Forestry England

Key stage 1 lesson plan

Geography



Forestry England looks after more than 1500 woods and forests. Forests are great places for studying maps and the physical and human processes that shape our environment, as well as providing opportunities for carrying out fieldwork for geography at all levels.

Curriculum links

Geography: (KS1) place knowledge; human and physical geography; geographical skills and fieldwork

Science: plants; seasonal changes; living things and their habitats



Before your visit

Look at aerial photos of the forest you are planning to visit. Can the children see and identify any human settlements, physical features or landmarks?

Having looked at the aerial photos, ask the children to draw a picture of what they think the actual forest will look like. What types of physical features, animals, plants and activities do they expect to see there? They could also draw a map of an imaginary forest.

To help your class prepare for their forest visit, take a look at our education resource hub and use the pre-visit filter to find some fantastic resources. These include thinking about what to expect from the forest and what your class will need to do to keep themselves safe whilst looking after the forest.

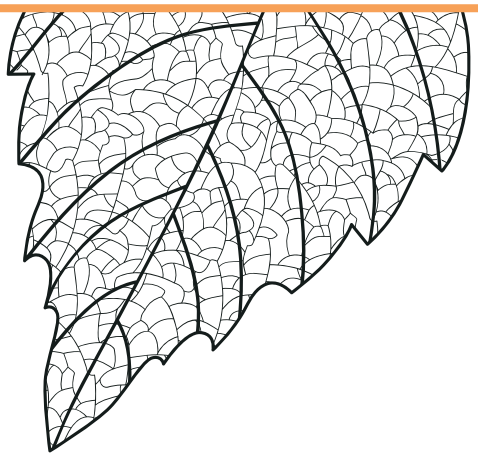
For health and safety advice and some top tips for teaching outdoors, visit **forestryengland.uk/planning-your-visit**

You will need to bring:

- plain paper
- clipboards
- pencils and coloured pencils
- Ordnance Survey maps of the forest (or site map leaflets)
- copies of forest features checklists (see pages 6 & 7)
- camera
- laminated copy of Forestry England logo
- Forestry England spotter sheets forestryengland.uk/learning

For more learning resources visit **forestryengland.uk/learning**

Starter activity



Find an area in the forest to sit or stand in a circle. Give out the pictures of the forest that the children drew at school. Discuss whether the forest is as they expected.

Which things are the same?

Which things are different?

Explain that they are going to make a simple map of the forest, but before they can do this, they need to walk around and look at all the features they are going to include.



Map preparation activities

Natural and man-made features of the forest

Take the children on a short walk around part of the forest (which you have identified as your study area on a pre-visit) to think about all the features - natural and man-made - that they can see.

Working in pairs or small groups, get them to tick everything they can find on their checklist (see end of lesson plan).





Next, encourage the children to use locational and directional language to describe where the features are, e.g. the play area is to the left of the café, or the car park is behind the visitor centre.

Vegetation – what types of trees are there?

Explain that Forestry England foresters plant and look after the trees in the forest:

- so that they provide homes and food for animals and birds (what kinds of wildlife do they think lives in or on or around the trees?)
- to provide a sustainable supply of timber (wood) for people to make things (how many things can they think of that are made of wood?)
- to create beautiful forests for people to visit and enjoy (what sorts of activities do they think people could do in the forest?)

Trees may be evergreen or deciduous, and are either conifers or broadleaves (see box). Different types of trees provide wood for making different things, and a variety of tree species provides habitats for different wildlife.

Tree words:

Evergreen – trees which keep their leaves all year round; mostly conifers (but not all e.g. holly is evergreen, but not a conifer)

Deciduous – trees which lose their leaves in autumn; mostly broadleaves (but not all e.g. larch is a deciduous conifer)

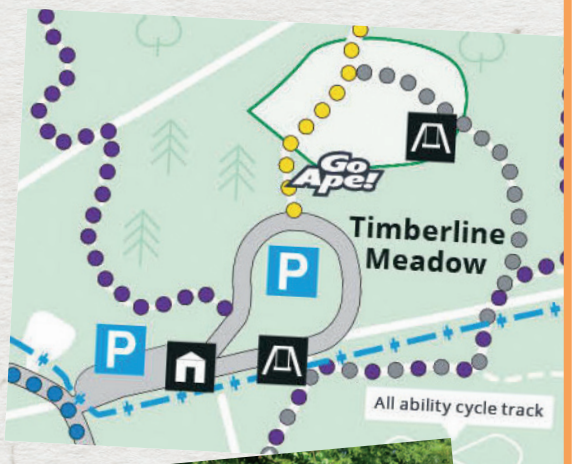
Coniferous – trees with cones and needles e.g. Scots pine, Douglas fir; usually evergreen

Broadleaf – trees with broad flat leaves e.g. oak, silver birch; usually deciduous

Ask the children to have a look around the area and decide whether most of the trees are evergreen or deciduous, coniferous or broadleaf. Look at the Forestry England logo, which is made up of two trees – one conifer and one broadleaf. Symbols like these can be used on maps to represent the different sorts of trees in a forest area.

