

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

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SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

INTRODUCTION

Spring
Scavenger Hunt on
CD-ROM

First signs of spring

Spring happens at different times around Britain, and at different times from one year to the next depending on weather conditions, so these dates are a guideline to the flora and fauna you may see on the Island during your visit. One of the first butterflies you will see is the Brimstone. Its closed wings resemble leaves and act as camouflage whilst it is hibernating among the ivy. When it flies, however, its bright yellow colouring makes it unmistakable. It particularly likes the nectar of willow blossom and this is why there are plenty of Brimstones on Holt Island. Encourage the children to look hard for these signs of spring! A Spring Scavenger Hunt is included on the CD-ROM to get them going.

MARCH

Horse Chestnut

Sticky buds start to swell in March, followed by the creamy white flowers known as “candles” – this is one of the first trees to come into leaf and flower each year. **SG p23**

Honeybee

Honeybees can also be seen collecting pollen from willow catkins.

Peacock Butterfly

Comes out of hibernation and lays its eggs on nettles. The spots on its wings, which look like eyes, scare off the birds. **SG p5**

Mallard

Watch out for drake mallards on their own, the females might already be sitting on eggs. **SG p12**

APRIL

Orange Tip Butterfly

The male has orange wing tips. Caterpillars eat Lady’s Smock and Hedge Mustard. **SG p5**

Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff

Cascading Willow Warbler song often heard in April. The Chiffchaff repeats its name! **SG p8**

Broken Thrush and Blackbird eggs

This evidence might indicate the activity of Magpies and Jays on Holt Island.

Marsh Marigold

Also known as King Cup, this is a member of the buttercup family which flowers from March to April. **SG p17**

MAY

Cuckoo Flower

Delicate flower found in wetter patches. Sometimes called Lady’s Smock or Milkmaids.

Greenfinch

Wheezy calls give away their location and they are often found feeding among the bright yellow catkins of White Willow. **SG p9**

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Tricky to see but easy to hear as they drill out their nest holes, usually high up in tree trunks.

SG p7

Buff-tailed

Bumblebee

A round, furry bee with an obvious white/cream bottom. **SG p3**

RESOURCES

www.rspb.org.uk/youth/learn Brilliant resources for birds

www.rspb.org.uk Everything bird related, but good for Design and Technology projects

www.enchantedlearning.com Great printable work sheets for every topic!

Teacher's
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GERMINATION AND HABITAT CHANGE

Spring is traditionally seen as the start of nature's calendar year. Everyone is eagerly waiting for plants and insects to appear, followed by young birds heralding summer. Germination is the production of both roots and shoots from a seed.

There are many classroom experiments to show children how individual seeds germinate and which conditions are the best, for example, between light or dark locations, with or without water and so on.

The following project suggestions are concentrating on outdoor activities on a broader scale, with suggestions for follow up classroom work or additional homework sheets.

To understand how landscapes can change scientists monitor colonisation when a volcano erupts and a new island appears. But it is a slow process. Seeds need to be blown in or dropped by birds, plants need to colonise an area, soil needs to develop and larger plants and trees need to become established, followed by animals and birds spreading into the newly formed habitat. For more information on this sequence of natural events it is worth researching the volcanic island of Surtsey, 20 miles off the Icelandic coast. Surtsey appeared overnight in November 1963 and has now been designated a nature reserve with extremely limited access so that scientists can carefully monitor the natural process.

It is possible to recreate changes like these on a smaller scale in a very short space of time to show children how nature can and does develop. Spring is a good time to try this.

Make a mini nature reserve

Take an old window box or large (not too deep) plant pot and put in some sterile soil or compost, making sure there are no seeds in it. Make a depression in the compost and place in it a plastic tub (a yogurt pot is fine) with some rain water in (keep topping it up), a largish stone and a log. If you locate several of these mini reserves in different places around the school you can make some interesting comparisons.

Use a camera to capture any changes and a note book to record which species appear. Watch for any changes. After a few months you will note that the bark begins to peel from the log and there may be some woodlice or snails exploring it. On the stone, some lichen or moss will begin to grow.

If you can leave your mini reserves for several years you may even see tree seedlings appear. On Holt Island 'winter tree work' is undertaken by Rangers and their chainsaws. In your case the children can use secateurs for your 'coppice' management and trim back branches to encourage fresh new growth.

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

THIS IS MY FLOWER!

My name is Date

My flower looks like this 

Its colour is

.....

It has a scent


It has no scent

✓ Tick the right boxes:

My flower is

 star-shaped


 bell shaped

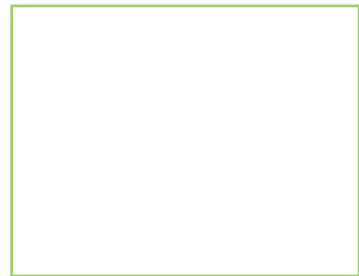
 in a spike


 in a cluster

 daisy-like


 dandelion-like

Its seeds look like this 



I found this minibeast  on my flower

Its leaves are

 heart-shaped

 spiky


 oval

 narrow

 wavy

 toothed


Its stem is

 smooth

 triangular

 square

 prickly

 hairy

I found my flower in/on

My flower is a

PARTS OF A FLOWER

AIM


This exercise demonstrates the different parts of plants and flowers in a very simple way. It encourages children to look more closely at plants and be aware of their differences.


