

Family Home Learning Pack

ANIMALS & HABITATS




Photo: Joanna Gilkeson

Notes for parents and carers:

These home learning packs have been compiled by Better Planet Education to support you whilst your children are at home during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Each week, we will include suggestions for activities you can do alongside your children, as well as those that they can do independently, whilst you are working from home.

We will attempt to suggest activities which require no special materials other than those you may find around the house. It may be possible to pick up some resources during your occasional shop for essentials but please do not aim to shop specifically for listed supplies! We will also attempt to minimise the need to print out any materials.

In your pack each week:

- * Open ended project ideas and research topics
- * Activities to explore independently or together
- * Games to play
- * Ideas for science experiments
- * Art and craft ideas
- * Links to other learning resources
- * A use each week for toilet roll tubes...

ACTIVITY IDEAS

Learn about life cycles:



Watching caterpillars pupate:

The process of metamorphosis, when caterpillars build themselves a cocoon and emerge from this as a butterfly, is fascinating. You can find out a lot about this online and there are some video links provided at the end of this pack. However, nothing beats seeing the process in action. It's possible to send off for a butterfly house and a pot of live caterpillars from companies such as <https://www.insectlore.co.uk/butterflies/live-butterfly-kits.html> so that you can observe this process at close range. Please only consider this

if you know you will be able to release the butterflies into a garden or park (or out of a window near one!) so that they will have somewhere to go and find nectar and a place to lay their own eggs.

See birds hatching:

This is the time of year when many birds are starting to build their nests ready to lay eggs. You can watch this process happening, right through to the hatching of chicks, by following nesting cameras online! There are many available, all over the world. As ever, please do approach any live stream content with caution. Reputable sites include:

<http://www.seenature.org.uk/school-zone/school-streams/>

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/webcams>

Observing tadpoles:

You may be lucky enough to have access to a pond in your garden or local park where you can watch frogspawn hatching into tadpoles and tadpoles becoming frogs. If not, this is a great video, showing the process

(Youtube link, supervision recommended):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMs3waaW75g>

Check out this factsheet from YPTE

<https://yppte.org.uk/factsheets/care-of-frogspawn-and-tadpoles/overview>



Make a life-cycle turning wheel:

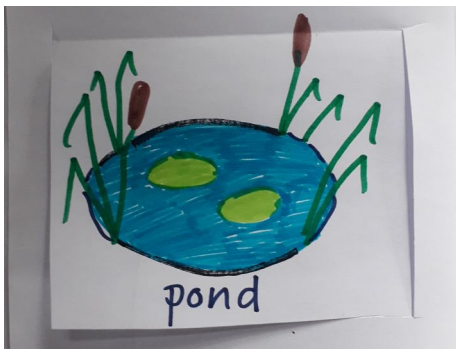
Paper plates work well for this activity, but any pieces of card or paper will work if need be. You could use the inside of a box, such as a cereal box, drawing round a bowl or plate for the circle. A split pin is ideal for the centre, but assuming that's a rare thing to find in a craft box, this will work with two beads threaded through the discs, an opened out paper clip, or a pin through the middle attaching the two to a pinboard.



On the first plate, or card disc, draw the stages of an animal lifecycle (butterfly, frog etc). You can research these first and discuss what the stages would be. Make sure that you divide the plate up equally (chance for some fraction chat!) so that each picture takes up the same amount of space.

On the second disc, cut a section out, big

enough to reveal each picture. Add an arrow to show which way to turn the disc, then attach the two discs with the pictures at the back. Turning the top disc will now reveal the stages of the life cycle in turn.

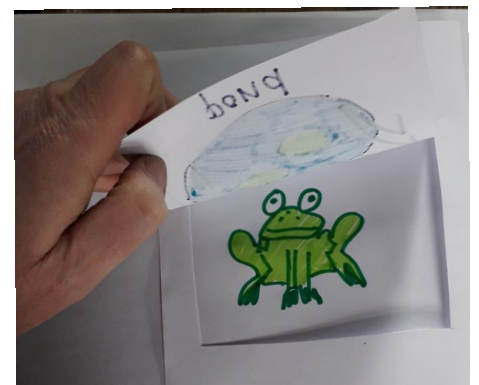


Make a habitat flap game:

Use two sheets of paper to make this 'lift the flap' game. Children may like to turn it into a guessing game. On the first piece of paper, draw and label some different habitats, such as garden pond, rainforest, or coral reef (see the learning links at the end of this pack for information on different habitats).

Using sharp scissors or a craft knife, with support as required, cut 3 sides of a rectangle over the picture to make a flap. Lift the flap

and draw an animal from the appropriate habitat underneath. Children can then ask each other questions about the hidden creature until they guess what it is!



