation

Choose which activities you will do from:

1. Test your memory
2. Mammal, bird, reptile or amphibian
3. Carnivore, herbivore or omnivore
4. Diet facts
5. Who am I?
6. Forest animal art

You will need to print and laminate the resources for the activities you to do are going to do.

TOP TIP for teachers

Some of the activities in this programme require setting up time – either by an adult colleague, or by the teacher beforehand.

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Activities
All about animals

Hands on activities

Test your memory

This is a good warm up activity, for encouraging teamwork.

You will need

A complete set of the twelve animal pictures.

How to do it

Find an open space in the forest; hang the animal photos up in trees; ask the children to work in groups, running around the area, finding all the photos, agreeing what each animal is; next, get back together and see how many they can remember.

Extension

This activity could also be set out along a trail through the forest, with the discussion and memory test at the end.

1

Hands on activities

Mammal, bird, reptile or amphibian

Children will need to be familiar with these words and their meanings.

You will need

A complete set of the twelve animal pictures, and a set of mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian cards, for each group of children.

How to do it

In their groups, the children sort the animals on the ground into the correct categories; identify and discuss their reasoning and any common mistakes.

2

Hands on activities

Carnivore, herbivore or omnivore

Children will need to be familiar with these words and their meanings.

You will need

A complete set of the twelve animal pictures, and a set of carnivore, herbivore, omnivore cards, for each group of children.

How to do it

Place the sets of pictures at one end of an open space, and the word cards at the other; have a relay race where each child runs to collect one picture of an animal, brings it back and puts it into the correct category; identify and discuss their reasoning and any common mistakes.

3



Hands on activities

Diet facts

4

You will need

A complete set of the twelve animal pictures, and a set of the diet fact cards.

How to do it

With the animal photos in front of the children where everyone can see them, read out each diet fact; ask for suggestions about which animal you might be talking about; note – there may be several answers for some of the diet facts.

Extension

With the animal pictures hanging from trees, read each diet fact, and ask the children to run to the animal they think it refers to.

Hands on activities

'Who am I?'

5

You will need

A complete set of the twelve animal pictures, and a set of the animal fact cards.

How to do it

Choose an animal and start to read out the facts – how quickly can the children guess which animal you are describing?



Hands on activities

Forest animal art

6

You will need

A complete set of the twelve animal pictures.

How to do it

Using natural materials (e.g. sticks, leaves), make a ground picture or sculpture of one of the animals and birds – try to choose materials that are appropriate for the animal's colour and features e.g. fur, feathers, scales.



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Conclusion

- You have done lots of activites to learn about the animals and birds that live in the forest.
- You have learned that trees and forests are really important places for animals and birds to live.
- The **Forestry Commission** looks after lots of woods and forests in England. Trees are planted and cared for, so that they grow big enough to be cut down to make things, then more trees are planted. This means that there will always be a forest for wildlife to live in, and for people to enjoy.



Your forests and woods are cared for by the Forestry Commission for people, wildlife and timber.
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Forest animal information for teachers

Fox

A fox is a mammal. It is classed as a carnivore, usually feeding on mice and other small mammals, but the fox is really an opportunistic feeder and often omnivorous. Foxes are nocturnal, with an excellent sense of hearing and smell. They live underground in a burrow or den (sometimes called an earth).

Mouse

There are a number of different species of mouse, all of which are mammals. A wood mouse is an omnivore and an opportunistic feeder. Its diet depends on the time of year and what is available, and includes seeds, nuts, fruits, fungi, insects and other invertebrates. Wood mice are mostly nocturnal. They can climb trees, but spend most of their time on the woodland floor, and live underground in a network of tunnels.

Hedgehog

The hedgehog is a mammal and a carnivore, with a varied diet which includes worms, slugs, beetles and bird eggs and chicks. Hedgehogs are mostly nocturnal and live on the forest floor. However, they can climb trees and even swim! They hibernate in the winter, making a nest in a pile of leaves or logs. Their spiky coat protects them from predators.

Deer

Six species of deer exist in the wild in the UK, all of which are mammals and herbivores, with a diet consisting of young trees, crops, grass and other plants. Many male deer have antlers, but the females never do. Deer tend to be quite shy, often hiding away during the day.

Toad

Toads have dry leathery skin and short legs. They are well camouflaged on the forest floor. They are amphibians, so they need to spend part of their lives in the water, which is where they lay strings of eggs that hatch into tadpoles. Toads are carnivores, and eat insects and the occasional small frog.

Owl

The tawny owl is a bird and a carnivore, with a diet of small mammals and other birds, as well as insects, frogs and worms. It is mostly nocturnal and has excellent hearing to help it hunt for its prey. After eating, owls produce pellets (the bones and fur are 'sicked', or regurgitated, back up – a bit like cats coughing up fur balls).

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Forest animal information for teachers

Squirrel

Grey squirrels and red squirrels live in forests in different parts of the country, with grey squirrels being much more common and widespread. They are mammals and herbivores, whose diet includes nuts and berries. They spend most of their time up in the trees, and make a nest (called a drey) from sticks and twigs.