Time needed
15 mins or more

Age group
6-12 years plus

Location
Indoors or outdoors

- What you will need**
- Felt board
 - Laminated parts of a flower
 - Laminated name cards for the parts
 - Worksheets, clipboards and pencils
 - Some flowers as examples to look at

Preparation
Print, laminate and cut out the parts of a flower and name cards from the  CD-ROM

Print Worksheets for the children from the  CD-ROM.

Safety first

Do not allow the children to handle any plants which are thorny or can sting. If the children handle flowers make sure that they wash their hands afterwards. Work in small groups sitting in a semi circle, so that they can all see and avoid being poked by a pencil.

What to do

The idea of the activity is to teach the children the different parts of the flower/plant and the function of each part using questions and descriptions.

Sit the group in a semi-circle around the felt board making sure that they can all see clearly. Give each child a clipboard to rest on, an activity sheet and a pencil. Start by asking simple questions, for example: What part of a plant is found underground and is used for taking up water?

Once the answer is given the relevant piece of the plant is placed on the felt board and the name card is placed by it. As each piece and name card is laid the children can fill in their worksheets.

Once the parts start to get more complicated it is best to describe the part and what it does rather than asking questions (see stage 8 over page). When you get to this stage use the example flowers to help show what you are talking about. By the end each child should have all the parts of the flower on their sheets labelled. **(See over page.)**

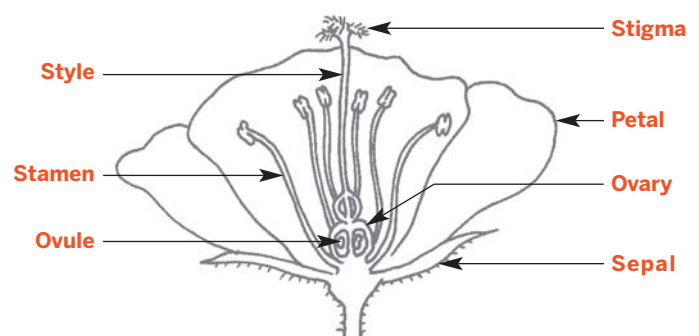
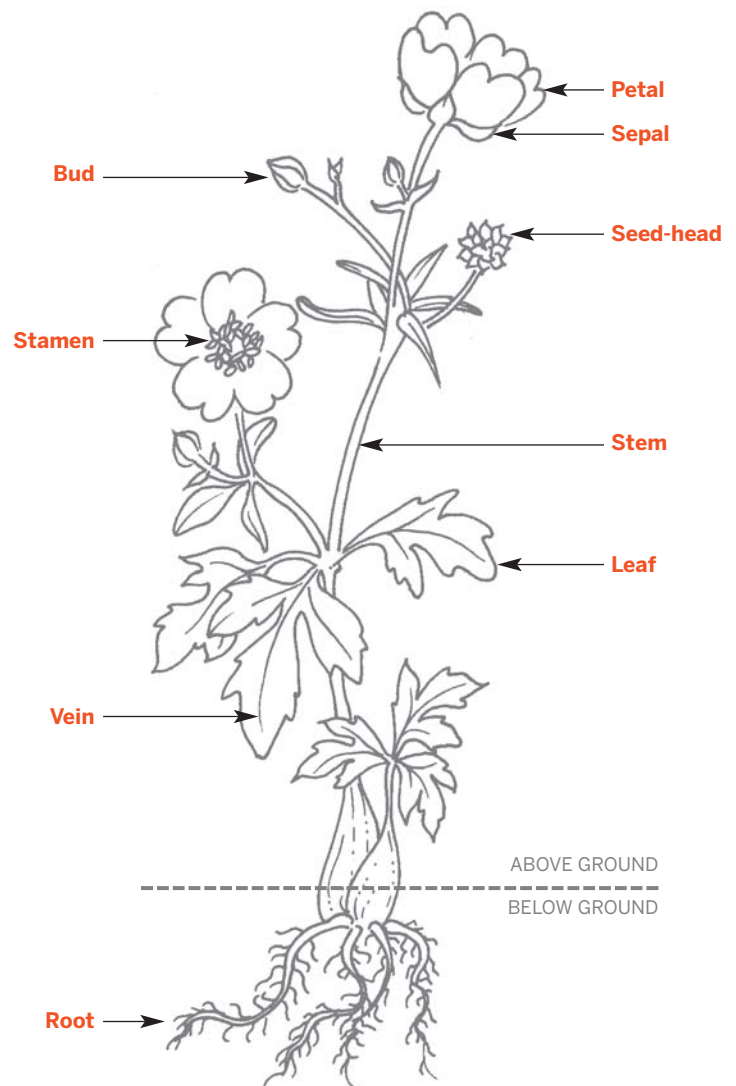


SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

PARTS OF A FLOWER continued

Example questions (in order) with answers

1. What part of the flower is found underground and is used for taking up water? **Roots**
2. What grows up from the **roots** towards the sky? **Stem**
3. What parts of the plant catch sunlight and turn it into food? **Leaves**
4. What protects the flower before it opens? **Bud**
5. When the **bud** opens it forms a ring under the flower and is given another name. What is it? **Sepal**
6. The **bud** opens, what comes out of it? **Flower**
7. What are these parts called? **Petals**
8. Inside the flower are tiny hair-like parts, which have tiny balls on the tips. The tiny balls are where the **pollen** is found and hairs hold the pollen up to the wind and passing insects. This part is called the **stamen**.
9. In the centre of the flower is the **ovary** and inside the ovary are spaces called **ovules**, in which **seeds** are created.
10. To create a seed a process called **pollination** takes place when pollen from the stamen goes into the ovary. But how does it get there?
11. When an insect enters a flower to feed on nectar the pollen sticks to its legs and body. As the insect moves around some of the pollen touches the **stigma**, which sticks up high in the centre of the plant. The pollen that touches the top of the stigma is taken into it. The pollen is then taken down along a tube called the **style** and will eventually end up in the **ovary**.
12. By the end of the summer the petals fall off the flower leaving behind a **seed-head** inside which are the **seeds**.



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PLANT REVISION SHEET

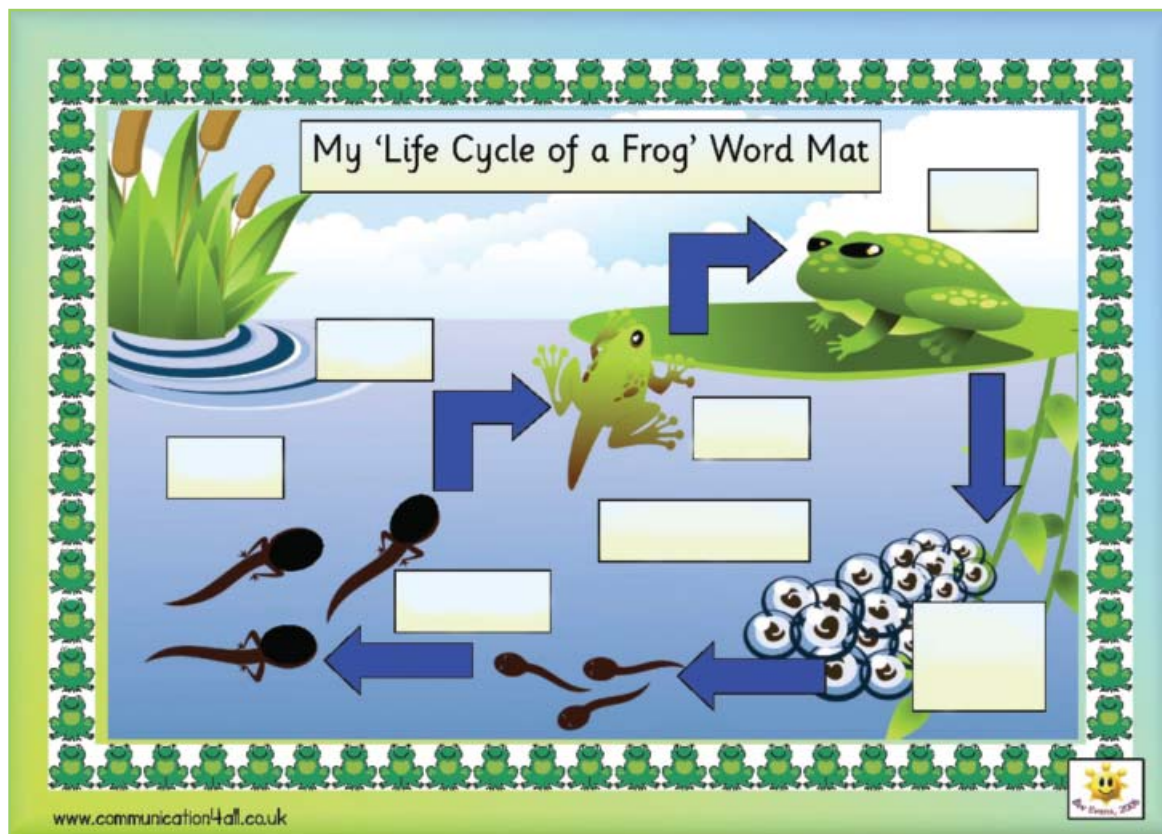
1. What conditions are needed for healthy growth of plants that are not needed for germination?	2. What is present in soil which breaks down dead things and recycles their materials?	3. Name three conditions needed for seeds to germinate.
4. Which part of the plant is a carrot?	5. Name the female parts of a flower.	6. Name the male parts of a flower.
7. Which part of the flower produces pollen?	8. Which part of the flower does pollen land on during pollination?	9. Which part of the flower attracts insects?
10. What do fertilisers provide for plants?	11. Which part of a carrot plant makes food for the plant?	12. Name two different methods of pollination.
13. What do we call the spreading out of seeds from the original plant?	14. What do we call the transfer of pollen from one flower to another?	15. How are the seeds of dandelions dispersed?
16. What pollinates a yellow dandelion?	17. What pollinates dull green grass flowers?	18. What do we call the joining of a pollen grain with an ovule?
19. How are the seeds of blackberries dispersed?	20. What do we call it when seeds start to grow?	21. In a food chain a plant is always a p _ _ _ _ _
22. In a food chain an animal is always a c _ _ _ _ _	23. Where does the energy for a food chain come from?	24. What is a predator?

