

## Season of Mists – exploring seasonal change in autumn

Suitable for Years 3-6, March to November

This programme takes maximum advantage of one of the best natural fireworks displays in the country as students experience autumnal changes first-hand and discover the underlying reasons behind them.

### Key Concepts

Adaptation, environmental change, seasons, evergreen, deciduous, hibernation, seed dispersal

### Learning Outcomes

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

- Describe the environmental changes that occur during the autumn
- List the effects environmental changes have on trees and animals and explain the reasons behind these effects
- Describe the main features of a deciduous and evergreen tree and the methods each employs to overcome winter hardships
- Name three methods of seed dispersal and why seed dispersal is important
- Explain three tactics employed by animals to overcome winter

### Before you come

Q How does a woodland change in autumn?

Q What strategies do animals use in autumn to prepare for winter?

### Programme Outline

Learning Objectives	Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduces the topic of the autumn season</li> <li>• Introduces evergreen and deciduous trees and tree seeds</li> </ul>	<p><i>Autumn gather</i></p> <p>In a woodland glade, children explore the arboretum and collect signs of autumn.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking at how animals are adapted to survive winter conditions</li> </ul>	<p><i>Warm in winter</i></p> <p>In groups, children find and build two suitable shelters (in different locations or using different natural materials) to protect heated toy badgers from the cold. At the end of the session come back and measure the temperature to discover which home is warmest. Suggest reasons for your results.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigating effects of winter weather on food sources for animals</li> <li>• Looks at migration, hibernation and animal food stores</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Winter Tactics</i></b> Children look for evidence of food for different woodland animals. They then discuss how animals cope with changes in their food supply in winter.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To compare evergreen and deciduous trees</li> <li>• Plant adaptation to winter</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Leaf slides</i></b> In groups children search for leaves and then view them up close to consider why some trees lose their leaves and change colour.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make observations of different types of seeds</li> <li>• To discuss methods of seed dispersal</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Seed Explorers</i></b> Children search for and gather a range of seeds before discussing different methods of dispersal.</p>

### Self-guided trails

To complement this half-day programme, we recommend the following activities from our **Growing Green Activity Pack**:

- 14 Leaf I-Spy
- 15 Leaf activity walk – autumn
- 17 Quick leaf activities
- 18 Leaf ID Team Challenge
- 22 Seed Explorer
- 23 Seed Sorter

This pack can be viewed at [www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt-education](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt-education).

### National Curriculum links

#### *Plants*

- Year 3 - explore the part that flowers play in the life cycle of flowering plants, including seed formation and seed dispersal

#### *Living things and their habitats*

- Year 4 – recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things – seasonal change
- Year 5 – describe the life process of reproduction in some plants