



# The Forest Set

## Teachers' Notes



Promotion and Guidance for  
Recreation on Ecologically Sensitive Sites

# Lesson One

## Know Your Forests

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce forests and woodlands and to outline some of the reasons why we need to care for them.

### Objectives

- To understand what a forest is and can describe a forest using all senses
- To understand why it is important for people to care for and manage forests
- To understand what they can do to care for forests

### Resources

[www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk) - for a downloadable copy of The Countryside Code

[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

[www.forestsforever.org.uk](http://www.forestsforever.org.uk)

[www.woodland-trust.org.uk/](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/)

Please feel free to search other FEI resources, the ones recommended to accomplish this lesson is: **Key Phrases**

### Preparation

Read the fact sheet for lesson 1 to provide you with all the right information for this lesson. You could visit the following website for additional background reading; [www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/what\\_we\\_do/forests/about\\_forests/types/index.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/forests/about_forests/types/index.cfm).

Photocopy the relevant accompanying activity sheet

- Story Senses sheet (Early years and Key Stage 1)
- Spotting Problems (Key Stage 2)

### Curriculum Links

*Literacy strands*

Speaking, Listening and responding

Group discussion and interaction, Creating and shaping texts

*Science*

Unit 1A, 2, 4B

*Geography*

Unit 6

*Citizenship*

Unit 2, 3, 8

### Lesson Introduction

Briefly explain to the children that they are going to be learning about forests and woodlands, why they are important and how we can care for them. Ask them for any immediate responses: What is a forest? What might we find in a forest?

### For Early Years

- Read the story of *Only made of Wood* to the children.
- Tell the class that you are going to explore the imaginary forest through their senses. Ask children to close their eyes and then briefly describe the forest from the story. Ask the children to imagine they are there.
- Ask them to take a deep breath through their nose – what can you smell?
- Listen very carefully – what can you hear?
- Reach out with your hands – what can you touch?
- What does it feel like?
- Explain to children that it is important not to taste anything without checking with an adult first. Remind children that they should not pick anything while in the forest or woodlands, like flowers or plants.
- If you would like to, hand out the Story Sense activity sheet, gather children's responses in drawings and words on each of the senses.
- Discuss how we can care for forests, use the copy of *The Countryside Code* as a reference. We can care by putting litter in a bin, not feed grazing animals, keeping our dogs under control, leaving gates as you find them, not starting fires. Why do children think that we have those certain rules that help care for the forest?

### For Key Stage One (5-7 year olds)

- Read *Only made of Wood* to the class and discuss briefly what they believe a forest is like.
- Tell the class that you are going to explore the imaginary forest through their senses. Ask children to close their eyes and then briefly describe the forest from the story. If you have the facilities you could do this task in a supervised area outdoors. Hand out the Story Senses activity sheet and ask children to fill in using words and pictures what they believe each sense would experience by being in a forest. Then ask the class to produce a scene of forest life on a large display board.
- Discuss caring for forests and woodlands with the class, what rules do they think have to be followed? And

why? Here are some examples - picking up litter, not touching or feeding grazing animals, no fires. Scribe on an electronic whiteboard key phrases that can later be used as captions for the display. Add the captions to the display board promoting careful use of the forest environment to reinforce the conservation and personal responsibility message.

- Ask children to work in groups of three. They are to design a plan for a big display to promote care of forests and woodlands. Discuss, as a class, the final plan for the display, who will do what and the media that different aspects of the display will be made in.
- You should then create the display as a class.

### For Key Stage Two (8-11 year olds)

- Discuss with the class what forests and woodlands are like and what their experiences of forests and woodlands are. Tell the class that you are going to explore the imaginary forest through their senses. Ask children to close their eyes and then briefly describe the walking through a forest or woodlands. If you have the facilities you could do this task in a supervised area outdoors. Discuss problems facing forests and woodlands. What do children think these might be? Use a selection of images of forest life to aid the discussion.
- Hand out the Spotting Problems activity sheet ask children to identify the range of problems depicted, broken glass, child picking a flower, child feeding a pony, litter, car driving through the forest. Discuss how we are each responsible for the care of the forest and how each problem could be prevented.