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

FROG LIFE CYCLE

Can you write the correct words from the list below into the spaces on the picture?

Pond Water Froglet Tadpoles Frog spawn Life cycle Frog



WATERY WORDSEARCH Can you find 18 'watery' words in the grid?

R	S	B	X	Y	S	E	D	L	O	K	Q	B	R	F
T	E	C	R	K	D	R	A	G	O	N	F	L	Y	R
E	F	T	N	A	E	I	M	R	O	I	F	E	S	O
G	T	A	T	Y	E	E	S	T	E	M	D	B	H	G
C	B	A	G	O	R	R	E	T	E	V	H	I	B	O
L	A	F	R	L	N	V	L	O	W	E	I	C	H	E
S	U	L	E	B	F	L	F	D	E	N	N	R	H	C
L	F	L	L	T	E	E	L	O	V	R	E	T	A	W
L	H	I	O	H	E	T	Y	E	T	O	N	U	R	T
I	S	A	P	A	E	Y	R	W	H	E	P	O	N	D
G	I	V	D	N	I	R	E	E	M	O	F	A	M	T
S	F	I	A	I	N	O	I	V	D	F	O	R	F	
T	M	F	T	T	O	N	D	N	A	N	M	L	D	R
S	A	C	Y	D	D	E	Y	O	M	H	I	L	E	R
S	E	R	C	I	S	W	T	Y	P	Y	S	G	F	F

BANKS
DAMSELFLY
DRAGONFLY
FISH
FROG
GILLS
HERON
INVERTEBRATE
MINK
NEWT
OTTER
POND
REEDS
RIVER
SEDIMENT
TADPOLE
TOAD
WATER VOLE

HELPING THE BIRDS!

Birds are found in the grounds of just about every school. With a little work, more can be encouraged and monitored. The real results gathered by the children can then bring maths lessons alive and can help prove that even graphs can be fun!

Feeding



Good food

bacon rind	unsalted peanuts
pastry	cheese
fresh coconut	unsalted nuts
fruit	suet
mealworms	cooked potato
wet bread	cake
cat or dog food	oatmeal
millet	corn
raisins/sultanas	sunflower seeds
mixed bird seed	



Bad food

salted nuts
desiccated coconut
mouldy food
uncooked rice
dry bread

Classroom Activity

Make a hole through the bottom of a yogurt pot, thread a piece of string through and knot the end so that the pot will be suspended upside-down. Mix up some dried fruit and put it loosely into the bottom of the pot. Carefully pour some melted lard over the fruit and mix together. (No need to let the lard boil, just gently melt). Allow to set and then hang it out for the birds to enjoy. A mixture of seed and fat can also be used to fill the cracks in fir cones or holes in logs.

Maintenance

Bird tables are an excellent way to feed the birds. Make sure the feeding surface is cleaned regularly to prevent any nasty diseases from being passed between birds. It is also a good idea to move a bird table once through the winter to prevent a build up of droppings and infections underneath.

Water

It is important to give the birds water all year round because it is vital for drinking and bathing. In the summer you will need to keep filling it up and in the winter you will need to keep melting it! You could combine this activity with monitoring the weather in the school grounds. **(See over page.)**

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

HELPING THE BIRDS! continued

Bedding

In the spring birds are on the look out for bedding material for their nests. Hang out small bundles of 2 cm long wool, sheep's fleece, straw, fluffy feathers and grass, and then sit back and watch who takes what! Which is the most popular?

Bird boxes

Make up some bird boxes and site them around your school grounds. Research which boxes are best for your area and use Design and Technology worksheets (see the introduction to Spring has Sprung!) to make them. Don't locate the boxes on south-facing walls as the young birds could overheat in prolonged sunshine. Make sure they are sited high enough to be away from cats if your school is in a residential area. Make sure you clean out the boxes each year.



Safety first rubbish

Recycling is an important part of everyday life now. Sometimes, however, the reasons why it is important to consider what we do with our rubbish can be forgotten. Think about the rubbish which is thrown away - it may harm birds scavenging on the landfill site. Ask the children to make a list of harmful rubbish.

