



Herts and Middlesex



Wildlife Watch

# Woodland Food Chain Game

## Background information

Food chains exist throughout nature and are vital to the survival of all species. Green plants are at the bottom of the food chain as they can make their own food through photosynthesis. Animals can't make their own food, so to stay alive they must eat plants, either directly as in the case of a rabbit eating grass, or indirectly as in the case of a fox eating a rabbit. Ultimately everything derives its energy from the sun.

## Activity objectives

This activity aims to get students thinking about food chains and the importance of the very small creatures at the bottom of the chain.

### What you will need

1. A space indoors or outdoors
2. The class or large group
3. Sheets of coloured card



Now turn over...



and play the game!





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## How to play

1. Divide the group into four evenly sized groups and allocate them each one of the following species:
  - Oak tree
  - Caterpillar
  - Blue tit
  - Sparrowhawk
2. Give each group a different coloured card to denote which species they are (they can write their species name on it if they like).
3. Get the groups to mix up and look for other members of the group with which to create a food chain.
4. Once they have found the four parts of the food chain, get them to line up in the correct order.
5. They should end up in groups of four consisting of one oak tree, one caterpillar, one blue tit and one sparrowhawk lined up in this order.

## Follow up

1. Discuss what other food chains the children can think of.
2. Make a woodland food "pyramid" with the same four species thinking about how many of each species are needed to support the next species in the food chain.
  - \*\* Note this won't quite be a pyramid as there will only be one oak at the bottom supporting many caterpillars!
3. Add in additional species you might find in woodlands to create a food web. How many connections can be made between the different species?
4. Research and draw up food chains/webs/pyramids for the classroom wall.

## Information for Teachers

### National Curriculum Links

**Y1 POS** Identify and name a variety of common animals that are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores.

**Y2 POS** Describe how animals obtain their food from plants and other animals, using the idea of a simple food chain.

**Y3 POS** Identify that animals cannot make their own food, they get nutrition from what they eat.

**Y4 POS** Recognise that environments can change and this can sometimes pose dangers to living things. Construct and interpret a variety of food chains, identifying producers, predators and prey.