Beak adaptation exploration:

Animals have adapted to live in their particular environments and have fur, feathers and features specially suited to the habitat that they live in. Explore this idea by carrying out a mini investigation into birds' beaks.

Gather together as many items as you can which could replicate a birds beak, such as:

- * tweezers
- * chopsticks
- * barbecue tongs
- * lolly sticks
- * toothpicks
- * a peg

Next, put some 'bird foods' into a dish. Again, you can be creative here and could include any small items such as seeds, raisins, grapes or maybe even cooked or tinned spaghetti...

Using the different 'beaks' (in only one hand!) see which types of beak are best for picking up different types of food and transferring them into another dish (in the way that a bird might need to bring food back to the nest for its young.

Follow this activity up by looking up some of the different types of beaks that birds have. What sorts of foods do you think these beaks are adapted for?



Racing Caterpillar game:

With plenty of opportunities for maths, measuring, time recording and ordinal numbers (first, second, third etc), this caterpillar racing activity is great fun! We'd obviously recommend that you use a metal or paper straw, or a ruled up tube of paper rather than a plastic straw, though! (Youtube video link, supervision recommended)

<https://youtu.be/lxEhFgJ-Bjk>

Making a bug hotel:

You can encourage many insects into your garden by creating a habitat for them to live in! Many insects help to pollinate plants and others provide food for a wide range of larger creatures, so making a bug hotel is a great way to increase the number of species living in your garden or local area. The hotel can be as big as the space you have allows, but it's possible to make a small one inside a flower pot or wooden box. As long as the container is reasonably weather proof, it's fine to use whatever you have.

The bugs need little crevices to live in. You can make these by collecting twigs and sticks, straws, leaves and grasses or little pebbles and bits of moss. If you don't have access to these materials outdoors, you can make little rolls of paper to poke in, or peel bits of corrugated cardboard to reveal the little gaps inside. For more information, see

<https://ypte.org.uk/downloads/home-learning-activity-make-a-bug-hotel>



This week's use for a toilet roll tube:

Toilet roll tubes can be used to make model animals! You can experiment with different head shapes by pressing the top of the tube inwards to make ears, or by cutting pieces out. Colour your animals with pens or paint.

Thank you very much to Martha for these lovely owls, fox and snake! Don't forget, you can share the pictures of anything that you make on Facebook or Instagram using the tag #yptelearning.

We'd love to see photos of some of your

models and will feature them in a future learning pack.

RESEARCH IDEAS

Find out about the impact that animals can have on their habitat.

DID YOU KNOW:

Some animals have such a dramatic impact on their habitats that, if they are removed (by being hunted for example) the whole habitat can change?

FIND OUT:

Why are the following creatures so important to the environment?

- Beavers
- Parrotfish
- Sea Otters

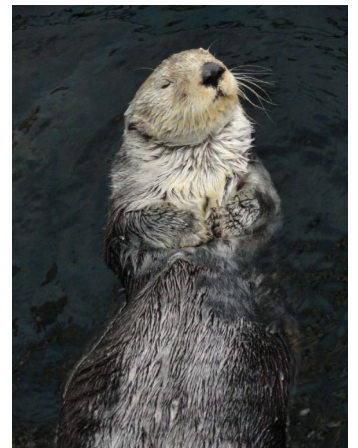


Photo: Dean Croshere

For an extra challenge, research what happened when wolves were reintroduced into their former habitat in Yellowstone Park in the US.

If you have a pet at home, research all the adaptations you have made in your home so that your pet has a happy habitat. Where does it sleep? What sort of food do you provide for it? How does it get exercise?

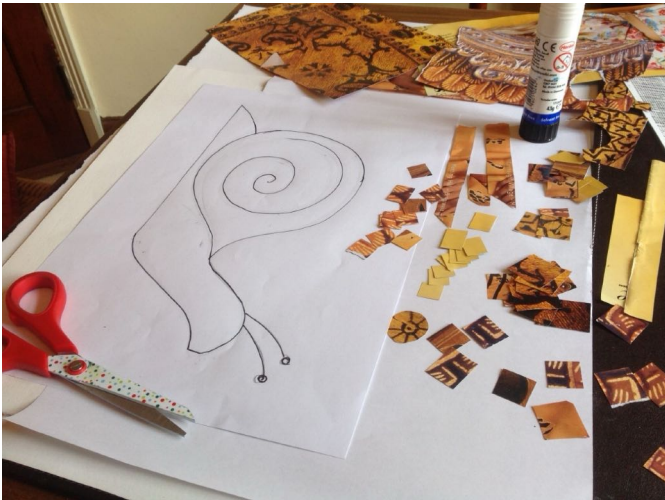
And another challenging question to have a go at:

What makes a good habitat for YOU?

