

Primary School Visits Alice Holt Forest



Suggestions for Follow Up

Many activities can be done in the classroom, in the school grounds or in other outdoor locations which can help to build on children's experiences at Alice Holt.

In addition to the more obvious opportunities for work in science, a visit to Alice Holt can provide ideal material for work in english, music, art, citizenship and education for sustainable development. Listed below are some suggestions for work which we hope teachers will find useful.

Further information and activity ideas will be included in your teacher pack.

Welcome to Alice Holt!

Alice Holt is a large area of woodland where you will find trees, animals and lots of things to play on.



Tree and plant studies

1. Buy seeds or collect them from trees and plants in autumn. Plant the seeds and grow them in a range of conditions to study the effects of light, water, temperature and soil conditions on the growth of the plants.
2. Study trees and plants in the school grounds or nearby to see whether they have any specific requirements e.g. do they need protection from animals which might eat them? do the plants in sheltered places grow better than the exposed plants?
3. Identify tree species using classification keys. This can be done as a group challenge. The children have a key and an answer sheet and are sent out to identify numbered trees. They can collect information about the leaves, bark and fruits of each species or just use one indicator.
4. Follow the identification challenge with the creation of illustrated tree species charts using pictures or pressed leaves, bark rubbings and examples of fruits and seeds.
5. The numbers of trees of chosen species in different locations can be counted. The results can be plotted on charts and graphs and conclusions drawn from them.

On a school visit you will learn about the forest through your own experience - usually no writing required - hooray !!!

If you're very quiet you might even see a deer. There are lots of them in the woods but they usually hide from us. We were lucky to get this picture.



Habitats, food chains and food webs

1. Make a detailed study of a small area to find out what kind of habitat it is. What lives here? Why does it make a good home for these creatures or these plants?
2. Make use of tree and plant studies, and animal studies, to identify food chains and webs in the school grounds and locally. Invertebrate studies will reveal relationships between the different species and their habitats and a combination of observation and other research will identify the species which depend on invertebrates. Damage to trees and plants will usually be evidence of the presence of invertebrates, small mammals or deer.
3. Make mobiles or illustrated diagrams of food chains and webs.
4. Make pictures of plants and animals in a habitat and group them into simple food chains (3 or 4 items). Put each set of pictures into a pack (envelope or zipper bag). Groups of children can be given a pack each to put the pictures into the correct food chain order. The whole class, or several groups together, can then discuss how the different chains can be put together to form a web. This can lead into food pyramids e.g "would there be more foxes or more rabbits in a real life food web? why?" It could lead into issues of sustainability and responsibility e.g. "What would happen to the foxes if all the undergrowth were destroyed?"

When you arrive...

You will meet our friendly forest teachers. We all wear green polo shirts and jumpers with a tree logo, so you'll know who we are.



English (cont'd)

4. Giving instructions can follow well from a visit to the woods as the children can choose one of their activities and prepare instructions for it. This could be done orally or in writing.

5. Children can take part in drama activities to describe their visit and to express their feelings about it. They can also create drama activities to explore issues they have considered on their visit e.g. man's effect on the woodland environment and on the animal population; the importance of camouflage or the correct habitat for particular animals; litter and pollution.

Please bring your lunch box, and any bags you've brought, into the classroom and put them out of the way under the tables. If it's warm you can leave your coat with your bag.



Art

Painting, drawing, collage (using natural and non-natural materials), sculpture and model making are all activities which follow naturally from a visit to the woods.

1. Use natural materials, such as charcoal, soil (mixed with water it makes a very effective paint) and chalk, in painting and drawing in conjunction with ordinary pencil and paint, or as interesting alternatives.
2. Make outdoor works of art (sculptures) in the school grounds or a local wood. Children can gather information about the shapes, textures and patterns around them and reflect them in their sculptures to create abstract designs. Alternatively, children can create models of minibeasts and other creatures of the forest using forest floor materials. These are most successful when children have observed at first hand the creatures they are modelling. Children who have created environmental art on their visit could develop their understanding and expression by doing other sculptures reflecting their feelings about the school environment or their neighbourhood.
3. Use photographs of the visit to Alice Holt as a starting point for art work.

Then you can have a look at all our forest treasures in the classroom.



Ever seen a deer antler, a fox, or a pheasant feather?

Music

1. If sounds of the forest have been recorded by the children during the visit (symbols or drawings on small cards) use them to create a class piece of music. Appropriate symbols for each of the sounds to be used in the music need to be agreed by the class. Each symbol will represent something heard in the woods e.g. the sound of the wind in the trees, bird song. The musical instruments used to perform the piece can range from fingers and voices through percussion instruments to woodwind, strings, piano and brass.
2. Record sounds in the school grounds or in a local wood or park to create a class piece of music inspired by the recording. In this case the sounds can be captured on tape or recorded by the children as symbols.

Lunchtime

We know you'll have a big appetite when you're outside all day, so bring plenty of lunch but please make sure it's a "waste-free" lunch.....no wrappers please - and make sure everything can be re-used or recycled.

This is an example of a waste - free lunch with a box and a bottle you can use every day. It would be even better if the yogurt were in a re-usable pot, too.



Phenology

Keep a record over a number of years of the dates of first sightings of things such as birds, animals, leaves, flowers etc. Over the years dates can be compared and patterns observed. As a result information is gained about changes in the climate and the local environment.

As this is a long term activity it will be of greater interest and value to those who continue the work than those who initiate it but it has great potential for future study.

You can also help to feed our wiggly worms - they turn our leftovers into compost. Clever, eh?
Put paper for recycling and things for compost into the labelled bins. Then we'll give the compost to the worms.



Wiggly worm compost bin

Out in the Woods

You'll do lots of different activities, and some games too, so wear clothes you can run around in. Wear trainers or boots. Don't wear sandals.

Remember to listen to instructions carefully, so you can have as much time as possible to enjoy the forest.



Have a look at the following pictures - we look forward to seeing you here!





Orienteering



Outdoor Art



Trees with eyes !



Colour Palettes





Mini nature trail



More outdoor art

Shelter building





Leaf patterns



Successful orienteers

The spider and the flies

