

Lifecycles and Food Chains

Suitable for Years 1 and 2, all year round.

Children will learn how to collect minibeasts from different micro-habitats, practise sorting and identifying them using keys, record data and draw conclusions from their results, giving them a greater understanding of the complexity of habitats.

Key Concepts

Woodland habitats, minibeasts, micro-habitats, adaptation, food chains.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the programme, students should be able to:

- Describe how woodland habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals and plants, and how they depend on each other.
- Identify and name a variety of plants and animals in a woodland habitat, including micro-habitats.
- Describe how animals obtain their food from plants and other animals, using the idea of a simple food chain, and identify and name different sources of food.

Before you come

Q What types of plants and animals live in woodlands?

Programme Outline

Learning Objectives	Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find evidence of the animals and plants that live in a woodland habitat. 	<p>Nature walk Children collect natural items they find on a short walk.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the lifecycle of a plant in relation to trees. • Review the lifecycles of animals that they already know. 	<p>Lifecycle of a Plant Children act out the lifecycle of a plant. Children compare the lifecycle of a plant with the lifecycles of animals they already know.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review what plants and animals need to live. • Predict what minibeasts they may find. 	<p>Minibeast Hunting In a woodland glade, children explore a variety of micro-habitats to search for minibeasts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How animals are adapted to where they live. • Where minibeasts fit in woodland food chains. 	<p>Food Chains Children look at the minibeasts they found in each micro-habitat and draw conclusions from their findings Children create food chains using the minibeasts they found.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How energy flows through food chains in woodland habitats. 	<p>Food Chain Game Children play a game to reinforce the way energy flows through a food chain.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make a minibeast out of natural materials. • To learn about the key characteristics of some common woodland minibeasts. • To describe how minibeasts are adapted to the woodland environment. 	<p>Minibeast Art In groups children use natural materials from the woodland habitat to create a woodland minibeast of their choice.</p>

Complementary Programmes

Why not have a led day by adding a second, shorter programme to complement Lifecycles & Food Chains. E.g. Plants as Producers, Marvellous Minibeasts.

Self-guided trails

To complement this half-day programme, we recommend the Forestry Commission's [Woodland Play Booklets](#) and [Who Lives At Westonbirt?](#) or [Minibeast Explorers backpack](#).

National Curriculum links

Plants

- Year 1 – identify and name a variety of common wild plants, including deciduous and evergreen trees

Animals, including humans

- Year 1 – identify and name a variety of common animals.
- Year 1 – identify and name a variety of common animals that are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores.

Seasonal changes

- Year 1 – observe changes across the four seasons

Living things and their habitats (Year 2)

- Identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited and describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals and plants, and how they depend on each other.
- Identify and name a variety of plants and animals in their habitats, including micro-habitats.
- Describe how animals obtain their food from plants and other animals, using the idea of a simple food chain, and identify and name different sources of food.