Camouflage Caterpillars

1 Overall aims:

- Engage with nature;
- Emphasize with nature;
- Respect others, animals and nature;
- Respect the environment of animals;
- Develop understanding of adaptation;
- Encourage Mathematics in play.

2 Vocabulary - keywords

Biodiversity, Interdependence, Animals, Adaptation

3 Sustainable abilities developed

- Systematic thinking
- Critical thinking competency
- Collaboration competency
- Integrated problem solving

4 Pillars of sustainability included

- Environmental

5 STEAM domains

S, M

6 Teaching methodologies/activity outline

Introduction:

This activity has good links with animal adaptation and it is an active demonstration of a simple food chain.

Tree → Caterpillar → Blue Tit → Sparrow Hawk.

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It is also a rich context for number processes work. Consider: a single blue tit chick can eat as many as 100 caterpillars per day. A blue tit brood can be as large as 10 so with both mother and father blue tit foraging all day, they need to find 500 caterpillars each. The brood will typically take 20 days to fledge so that equates to 20,000 caterpillars by the end. This is before they have even fed themselves!

Pupils could try to work out how their rate of finding woollen caterpillars compares to a blue tit by working out roughly how many caterpillars a real blue tit would find per hour/half hour.

Activity:

1. Split the children into two equal groups.
2. Let each person take a number of "caterpillars" or "worms" that they will hide (can be a good link to multiplication e. g.: if we all take two, how many have we got?)
3. The two groups hide their woollen strands in separate areas of the grounds.
4. When all worms are hidden, explain that the groups have now become hungry birds.
5. The two groups need to swap areas and try to find as many of the other group's strands as possible in the time allowed.
6. Discuss which were easier to find and why.

Extension:

1. Use only short lengths of green wool and hide a series of strands along a hedgerow.
2. The participants walk slowly and quietly along the hedgerow to see how many "caterpillars" they can spot along the route and then compare their abilities to those of a blue tit.

7 Expected learning outcomes

The child will be able to:

- follow instructions;
- engage with nature;
- develop senses.

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8	**Assessment** The evaluation is implemented through observation of the activity by the teacher who assesses pupils' commitment and participation.
9	**Equipment and materials to be used in learning unit (tools, ingredients etc)** • Different lengths and colours of wool including green; • A varied open space.
10	**Kind of setting - lab, kitchen, outdoor etc.** Outdoor
11	**References - source:** Learning through Landscapes website, Outdoor Learning Ideas https://www.ltl.org.uk/free-resources/?swoof=1&pa_age=2-5&pa_subject=outdoor-learning

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