### Extension

Ask children to produce one or a series of posters on the subject of caring for forests and woodlands in general. Discuss attention grabbing imagery that they could use and a short, punchy caption. The posters could show that broken glass causes forest fires, plastic bags could kill ponies, that you should drive considerably on forest roads, respect rights of way and private property or support local food producers. Share all the posters and messages in an assembly focussed on caring for forests and woodlands.

# Lesson Two

## The New Forest Today

**The purpose of this lesson is to gain an overview of the history of the New Forest and to broaden the children's horizons on the wildlife of forests in general.**

### Objectives

- To understand that the New Forest has a history dating back 1000 years
- To understand the New Forest is a place where lots of different activities happen
- To know where the local forest is and something about its history and use today

### Resources

[www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildfacts/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildfacts/)

A great resource that includes facts about hundreds of species and video clips

[www.zephyrus.co.uk/](http://www.zephyrus.co.uk/)

Great resource with straightforward explanations of life processes including food chains and food webs

Tree Trumps:

[http://cte.napier.ac.uk/firrs/timber\\_trumps.php](http://cte.napier.ac.uk/firrs/timber_trumps.php)

Please feel free to search other FEI resources, the ones recommended to accomplish this lesson is:

### Nature Detective

#### Tree Council

### Preparation

Read the fact sheet for lesson 2 to provide you with all the right information for this lesson.

- Prepare sheets of paper, string and colouring equipment for mask making (Early Years)
- Photocopy relevant activity sheets for each child
- Wildlife Fact Cards (Key Stage 2)

### Curriculum Links

*Literacy strands*

Speaking, Listening and responding

*Drama*

Creating and shaping texts, Text structure and organisation, Presentation

*Science*

Unit 1, 2B, 5B

*ICT*

Unit 3A, 4A, 6A

### Lesson Introduction

Remind children of the previous lesson and what they learnt about forests and woodlands. Ask children what types of animals and plants they think would live in a forest. How many animals do they think

there are in a forest? How many plants?

### For Early Years

- Develop a role-play corner using a forest theme such as a forest glade. You could use large carpet rolls painted brown to form tree trunks. The children can print or paint leaves to attach to these. You could use green and brown material to create an enclosing background so that children really do get the feel of being in a forest. If you have the facilities available take the class outside to the playground or even the local forest or woodlands, to get some ideas.
- Tell the class that all that is missing are the animals. Ask them to design and make animal masks for a variety of typical woodland animals – deer, fox, badger, jay, woodpecker, lizard, adder and so on. Bring the forest glade to life with some of the children wearing masks and moving as their animal with accompanying noises.
- Ask them to think about how it might feel for different animals living in a forest.
- Provide opportunities in this exciting role-play area by sending in a team of naturalists with binoculars made out of the insides of kitchen rolls to explore the forest and identify the wildlife with notebooks to record their discoveries. You can also share stories and poems in the woodland glade and talk about the wildlife of the forest.

### For Key Stage One (5-7 year olds)

- Tell the class that they are taking part in a research project. Either arrange to take a trip to the school library or resource centre and allow children to browse for any books that may help them research animal and plant life of the forest, or provide them ready in the classroom. As a class seek out the pictures of animals, plants and trees to copy as line drawings on plain paper.
- Explain to the class the purpose of labels and captions and model how to use them.
- Once each child has a different labelled diagram of a plant or animal, create food chains and food webs using string. For example, a child with a picture of a leaf may stand next to a child with a picture of a rabbit and they can stand next to a child with a picture of fox. Get the children to hold a piece of string

and explain producers, herbivores and carnivores. Involve the whole class and see if you can create a web of string by joining up all the plants and animals in some way. If there is time then remove one part of the food chain to see what the knock on effect is.