Firstly, recycle as much as possible, minimising the rubbish ending up in landfill. Landfill destroys habitats and pollutes the surrounding areas. Of the lists the children have just written which items could be recycled?

Secondly, make all rubbish safe - wrap up broken glass, break up the plastic

rings which hold cans together, do not leave a tin can lid partly attached to the can (this can trap legs or beaks, or small animals such as mice can get in but often cannot get out).

These topics can lead onto Countryside Code activities. It is worth encouraging children to pick up litter in the countryside, but emphasize that they should NEVER touch broken glass, needles or anything which may harm them. An adult should be asked to help if possible. Discarded fishing line is a problem to water birds. It can get caught around the feet or beaks of birds on the bank or in the water. It should be picked up carefully, avoiding any sharp hooks, and placed in a bin.

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Don't forget to take your binoculars if you have a pair.

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

BIRD BONANZA!



Walk around Holt Island as quietly as you can and note the birds you see or hear. Look out for the bird feeders. These will be good places to watch the birds. Every time you see a bird, fill in this table:

Bird Name (or description)	What was the bird doing?

Where did you see the most birds?.....

Can you find out which birds these beaks belong to?

A
B
C

Birds on or around Holt Island eat different things. Look at the pictures on the left, and write down the answer to the following questions:

1. Which beak would be best for eating seeds?
2. Which beak would be best for eating insects?
3. Which beak is best for catching fish?



Stand still, be quiet and listen.

Draw the shape of a beak for a Shoveler or a Goose.

Can you hear any birds singing?

Why do you think birds sing?.....

.....
.....
.....
.....

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!



COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE



As humans we mainly talk to each other to communicate, but we can also use hand signals and even facial gestures (smiling or frowning, for example) and head nodding, Morse code (dots and dashes or short and long beeps used in the First and Second World Wars), text messages or semaphore flags still used in the Navy.



Research the semaphore alphabet to discover what this message says. Each position means a letter. Write your answer here

 Birds communicate through their song. They can give warnings (listen for a blackbird calling loudly and very fast when there is a cat around!) and in spring  listen out for lots of songs as birds prepare to nest. We can't understand exactly what they are saying but it is important that the birds listening can.

MAKE YOUR OWN SECRET COMMUNICATION CODE

Using a simple code like this is a bit like communicating in another language. Each letter is represented by a number:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Holt Island could be written 8-15-12-20 9-19-12-1-14-4

Can you decipher this message? Write the letters in the spaces underneath the number codes:

25-15-21 3-1-14 13-1-11-5 2-1-19-11-5-20-19 21-19-9-14-7 23-9-12-12-15-23

.....



Use the table above to tell your friend what you have seen on the Island today. See if they can unscramble your code.

Code

Translation

Create your own code and try it out. Use numbers or shapes to represent letters.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

BIRDS' NESTS AND EGGS

See how many egg and nest questions you can answer.

Birds lay hard-shelled eggs. Some birds, like chickens, lay eggs each day. A chicken's egg takes around 20 days to hatch, whilst a swan's egg takes around 30 days.

1. How long does a blackbird's egg take to hatch?.....
2. How long does a wren's egg take to hatch?.....
3. What factors might affect this?.....
4. Worldwide, which birds eggs have the longest incubation period?
5. World wide which bird lays the smallest egg?.....

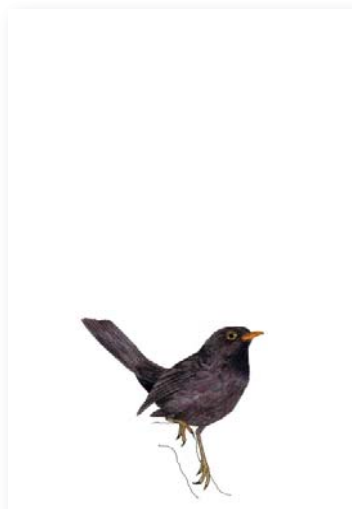
Birds build nests for breeding in trees, on cliffs, or on the ground. Most birds are taken care of by at least one parent until they are able to fly and get their own food.

6. What is special about a cuckoo and its eggs?.....

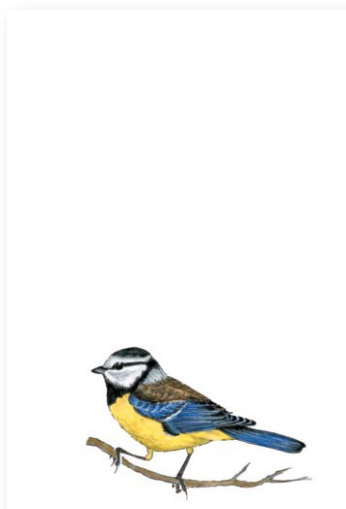
Nests are made using the materials nearby, so sometimes they are stones roughly pulled into a circle on a pebbly beach.