ART AND CRAFT

Collage snail:

Collaging lots of tiny pieces can be an absorbing way to spend some time; it requires quite a lot of concentration, but is not too complicated. You can draw your own snail outline or use the one provided at the end of this pack.



Use newspapers and magazines for the pieces, or cut up old envelopes or card from your recycling. Sorting the colours can be enjoyable in itself. Cut the pieces for the shell into strips and then slice pieces off the ends of the strips.

Fill the spiral in from the centre and working outwards. If you don't have glue available, a flour and water paste works well. It may currently be easier to get hold of glue than flour, however!



Once your snail is finished, you could design a habitat for it to live in. Try to find out where snails like to live in your garden, if you have one.

Milk bottle elephants:

Use your empty plastic milk bottles to create a family of elephants! Different sized bottles can be used to create different members of the family.

Draw a line around the top of the bottle like this:

Mark off a curve, following the curve of the plastic, to show where the legs will go. The trunk (made from the handle) should be a little bit shorter than the legs.

Cut along the line carefully with sharp scissors, getting help if you need it.



You can simply draw eyes on to your elephant, or you could decorate it with paint, collage, googly eyes! For more information, see <https://ypte.org.uk/downloads/home-learning-activity-milk-bottle-elephants>

Here's a great how to video, where the elephants have been made into Elmer the Patchwork Elephant! (Youtube link, supervision

recommended)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eub7Pe6DZlc>

If it takes a really long time for the recycling collections to get back to normal, you could get really ambitious and go all out...



Painted rocks:

When out on your daily walk, keep an eye open for interestingly shaped stones. These can be really fun to paint as animals (or with any pictures) People often leave stones like these around to cheer others up on their walks, but it is probably not advisable to collect / touch those that you spot at the moment

GAMES

Donkey tails:

One for burning off some steam in a larger space. Use a strip of material or a sock to make your 'donkey tail' by poking it into your waistband behind your back. Everyone tries to capture each others' tail, whilst keeping their own. It's easier to grab a longer sock or piece of fabric, so you can make the game more fair by giving the slowest member of the family a shorter tail.

Alligator in the swamp:

For this game, one person is the alligator and has to catch the other participants as they try to cross the swamp. You can determine how big the swamp is and set rules such as how far the alligator is allowed to move, or whether it has to float in one place. The people crossing the swamp might only be allowed to jump from piece of paper to piece of paper, or cushion to cushion, or the alligator might have to keep its eyes closed. Discuss ways of adapting the game to make it more fair, depending who is playing the alligator (this can provide interesting ways in to discussions about how some people or animals might need specific adaptations to thrive in different environments)

Sloth, kangaroo, cheetah:

A change of pace game that's best in the garden or when you go out for your daily trip to the park! Establish different movements for each animal. The sloth moves very, very slowly. The kangaroo jumps and the cheetah sprints as fast as it can. One person takes it in turn to call out the different animals whilst everyone else does the actions.

Shoal of fish:

A mirroring game that calls for paying close attention. One person takes in in turn to be the lead fish. You might like to watch a group of fish swimming in a shoal first, so that you can see the way they all move as one by copying movements very, very quickly. This shoal is escaping from a shark:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15B8qN9dre4> (Youtube link, supervision recommended).

The lead fish should make lots of changes of direction and can add in other moves, fish-like or not, while everyone else tries to follow as quickly as possible, doing exactly the same movements.

Cat's cradle:

A more peaceful game that only requires a loop of string or elastic. You can play with two people, but it's possible to play solo as well. Here's a how to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZM53k3pKCqg> (Youtube link, supervision recommended).

LEARNING LINKS

There are a large number of resources available for online learning at this time. We'd always recommend that you support your child with this and only follow links from reputable names. **Any links provided here have been checked for suitability.**

Play the habitats game to find out where each animal lives. How is each creature adapted for its environment? (requires Flash player)

<https://368.stem.org.uk/Human%20and%20Animal%20Habitats/page/modules/habitats2.html>

Find out about different types of animal habitats and how animals have adapted to live in different places with these BBC clips:

Key Stage 1:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zx882hv>

Key Stage 2:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zbp6n39>

This video from Discovery Education explains what is meant by a habitat. (Youtube clip, supervision recommended)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrSWYE37MJs>

This habitats pack from the Wildwood Trust is designed for teachers but has many accessible fact sheets and activities suitable for home use.

<http://www.wildwoodtrust.org.uk/files/ks2-habitats.pdf>

