

habitat activity

Introduction:

This role-play is designed to demonstrate to children that animals need a safe, clean place to live. Dumping in our environment affects both animal habitats, and the visual appearance of the landscape. For many animals, dumping creates a polluted habitat, one which is unsafe and often uninhabitable.

Instructions:

From the list below chose two or more habitats. (N.B. to enable comparisons, one of the habitats must be a dumped habitat)

Split the class into groups

Pick areas of the room which will act as each of the habitats

Now give each of the groups the name of a wild Irish animal – this is the animal they will pretend to be, i.e. fox, badger, rabbit, bat, otter, etc.

To introduce the children to the activity, the teacher asks each animal/group to describe the habitat they would normally live in and the important features of this habitat. (i.e., water, food, safe and warm, clean, etc.)

Now standing at each of the habitats read out the below description of the area,

BUT DO NOT GIVE THE NAME OF THE HABITAT

After describing each of the habitats ask the children which one they would chose

Only give the names of the habitats after the exercise.

Habitats:

A farm – Here we have a large house surrounded by many stone-outbuildings and hedges, (a good place to build a nest or make a home). There are wide open fields, ideal for food (beetles, bugs, seeds and berries). Here we also find long grassy meadows with lots of wild flowers, (again ideal for food and great place for hiding from danger). Trees can be found near by to a little stream, (more places to live, food and clean drinking water).

A dumped area – A grassy meadow with a little stream. The grassy meadow has lots of blue bottles and flies hovering overhead and on the ground. There are big white things made of metal (fridges, washing machines, cookers, etc.), with rusty sharp parts. Black plastic bags of rubbish are lying on the grass with rats scuttling around, (food would be difficult to find here). The near-by stream is polluted by acid from old car batteries, tyres, and scrap metal, (no clean drinking water here either).

An upland mountain – Here we find wide open space with grasses, heather and wild plants growing, (perfect for hunting and homes). Nearby there are plenty of trees and lots of insects, beetles, slugs, snails and worms, (food for a number of wild animals and great places for building nests, dens or setts). Large boulders are dotted on the landscape, (animals can use these to hide from danger).

A city field/back garden – This area can be a little noisy, but animals can get use to noise. There are a few trees and lots of grass with a variety of insects, beetles, spiders, worms and slugs (no shortage of food). Hedges surround the area (good for homes and hiding from danger). Empty buildings and sheds are also found here, (ideal homes for bats and owls). This area can be particularly busy both at day and at night. Food is often left out on a high table or in feeders hung from trees.

OUR TOP 5!

Ask the children to list the five most favourite things they like to see in nature, i.e. flowers, birds, etc.

Now ask them to list the five things they don't like to see in nature, broken glass, litter, etc.

Together as a class compile the answers and come up with a top 5 list for the whole class.

How To Create Your Own Wildlife Nature Garden.

Top tips for a wildlife garden

Leave it wild - Plant native species – ash, oak, etc. - Make sure there is lots of long grass and hedges for creatures to live - Put up bat boxes, bird boxes, etc. - Leave an area for wildflowers to grow - Do not use any pesticides on your school grounds