

# Living things and their habitats

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*Food chains in woodland habitats*

*Year 4  
Age 8-9*



## **For parents**

*Thank you for supporting your child's learning in science.*

### ***Before the session:***

- Please read slide 2 so you know what your child is learning and what you need to get ready.
- As an alternative to lined paper, slide 5 may be printed for your child to record on.

### ***During the session:***

- Share the learning intentions on slide 2.
- Support your child with the main activities on slides 3 to 6, as needed.
- Slide 7 is a further, optional activity.
- Slide 8 has a glossary of key terms.

### ***Reviewing with your child:***

- Slide 9 gives an idea of what your child may produce.



# Living things and their habitats

## *Food chains in a woodland habitat*

### Key Learning

- A **food chain** shows the links between different living things and where they get their energy from.
- Living things can be classified as **producers** or **consumers** according to their place in the food chain.
- A **predator** is an animal that feeds on other animals (its **prey**).
- Animals can be described as **carnivores**, **herbivores** or **omnivores**.

### I can...

- Draw food chains for woodland plants and animals.
- Describe the relationship between predators and their prey.

### Activities (pages 3-6): 30 - 40 mins

- Use lined paper, a ruler and a pencil.
- Alternatively, print page 6 as a worksheet.



### Find out more... (page 7): 30 - 60 mins

- You may like to explore more about predators and their prey.



# Explore, review, think, talk....

*What do you already know about how animals feed?*  
(5 minutes)

All animals need to eat food to survive.

- Talk about what you already know about the kind of food different animals eat.
- What is the name of an animal that only eats plants?
- What is the name of an animal that only eats other animals?
- What is the name of an animal that eats both plants and other animals?



Watch this clip about birds. What kind of food do they eat?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/z9nhfg8>

Animals can be described as **herbivores**, **carnivores** or **omnivores**.

- Birds like robins, blue tits and house sparrows have a very varied diet!



slugs



flies



spiders



worms



mealworms



berries



nuts & seeds



woodlice

Robins, blue tits and house sparrows are **omnivores** because they eat plants and other animals.



# Watch, read, listen...

*Describing a food chain*  
(10 minutes)

Watch this clip describing a food chain.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zjshfg8>



*Think about these questions as you watch*

- Where does a food chain start?
- Which animals are herbivores?
- Which animals are carnivores?

- A food chain starts with energy from the **Sun** because **plants** need the Sun's **light energy** to **make their own food** in their leaves.
- Plants are eaten by animals.
- These animals are then food for other animals, creating a **food chain**.



sunlight



leaves → caterpillar → magpie → cat

- The **arrows** in the food chain show the **flow of energy**.





# Building food chains

*Describe producers, consumers, predators and prey in a food chain  
(page 5-6: 30 minutes)*

- All plants make their own food. They are called **producers**.
- Animals eat plants or other animals to survive. They are called **consumers**.

*Play this food chain game to identify some woodland producers and consumers.*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zbnnb9q/articles/zsphrwx>



Animals which hunt and kill other animals to eat are called **predators**.

The animals they eat are called **prey**.

*Write down a list of predators and their prey from the food chain game.*

predator	prey
badger	worm

Draw four different food chains for woodland animals.

Label each living thing as producer or consumer. Write short sentences underneath to describe the predators and prey in the food chain.

Use what you have learnt and the word bank and the pictures to help you.

producer consumer predator prey



blackberries



leaves

caterpillar



worm

bird



badger



fox



hedgehog



owl



shrew

I can draw and label food chains for woodland animals. I can describe the relationship between predators and their prey.

*Example:*

leaves → caterpillar → bird → fox  
producer consumer consumer consumer

The caterpillar is the bird's prey. The bird is a predator but it is also prey for the fox. The fox is the top predator in this food chain.



# Find out more about predators and their prey

*Explore the relationship between ants, tiger beetles and parasitic wasps  
(20 – 30 minutes)*

Tiger beetles are **predators** and one of their favourite **prey** are ants. However, beetles can also be prey for another insect...

*Watch this BBC clip to find out more.*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p003xjbk>



Most ants are omnivores. They like to eat plants, seeds, nectar, and even other animals.

*Make a food chain to show how the tiger beetle larva can be a predator and prey. Write a short paragraph to describe what happens.*

## **Taking it further....**

Imagine you are Methocha, a parasitic wasp. Write a short story about how you trick a tiger beetle and what you do once you have paralysed it.

## Glossary of terms

**Carnivore:** A **carnivore** is an animal which only eats other animals.

**Consumer:** All animals are **consumers** because they cannot make their own food.

**Food chain:** A **food chain** shows the links between different living things and where they get their energy from.

**Herbivore:** A **herbivore** is an animal which only eats plants.

**Omnivore:** An **omnivore** is an animals which eats plants and other animals.

**Predator and Prey:** A **predator** is an animal that feeds on other animals (its **prey**).

**Producer:** Plants are **producers**. A food chain starts with the Sun providing energy for a plant (the producer) to make its own food.



In UK woodland, badgers and foxes are 'top carnivores' as they are not eaten by other animals.

Badgers and foxes are omnivores. They eat berries as well as small animals. A food chain can have just a producer and one consumer. In this case there is no predator or prey.

## Possible learning outcome for reviewing your work.

I can draw and label food chains for woodland animals. I can describe the relationship between predators and their prey.

Berries → Hedgehog → Fox  
producer                  consumer                  consumer

The fox is the predator in this food chain and the hedgehog is its prey.

Leaves → Caterpillar → Shrew → Badger  
producer                  consumer                  consumer                  consumer

The shrew is a predator in this food chain and the caterpillar is its prey. The shrew is also prey for the badger. The badger is the top predator.

Berries → Badger  
producer                  consumer

There is no predator in this food chain. The badger is an omnivore and eats plants as well as other animals.

The arrows in a food chain show the flow of energy. (A food chain starts with energy from the **Sun** because plants need the Sun's **light energy** to make their own food in their leaves.)

Hedgehogs are omnivores. They eat berries, worms and insects.