Bat

The pipistrelle bat is the most common bat in the UK. All bats are mammals, and the pipistrelle is a carnivore. It eats moths and other insects, hunting at night using echolocation (making a high pitched squeak which bounces back off flying insects so it can locate them). Bats sleep (roost) during the day.

Adder

The adder is a type of snake, which enjoys sunbathing in warm sunny spots during the summer. Adders are reptiles, although they give birth to live young, and don't lay eggs like most reptiles. They are carnivores, mostly eating small mammals, which they kill with their venom (poison) then swallow whole. They hibernate during the winter and as they grow, they shed (get rid of) their skin several times.

Slow Worm

The slow worm is a reptile. It looks like a snake, but is actually a lizard with no legs. It is a carnivore and enjoys a diet of slugs and earthworms. Slow worms live in the edge of the woodland, and spend most of their time underground or hiding under things.

Frog

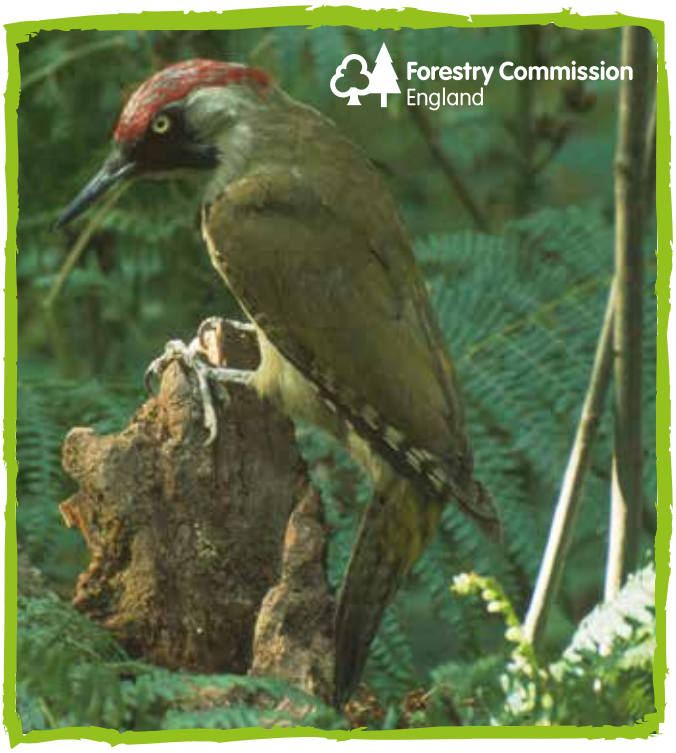
Frogs are amphibians, which need to live near to water. They lay their eggs in jelly-like lumps in ponds, and are carnivores, eating insects and other minibeasts. They have smooth moist skin, and in cold winters, they go into a state of 'torpor' (a bit like hibernation) in the mud at the bottom of ponds.

Woodpecker

There are three different species of woodpecker that live in forests in the UK. The green woodpecker is a carnivore (and a bird), which eats lots of ants, as well as beetles, flies and caterpillars. They nest in holes in trees and you are more likely to hear them in the forest than to see them – they tap on tree trunks with their beaks, in order to make nest holes.









Top left – adder;
Top right – common frog;
Bottom left – green woodpecker;
Bottom right - hedgehog



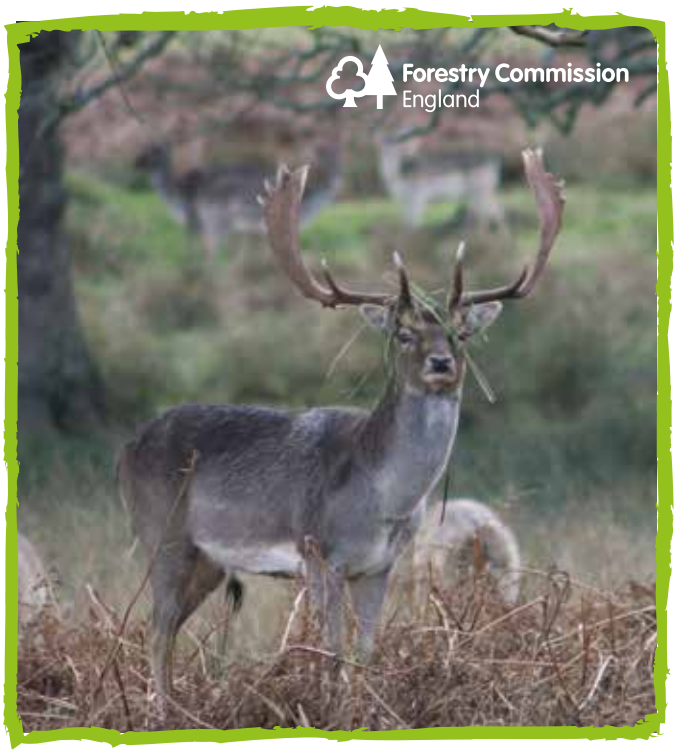






Top left – pipistrelle bat;
Top right – slow worm;
Bottom Left – tawny owl;
Bottom right – common toad