7. What do you think most birds use on Holt Island for their nests?.....

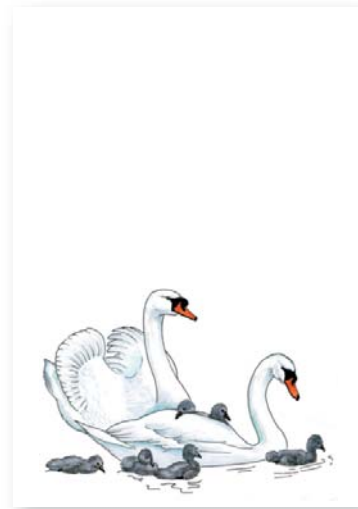
Draw a picture of a Blackbird's nest, a Blue Tit's nest and a Swan's nest.



Blackbird



Blue Tit



Swan

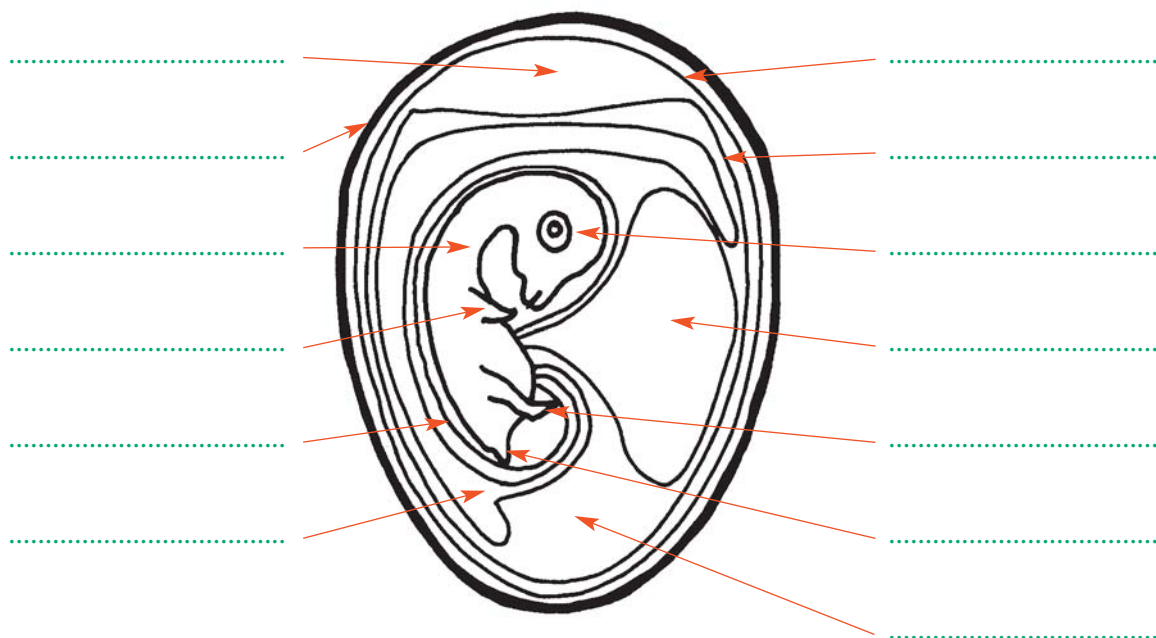
List what each bird has used to make their nest.

.....
.....
.....

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

BIRDS' NESTS AND EGGS continued

Using the information below, label and colour the diagram of this 10-day-old egg.



Air cell A space at the large end of the egg, between the inner and outer shell membranes.

Albumen The egg white. It provides protein and water for the embryo and protects it from microorganisms.

Allantois A sack that holds some of the embryo's waste. It is attached to the embryo near the legs.

Amnion A membrane that surrounds the embryo, protecting it from dehydration (losing water) and shock.

Eggshell The hard, protective coating of the egg. It is semi-permeable; it lets gas exchange occur, but keeps other substances from entering the egg. It is made of calcium carbonate.

Embryo The developing chick inside the egg.

Eye Large and prominent on the head.

Inner shell membrane The thin membrane located between the outer shell membrane and the albumen.

Leg One of the lower limbs of the chick.

Outer shell membrane The thin membrane located just inside the shell.

Tail Located at the far end (the posterior) of the embryo.

Wing One of the upper limbs of the chick.

Yolk The yellow part of the egg; it contains nourishment (food) for the embryo.

WHAT BIRD AM I?

Can you work out which birds these clues describe? (Use books or the internet to research your answers if necessary.)

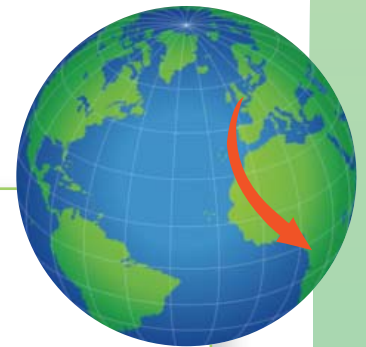
1. Water bird, lobed feet, white bill and face shield
2. Large brown bird, big black eyes, hoots
3. Green, red cap, yellow rump, often feeds on the ground
4. White rump, black head, pink breast
5. Black and white and pink, long tail, usually found in flocks
6. Grey, long legs, black crest, long yellow beak, likes to eat fish
7. Blue back, orange breast, long beak, lays eggs in tunnels in the river bank
8. Brown back, red chin and breast eats worms, seed, fruit and insects
9. Yellow breast and belly, blue crown, olive/grey back
10. Yellow and black wings, white rump, red chin

Long-distance traveller

Imagine you are a Willow Warbler, and after the summer here on Holt Island, you now have to migrate to West Africa. Using the internet or books, make some notes about your characteristics.