### For Key Stage Two (8-11 year olds)

- Hand out the activity sheet and ask children to research individual forest animals, including mammals, birds, insects, reptiles and amphibians. Produce a box set of Wildlife Fact Cards. The facts from the Wildlife Fact Cards can then be transferred to A5 pieces of card and illustrated or stored on a computer database.
- Once each child has a different labelled diagram of a plant or animal, create food chains and food webs using string. For example, a child with a picture of a leaf may stand next to a child with a picture of a rabbit and they can stand next to a child with a picture of fox. Get the children to hold a piece of string and explain producers, herbivores and carnivores. Involve the whole class and see if you can create a web of string by joining up all the plants and animals in some way.
- With each Wildlife Fact Card that is complete the class can build their own Top Trumps cards to play in groups, Plant vs Plant and Animals vs Animals. If there is not enough time, remember that Tree Trumps is available online.

### Extension

Now tell the class they are going to research the New Forest, or their neighbouring forest, to produce an A4 triple fold tourist leaflet. As a class, look at various tourist leaflets so the children can understand what kind of information they contain and how they are laid out. Ask the children to research all the information they need for inclusion in their own leaflet. Discuss the modelling of the writing of a tourist leaflet. Including headline text, use of sub headings, bullet points, contact information, maps and use of pictures. Children should work in pairs to design and make their tourist leaflet either directly on to paper or on a software design programme. They can use the information they have gained to help prepare for the next lesson or for a family trip to their neighbouring forest.

# Lesson Three

## Have Fun in the Forests

The purpose of the lesson is to help children appreciate that forests and woodlands are exciting places to visit and encourage them to want to visit forests and woodlands.

### Objectives

- To understand why people enjoy visiting forests
- To know that forests are exciting places to visit
- To want to visit a forest!

### Resources

*Sharing Nature with Children*

by Joseph Bharat Cornell

Sharing Nature with Children Foundation

[www.sharingnature.com/](http://www.sharingnature.com/)

Find the age of trees using the guide at

[www.uksafari.com/treeage.htm](http://www.uksafari.com/treeage.htm).

A detailed identification guide to the 33 native species of British trees

[www.british-trees.com/index.htm](http://www.british-trees.com/index.htm)

[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

[www.foresteducation.org](http://www.foresteducation.org)

### Preparation

Read the fact sheet for lesson 3 to provide you with all the right information for this lesson.

### Curriculum Links

*Literacy strands*

Speaking, Listening and responding,

Group discussion and interaction

*Geography*

Unit 1, 1B, 2B

Design and technology

*History*

A local history study

### Lesson Introduction

Ideally you will take your children to visit a forest or woodlands. This lesson plan is designed to allow you to explore the concept of forests and woodlands with school based activities.

### For Early Years

- Turn your small world play area into a forest. Cover a table in a brown drape and create woodland trees and plants from a range of materials. Place some stones as boulders. Use blue ribbon for a stream. Make picnic benches out of small boxes. Have a car parking area and a shop. Place some appropriate model animals and birds. Don't forget the ponies and pigs if your forest is the New Forest!
- Invite children to visit the forest with model people and cars bringing the forest to life.
- Observe the children at play and note their conversations – how do they interpret the forest? Use their ideas to reflect on having fun in the forest with the children. What are the exciting things you can do in a forest? What are the dangers you need to be aware of?
- Photograph the children at play in the small world play area and create a class book titled, 'Visiting the forest'.

### For Key Stage One (5-7 year olds)

- Explain that you are taking them out on a walk around your local community to get to know the trees that are already a part of their everyday life. Take a simple, large scale street map of your area with you and ask children to identify native trees using the resource on tree identification. Visit [www.british-trees.com/index.htm](http://www.british-trees.com/index.htm) for a detailed identification guide to the 33 native species of British trees. Find

the age of the native trees using the guide at [www.uksafari.com/treeage.htm](http://www.uksafari.com/treeage.htm). Mark on the map all those native trees that are over a hundred years old. Consider and discuss ways in which your class can celebrate local trees.

- Ask the class to now create their own fact sheets on the types of trees that they saw in their local area. Ask students to collect leaves and when you are back in the classroom, you can laminate them for an educative display in the classroom.

