

Letter from the Hedgerow

In this activity the children will need to choose a hedgerow animal or bird. They will need to research information about the animal – what type of animal it is (insect, mammal etc), what it looks like, where it lives, what it eats and what eats it etc.

This information can be found in the many age appropriate books now available or from websites such as those listed on our 'learning zone' pages.

Having done this the children then write a letter pretending to be that animal (give the animal a name eg Jenny Wren) to another animal explaining everything about themselves and where they live. Alternatively, they could write a diary page describing a typical day for them in their hedgerow.

This is the sort of information they will need to collect:

Blackbird

Food: insects and worms in the summer, berries in the winter.

Finding a mate: the male sings a loud, fluting song to attract a female, usually between March and June.

The nest: grass, straw, and moss, plastered with mud, lined with fine grass. It will usually be found a little way up in hedges and small trees.

Eggs: usually 3 - 5, bluey-green, with brown speckles.

Fledglings: brown and speckled (easy to confuse with a song thrush)

Other facts: the hedge provides food, shelter and a nesting site. If it has trees along it, male blackbirds use them as song posts from which to sing to attract a mate.

Blackbirds enjoy sunbathing and will sometimes lie on the ground with their wings out to catch the sunshine.

And an example of a letter. This is very factual and you may wish to encourage the children to be more creative in how they present it. Even giving the animal human qualities!

Lucy Ladybird

I am often found in a garden habitat because my favourite food likes to live on roses. I eat aphids, or you might know them as greenfly. I lay my eggs on plants and my young, which are called larvae, can eat hundreds of aphids before they turn into an adult. This is why gardeners like to have us around!

I am a kind of beetle and I can fly. My wings are hidden under my brightly coloured wing case. I am brightly coloured to warn other animals that I am not good to eat. I taste very bitter.

I will live in a variety of habitats as long as there are plants and aphids around. In the winter we need our habitat to have a place where we can hide and hibernate. This could be a crack in a piece of wood or under the bark of a tree.

See also the page 'Habitats and who lives there'.