Creating symbols for a map key

As well as symbols to show the types of trees in an area, maps show other features represented by symbols in a key.



Do the children know of any other symbols e.g. a 'P' to represent a car park, or a man and woman to represent toilets?

On Forestry England sites, similar symbols are often used on signposts. Can they find any other symbols on site?

Do they know what they mean?

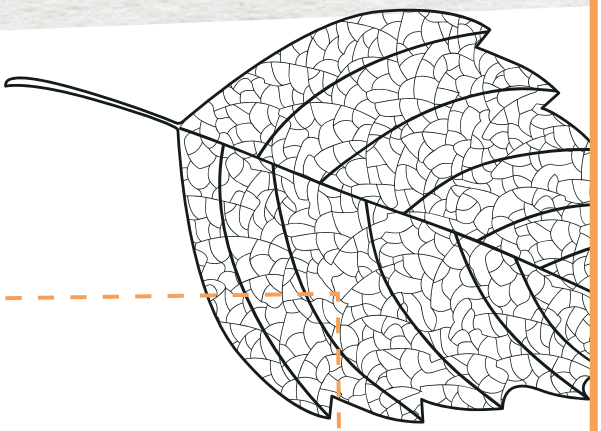
Show the children symbols on an OS map of the forest, or on a site leaflet.





Compass directions

Locate north using an OS map or compass. Point to the north and then encourage the children to work out where east, south and west are, with the aid of a rhyme if appropriate (e.g. naughty elephants squirt water). Next, ask questions about which direction you would have to walk to get to particular features e.g. car park or café. Explain that north is usually at the top of a map, and is often shown by an arrow with a capital N.



Making maps

Paper map

Find a suitable place where the children can sit or stand to draw their maps, using paper on clipboards with pencils and coloured pencils. Encourage them to use the symbols which have been discussed to represent features on the map.

Alternative map using natural materials



Rather than creating a map on paper, the children could produce a ground map from natural materials. This is especially appropriate in wet weather, and photos can be taken of the finished maps for a lasting record.

Choose an area that is fairly flat, and gently sweep the leaf litter aside to create a bare space. Collect four or more sticks to make a frame, then use twigs, small sticks, stones, leaves, pine cones etc to represent all of the features on the map, making sure they put them in the right places in relation to each other. They will also need to make a key.

Exploring uses of the forest

Forestry England manages forests in England for timber, people and wildlife. Go for a walk through part of the forest to explore how it is used.

Divide the children into three groups.

Give out the downloadable Forestry England spotter sheets – one group will explore the forest cycle, one will look for evidence of wildlife, and one will investigate what activities people can do in the forest.

Explain that:

- the way forests are used has changed over time; for example, hundreds of years ago, people would have used forests to hunt for food, and collected wood to make charcoal
- although timber (wood) is still harvested from forests today and is used to make lots of useful things, Forestry England replaces felled trees with new ones

Give the children some time to look for the things on their sheet(s), then get back together for a discussion about the evidence they have seen of how the forest is used.

Back at school

Compare leaflets from Forestry England woodlands with those from other sites, such as National Trust – do they use the same symbols on their keys? Are the maps in the same style?

Produce a poster about the forest you visited, showing that the forest is good for timber, people and wildlife.

Compare maps and aerial photos of the forest you visited, with other forests in the UK and overseas.



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The mark of responsible forestry

Forestry England forests and woodlands have been certified in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

PEFC
PEFC/16-40-1001
Promoting Sustainable Forest Management
www.pefc.co.uk

For more information about Forestry England's sustainable management of the nation's forests, please visit **forestryengland.uk**

Forestry England

Man-made features checklist

Put a tick next to the pictures of things that you can see at your forest site

☐ Forest visitor centre





☐ Cafe and/or shop

☐ Adventure playground





☐ Picnic area



☐ Walking trails or routes

☐ Covered area/ sitting circle





☐ Forest art or sculpture



☐ Car park

☐ Toilet block



How many of our two trees logos can you spot during your visit to the forest? ☐

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Forestry England

Natural features checklist

Put a tick next to the pictures of things that you can see at your forest site



☐ Forest

☐ Evergreen trees





☐ Deciduous trees



☐ Vegetation

☐ Valley





☐ River or stream



☐ Hill

☐ Soil





☐ Meadow

How many of our two trees logos can you spot during your visit to the forest? ☐

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