### For Key Stage Two (8-11 year olds)

- Explain to the class that they are going to take part in The Den Building Challenge.
- Provide them with plenty of sticks, straw, string and mud and challenge them to work in groups of three or four to create a model den to the following criteria:
  - Your den must fit on to a piece of A4 board
  - Your den must be able to withstand a strong wind
  - Your den must be waterproof
  - Once the children have created their model dens, test their resistance to wind with an electric fan and their resistance to water by sprinkling water over them.
- Discuss as a class what the children have learnt about den building and evaluate their designs. Start planning a trip to a forest to make real dens, remember to check with your local forest if you are allowed to before you go! If you need any help in finding information on your local forests or woodlands please contact the FEI through their website [www.foresteducation.org](http://www.foresteducation.org).

# Lesson Four

## Forests for the Future

**The purpose of this lesson is to inspire children to take responsibility for trees and forests and to take practical, positive action.**

### Objectives

- To understand some of the threats forests are facing
- To understand some of the opportunities for the future of forests
- To know what I am going to do to help make a difference

### Resources

The Democracy Coalition at [www.democracycoalition.co.uk/](http://www.democracycoalition.co.uk/)  
The Children's Parliament at [www.childrensparliament.org.uk/](http://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/)  
[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)  
[www.forestsforever.org.uk](http://www.forestsforever.org.uk)  
[www.woodforgood.com](http://www.woodforgood.com)

Please feel free to search other FEI resources, the ones recommended to accomplish this lesson is:  
Creating your Community Wood

### Preparation

- Read the fact sheet for lesson 4 to provide you with all the right information for this lesson.
- Photocopy accompanying activity sheets for each child  
A Council of Forest Life (Key Stage 1)  
My Point of View (Key Stage 2)

### Curriculum Links

#### Literacy strands

Speaking, Listening and responding  
Group discussion and interaction, Drama

#### Science

Unit 6A

#### Citizenship

Unit 01, 10

### Lesson Introduction

Discuss with the children what they have been learning about forests and woodlands.

### For Early Years

- Discuss with the children what they have been learning through their play in the forest glade and with their small world forest. Talk about threats to the forests and woodlands such as litter and fires.
- Tell the class that they are going to make a class story about balancing human and wildlife interests in a forest.
- Create a simple story using the children's ideas – maybe, a family of mice lose their home when picnickers trample through the undergrowth or a group of pigs are trapped due to a fire in the forest. These stories can be tape recorded or developed through role play and photographed. Throughout this activity reinforce the message that people have responsibility for the forest they visit.

### For Key Stage One (5-7 year olds)

- Introduce children to threats to the future of forests and woodlands through a discussion about what would happen to the life of the forest if:
  - large area of trees were cut down and not replaced
  - A class of children visiting the forest left all their litter behind
  - A stream was polluted
  - A lot of cars arrive in the forest
- Explain to the children that they are going to stage a Council of Forest Life. Hand out the activity sheet, a Council of Forest Life, ask children to get into groups of three or four and given an animal, tree or plant to represent. In their groups they discuss the point of view of their creature about the threats that the forest faces. Introduce children to a more hopeful future for forests and woodlands:
  - People look after the forest and respect it
  - People travel to the forest by bike or public transport

Ask the Council of Forest Life how this future looks to them

- During a class discussion decide what we can each do to help give forests and woodlands a future.
- Each child can design and write a pledge card saying what they are going to do to help forests and woodlands, for example, recycle paper, plant a tree, raise money for a forest charity. The pledges can be tied to a pledge tree and displayed in the school hall or reception.

### For Key Stage Two (8-11 year olds)

- Tell the class that they are going to stage a role play debate focussed on a threat to the forest. For example, a new bypass will cut through part of the forest or a housing development is proposed.
- Divide your class into groups of three or four children and give each group a character associated with the forest:
  - A commoner who owns a small herd of pigs
  - Someone who has just moved to the forest to escape city life
  - A tourist
  - A forestry worker
  - A road builder
  - A motorist
  - A birdwatcher
  - A builder
  - A local councillor
- Hand out the activity sheet and ask each group to use the activity sheet to decide on their opinions on the issue. Stage a debate where a representative of each group speaks to the meeting and then there is a debate about the point they raised. Your role as teacher is to ensure that an even-handed debate takes place where all views are considered. At the end of the process you can hold a vote.

### Credits

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