I am a Willow Warbler notes



Use the table below to list your thoughts, regarding when, where, why you should leave, what dangers you will meet on the way, what might help you, what will you eat.

Reasons to go	Reasons to stay

Now write a poem to reveal your feelings as a bird at the end of the summer.

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

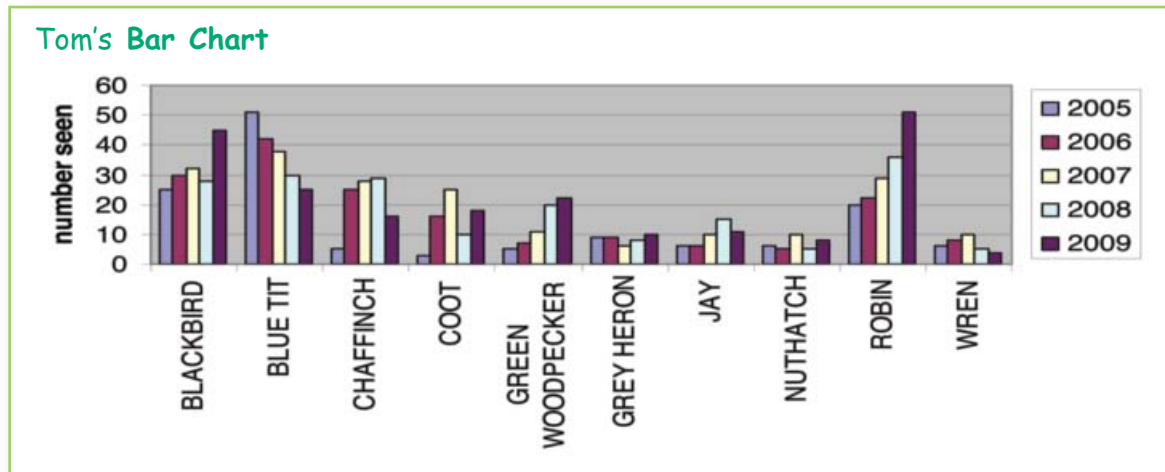
BIRD NUMBERS

Tom is keen on birds. Over the summer he kept a record of every time he saw a particular bird on Holt Island or on the River Great Ouse (each picture = 5 birds)

Tom's Tally Chart	
Sparrow	
Willow warbler	
Blue tit	
Heron	
Robin	
Green woodpecker	
Swan	

- Looking at the tally chart:
1. How many times did Tom see a Robin?
 2. What was the most common bird?
 3. Which bird did Tom see least often?

Tom kept a careful record of birds over 5 years, and his findings are shown below.



- Looking at the bar chart:
4. Which two species have consistently increased?.....
 5. Which species appears to be decreasing?
 6. Can you think why the Heron seems to be the most constant?

During your visit to Holt Island, keep a tally of the bird species you see, and note how many of each you spot. Record your findings in a graph like Tom's bar chart.

BIRD MIGRATION GAME

AIM

To demonstrate bird migration and the problems faced by birds on route.

Time needed
15 mins or more

Age group
6 years plus

Location
Indoors or outdoors

What you will need

- 216 Fuel Cards/tokens
- 36 Action Cards
- 10 lengths of rope or skipping ropes
- Dice

Preparation

Print 216 Fuel Cards from the CD-ROM or use plain green paper/tokens instead

Print 36 Action Cards from the CD-ROM.



What to do

All the children are birds, for example Swans migrating from Iceland to England or Swallows migrating from England to Africa.

Gaining fuel

Before the children can start their migration they must gain fuel. To do this each child in turn throws a dice 7 times to see how many green Fuel Cards they can get.

Throwing numbers

1 to 4 on the dice = 1 Fuel Card

Number 5 on the dice = 2 Fuel Cards

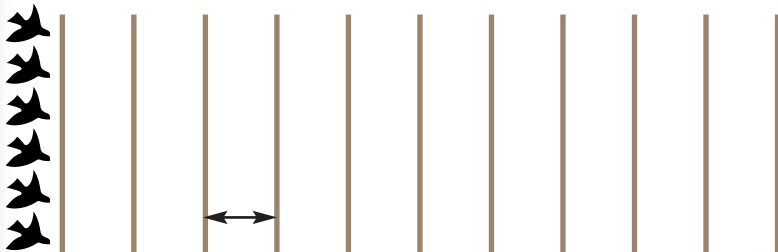
Number 6 on the dice = No Fuel Cards



Each Fuel Card represents food for one day so when some 'birds' have got 7 Fuel Cards they can start the journey. Explain that this illustrates that some birds have problems putting on enough weight before migration.