Top left – wood mouse;
Top right – fallow deer;
Bottom left – fox;
Bottom right – grey squirrel

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Word cards

Bird

Amphibian

Reptile

Mammal

Carnivore

Herbivore

Omnivore

Animal fact card: Fox

I am mostly nocturnal (come out at night)	I have an excellent sense of hearing & smell	I live underground in a burrow or den (sometimes called an earth)
I am a mammal	I am a carnivore, and I eat other small mammals, but I also like fruits, berries and even food from bins	I am reddish brown

Animal fact card: Wood mouse

I am mostly nocturnal (come out at night)	I can climb trees, but spend most of my time on the woodland floor	I live underground in a network of tunnels
I am a mammal	I love the forest, but am also found in many other habitats	I am an omnivore and enjoy eating nuts, berries, fungi and insects

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Animal fact card: Hedgehog

I am mostly nocturnal (come out at night)	I live on the forest floor, but can climb trees and even swim (but I don't like swimming!)	I hibernate in the winter, making a cosy nest in a pile of leaves or logs
I am a mammal	I am a carnivore and eat worms, slugs, beetles and bird eggs and chicks	I have a spiky coat to protect me from predators

Animal fact card: Fallow deer

I am very shy, and I tend to hide during the day	I get into trouble with the forester, because I nibble his trees, and with the farmer, because I eat his crops	I am a herbivore – as well as trees and crops, I like to eat grass
I am a mammal	I have short brown fur – in the winter my coat is darker, and in the summer, it is lighter	My father has antlers, but my mother doesn't

Animal fact card: Squirrel

My nest is called a drey and it is made from sticks and leaves	I spend most of my time up in the trees	I am a herbivore – I eat nuts and berries, and am a pest to the forester because I nibble tree bark
I am a mammal	I store nuts in the autumn so that I have plenty to eat all winter	I can be red or grey

Animal fact card: Pipistrelle bat

I sleep (roost) during the day in roof spaces and trees	I am a carnivore	I eat moths and other insects
I am a mammal, but I can fly	I hunt at night with echolocation (making a high pitched squeak, that bounces off insects so I can locate them)	I am usually black or dark brown

Animal fact card: Snake (adder)

I am a reptile	I give birth to live babies (I don't lay eggs, which is unusual for a reptile)	I hibernate during the winter
I enjoy sunbathing in warm sunny spots during the summer	I am a carnivore and I eat small mammals – I kill them with my venom (poison) then swallow them whole	As I grow bigger, I shed (get rid of) my old skin several times

Animal fact card: Slow worm

I live in the edge of the woodland, but I don't like dense forest	I spend most of my time underground or hiding under things	If I am caught by a predator, I can shed my tail so that I can escape – later I grow a new one!
I am a carnivore	I am a reptile – I look a bit like a snake, but am actually a lizard with no legs	I eat slugs and earthworms

Animal fact card: Tawny owl

I am mostly nocturnal (come out at night)	I am a carnivore and I eat small mammals and other birds, as well as insects, frogs and worms	I have excellent hearing to help me hunt and find my prey
I nest in holes in trees	After eating, I produce pellets (bones & fur from whatever I have eaten, are regurgitated)	I am a bird

Animal fact card: Green woodpecker

I am a carnivore	I eat lots of ants; also beetles, flies and caterpillars, but ants are my favourite	I nest in holes in trees, but I find most of my food on the ground
I am green, but my friends can be great spotted or lesser spotted	You are more likely to hear me than to see me – I tap on tree trunks with my beak, in order to make nest holes	I am a bird

Animal fact card: Toad

The forest is a good place for me to live as long as there is a pond nearby	I have dry leathery skin and short legs	I am well camouflaged on the forest floor
I lay strings of eggs in the pond – these hatch into tadpoles	I am an amphibian, but I spend much of my time on land	I am a carnivore – I eat insects and sometimes other amphibians too

Animal fact card: Frog

I can live in the forest, but need to be near water	I have smooth moist skin	In cold winters, I go into a state of 'torpor' (a bit like hibernation) in the mud at the bottom of ponds
I am a carnivore – I eat insects and other minibeasts	I am an amphibian	I lay clumps of eggs in a jelly-like lump, which hatch into tadpoles

Diet fact cards

Mice are my favourite food	I love to nibble on a nut	I find worms, slugs & beetles really tasty
I eat grass & nibble on leaves	Nuts, acorns & tree bark make a delicious feast for me	Yummy moths & insects are my favourite food
I like to swallow mice & other small animals whole	I have a small appetite, and enjoy slugs & earthworms	Mice & other small animals can't hide from me when I'm hungry
Ants, ants and more ants – mmm, delicious!	I like insects for my tea, and the occasional small frog or tadpole	My favourite foods are insects and other minibeasts