

Forest Flora and Fauna: A science lesson for children aged 7 - 9

Teacher Guide



This science lesson has been designed for use with children aged 7 – 9 but could be adapted to use with younger or older children. The PowerPoint presentation can be edited to suit the needs of your learners.

The Lesson's aims

- **To understand why forests are so important** – Children will learn about the importance of forests for biodiversity, regulating the climate and producing resources.
- **To explore possible ways of grouping living thing** – Children will learn about the plants and animals that live in sustainably managed forests.
- **To learn about forest habitats** – Children will discover what makes a habitat suitable for certain species to thrive.

Background information

Sustainably managed forests

Children will be introduced to sustainably managed forests for paper production. Sustainably managed forests are crucial for paper production, providing a reliable and renewable source of wood fibre while ensuring ecological and social benefits.

Key facts about sustainably managed forests for paper production

Renewable resource

Paper production relies on a renewable resource, trees, which are replenished through sustainable forestry practices.

Biodiversity and ecosystem services

Well-managed forests preserve biodiversity and provide essential ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration and clean water.

Growing forests

European forests are growing, with new growth exceeding harvested wood, ensuring a sustainable supply of timber for paper production. Between 2005 and 2020, European forests grew by 58,390 square kilometres – that's an area bigger than Switzerland and amounts to over 1,500 football pitches every day!

Certification

Certification programmes like FSC® and PEFC ensure responsible sourcing, traceability, and adherence to sustainable forestry standards.

Circular economy

The paper life cycle is a well-functioning system which minimises waste, with high paper recycling rates. The European paper recycling rate is 79% and 83% of paper packaging is recycled.

Low carbon intensity

Paper production, especially when utilising renewable energy and recycled fibre, has a surprisingly low carbon intensity. The print and paper industry is one of the lowest industrial greenhouse gas emitters in Europe, accounting for just 0.8% of emissions in 2022.

Reduced water consumption

The paper industry is constantly working to reduce water consumption and implement water management practices. In 2022, around 90% of the water used in the European paper industry was returned to its source (having been reused within the mill before being suitably treated), with the remainder either evaporated, staying within the product, or bound up in solid waste.

Environmental benefits

Sustainable forest management helps to mitigate climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide and preserving forest ecosystems.

Social and economic benefits

Well-managed forests support local livelihoods and contribute to the broader economy through the production of paper and paper-based products.

Sources

- FSC® [What Is Sustainable Forestry?](#)
- PEFC [What Is Sustainable Forest Management?](#)
- Two Sides [Myths & Facts Booklet](#)
- WWF [Why Forests Are So Important](#)
- Forest Europe [State of Europe's Forests 2020](#)
- Love Paper [The Paper Fact File](#)

The Lesson sequence

Use the PowerPoint presentation to guide children through the lesson. You can edit the slides to tailor the learning to your pupils. You'll find useful notes on each slide in the presentation which expand on ideas and suggest relevant explanations, questions and points for discussion.

Resources needed:

- Forest Flora and Fauna Presentation
- Coniferous and Deciduous Trees Activity (one per pupil or pair)
- Animal Species Classification (one per pupil, if required)
- European Forest Animals Photos (one set per group)
- Animal Masks (one per pupil)
- My Forest Habitat Activity (one per pupil)
- Access to reference books and digital devices for research purposes

Slide 2	Introduce the lesson and tell the children that in this lesson, they will be learning about the importance of forests, forest habitats and ways of grouping living things.
Slides 3 - 6	Introduce the term 'sustainably managed forests' and ask children why they think forests are so important. Use the information on these slides to discover how forests support biodiversity, regulate climate and provide resources.
Slide 7	Tell pupils about REY®'s paper mill in France and how wood from local sustainably managed forests is used to make their paper.
Slide 8	Tell children that there are different types of trees that grow in sustainably managed forests in Europe. Hand out the Coniferous and Deciduous Trees Activity and ask children to cut out and sort the trees, then stick them in the correct column on the table
Slides 9 - 11	<p>Use these slides to discover some of the animals that can be found in France's sustainably managed forests.</p> <p>Give each group a set of the European Forest Animals Photos and ask the children to sort the animals into different groups, discussing and choosing their own criteria.</p> <p>Show children the animal classification diagram and ask them to find animals from the photos on their desks that fit each category.</p>
Slide 12	Discuss the different types of habitats that can be found in the European sustainably managed forests and ask children about the animals in the photos on their desks. Do they know which sorts of habitats these animals live in and why?
Slide 13	<p>Explain the research task to the pupils. Let them choose which animal they would like to learn more about. They can then cut out and colour their animal mask and use books or digital devices to research their chosen animal. They can use the My Forest Habitat sheet to guide them with their research.</p> <p>Once children have completed their mask and research, they can take turns to present their findings to their group or to the class. Children who researched the same animal might like to compare their information and check it for accuracy.</p>
Slide 14	Recap on the lesson's learning using the prompts on this slide. You might wish to ask children to respond to the prompts individually and record their responses, or you might ask pupils to discuss their answers in pairs, then share responses as a class.