

Forest Food Chains

Suitable for Years 3 and 4, March to November

This programme is designed to investigate woodland food chains and the language used to describe each stage. Students will explore the arboretum for different woodland foods and evidence left behind by the animals that eat it.

Key Concepts

Habitats, food chain, producer, consumer, predator, prey, feeding relationships

Learning Outcomes

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

- Explain that a habitat is the home of a specific community of plants and animals
- Understand the terms producer, consumer, herbivore, carnivore and their relevance in food chains
- Explain that all food chains start with plants that make their own food, stating the role of sunlight
- Use evidence found in the woodland to represent each stage of a food chain

Before you come

Q Name 6 different British woodland animals. What would they like to eat and what would like to eat them?

Programme Outline

Learning Objectives	Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess prior knowledge and questions from the group 	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Name some British trees together. Brainstorm some animals that would like to eat different parts of one of the trees named Build up a simple food chain. Discuss the terms plant, herbivore, carnivore and omnivore, producer, consumer, predator, prey</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce/reinforce the habitat concept 	<p>Habitat Game</p> <p>Individually, children are asked to find the four things animals need to survive. Other animals competing for food and predators are then added into the game to add a few survival challenges. The students then identify the 2 or 3 food chains represented in the game</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To practice using the vocabulary of food chains 	<p><i>Food Chain Bags</i> Students work in groups to put the steps of forest food chains in the right order. There will be a selection of British woodland food chains, and food chains from other parts of the world</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To investigate the woodland habitat and recognise the variety of food sources available. 	<p><i>What's for dinner?</i> Students observe the many types of woodland food available to different species. As they find each type of food, they name one animal that would eat it, building up 2-step food chains</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build a complete food chain using evidence left behind by woodland animals 	<p><i>Food Chain Challenge</i> In groups the students are asked to collect as much evidence for different parts of a food chain as possible. They will then be asked to create a working food chain from that evidence.</p>

Self-guided trails

To complement this half-day programme, we recommend our [Who Lives At Westonbirt?](#) backpack. This can be viewed at www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt-education

National Curriculum links

Animals including humans

- Year 3 – Identify that animals need the right types and amount of nutrition, and that they cannot make their own food; they get nutrition from what they eat
- Year 4 – Construct and interpret a variety of food chains, identifying producers, predators and prey