



tinyforest
earthwatch
EUROPE

KS2 LESSON IDEAS

11 ACTIVITIES TO INTRODUCE TINY FORESTS TO YOUR CLASSROOM!

Now is the perfect time to inspire and engage your students with nature, helping them to understand their impact on the natural world and take action to protect it. Our activities provide guidance on how to incorporate Tiny Forests into your curriculum, offering ideas for engaging ways to connect your pupils to nature and build their confidence!

CREATE A TINY FOREST JOURNAL

At the start of the topic, you may wish to ask students to create a tiny forest journal, either from an exercise book, old notepad or recycled paper. This can be used to record their experiences or complete their work in, and can also be used for photos and items they have collected during the topic.

MEET A TREE

Learn more about trees by interacting closely with them. Approach the tree and write down some of its key features. What colour is its bark? What shape are its leaves? Does it make a sound when the wind blows? Does it have any flowers, fruit or seeds? You could pick a leaf to save, or do bark rubbings with crayons. Make sure to touch the tree and see how it feels. Think about what life the tree might support.

LEARN ABOUT PLANTING

Learn about the life cycle of a plant by planting your own! You could plant cress in egg shells and talk about germination and the process of growth. Or, you could use clear CD cases to plant bean seeds. This way, you will be able to see all of the stages of growth, including being able to see each aspect of the plant through the clear walls of the case.

TREES THROUGH THE SEASONS

Monitor a specific tree or patch of woodland through the seasons. You could make predictions about how you think the tree might change and then see if they're true, or just look at the changes as the seasons go by. You could assign each student a tree and ask them to draw it at different times of the year, or set a creative writing piece about how the seasons change trees.

FOREST FOOD CHAINS

Make cards with different producers, primary consumers and secondary consumers on them and ask students to construct food chains from them. Examples could include oak tree, caterpillar and bird. You could extend these to include tertiary consumers and by asking pupils what they think might happen if one of the components of the food chain disappears.

LEAF MATCHING

Ask students to gather leaves from outside and then identify them. You could give them clues on key features of a leaf that will help them to identify the tree, or you could print off pictures of the leaves and ask them to match them with the leaves they have gathered to identify trees.

LIFE CYCLES

Ask pupils to draw out the life cycle of an animal. Examples could be egg, chick, bird or caterpillar, cocoon, butterfly. You could go out into the forest and look for signs of these life cycles, such as spotting the species or looking for signs like nests.

SCAVENGER HUNT

Put students into groups and start by giving them a list of things they need to collect. You could provide them with a tray or an egg carton for them to gather their items. You may wish to give them some freedom by asking them to bring back 10 different objects, or set them a specific list, asking for things like two leaves of different colours, or one item that is yellow for example.

SENSORY WALK

Forests are a great place to tune students in to their senses, and so a sensory walk can be a great mindfulness exercise. Start by asking students to sit silently for 1 minute, before asking them what they can hear. You could ask them what natural and man made noises they might have heard. Along the walk, ask students what they can smell. They may be able to sniff out different plants at different spots. Ask students to pick 5 things they can see – this could be any 5 things, or you may wish to set a challenge, such as 5 different plants or colours. Ask students to touch different objects, such as bark, pine cones or grass, and describe how they feel. Finish the walk off by trying some fruit that typically grows on trees, like apples or pears. You could summarise this exercise by asking students to record what they have experienced.

MINI BUG HOTELS/SCHOOL BUG HOTEL

Create bug houses using old tin cans or recycled plastic bottles. Stuff them with twigs, dried leaves and straw to create a perfect home for minibeasts. You can then hang these from trees and observe the different insects that are using them. If you would prefer, you could build a large bug hotel and ask your class to contribute to that. The form of a larger bug hotel can be made from pallets and bricks, and then can be filled with lots of different materials, like logs, roof tiles, slate, twigs, straw, rocks and many other natural materials.

DESIGN A HOME

Provide students with basic information about woodland creatures, explaining the type of home they like to live in and what their requirements are. Then, ask your students to pick one of the animals and design a home for it. They should label the different materials and features of the home, and could go on to explain why they have included them. Some animals you could choose are birds, deer, squirrels, hedgehogs or insects such as ladybirds or butterflies.