The Journey

Lay out rope/twigs/draw lines so there are 10 flying days.



= 1 day's flight

Variations

There is suddenly a good wind. All birds go forwards 1 day and keep the same number of Fuel Cards.

Very bad weather. All birds go back 1 day and keep the same number of Fuel Cards/lose 1 Fuel Card.

All birds get to England and find their lake has been drained. Only those with more than 2 Fuel Cards make it to the new winter site!

Each bird in turn picks an Action Card.

- If the bird moves forward 1 day it has to give back a Fuel Card, which represents the energy it has used in flying for one day.
- If the bird stays in the same place for a turn it gains a Fuel Card because it is gaining energy by resting.
- If there is a really good wind then the birds don't use energy flying so they keep the same number of Fuel Cards.
- Any bird that runs out of Fuel Cards dies of exhaustion and is out of the game. They are also out of the game if they pick an Action Card which says 'Sorry! You are now dead'.

Action Card
Blown off course, go back 2 days. Keep same number of fuel cards



Teacher's Page

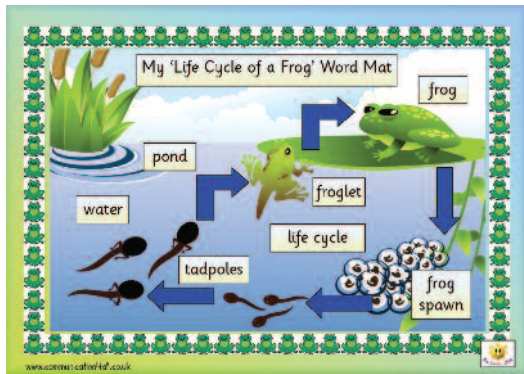
SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

ANSWERS

PLANT REVISION SHEET

1. Light (allow fertilisers)
2. Microbes
3. Air/water/warmth
4. The root (swollen tap root)
5. Ovary/carpel/pistil/style
6. Stamen (anther and filament)
7. Anther
8. Stigma
9. Bright petals or nectary
10. Nutrients/minerals/nitrates
11. The (green) leaves
12. Wind and insect
13. Seed dispersal
14. Pollination
15. By the wind
16. Insect/bee/or other named insect
17. The wind
18. Fertilisation
19. By birds/animals (in their droppings)
20. Germination
21. Producer
22. Consumer
23. The Sun
24. Something which hunts and kills its food

FROG LIFE CYCLE

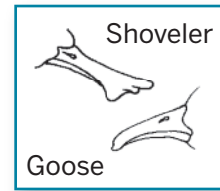
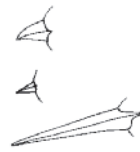


WATERY WORDSEARCH



BIRD BONANZA!

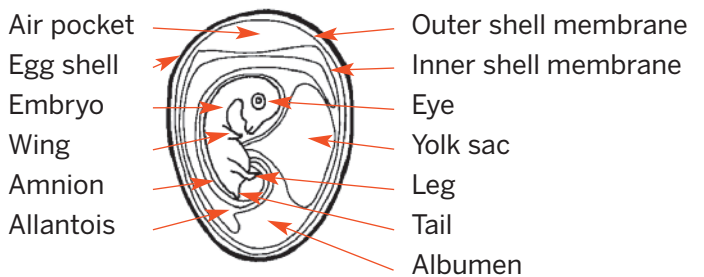
1. Chaffinch (A)
2. Blue Tit (C)
3. Heron (B)



COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE

Semaphore word: Feathers

Message deciphered: You can make baskets using willow.



BIRDS' NESTS AND EGGS

1. 10–19 days (2 or 3 clutches a year, 3–5 eggs per clutch)
2. 13–18 days (2 clutches per year, 5–8 eggs a time)
3. Weather (especially temperature), predators, nest disturbance
4. The male Emperor Penguin incubates the single egg on the top of its feet continuously without relief for 64–67 days. The male kiwi and wandering albatross incubate for 85 days but do leave the nest to feed
5. West Indian Vervain hummingbird and bee hummingbird eggs are around 10 mm and incubate for 16–17 days
6. Lays eggs in other birds nests. The young cuckoo will be fed whatever the “foster parent” eats, regardless how big the foster parent is. These foster parents can get exhausted by the demands of such a big baby
7. Twigs, moss and feathers

WHAT BIRD AM I?

1. Coot
2. Tawny Owl
3. Green Woodpecker
4. Bullfinch (male)
5. Long-tailed Tit
6. Heron
7. Kingfisher
8. Robin
9. Blue Tit
10. Goldfinch

BIRD NUMBERS

1. 10
2. Blue Tit
3. Willow Warbler
4. Green woodpecker and Robin
5. Blue Tit
6. There is a constant food source of fish around Holt Island.

Teacher's Page