

## NATURE

## Activity N03

**Theme**

Class activity (CA). Students investigate and identify some of the plants and animals in a local habitat. A food chain from the habitat is represented in a mobile made by the students to hang in the classroom or at home.

**Objectives**

Teaching about food chains, the mutual dependence of plants and animals in any

habitat and the vital role of energy from the sun.

**Curricular Strands**

SESE, Science—Plant and animal life, identify the interrelationships and interdependence between plants and animals in local and other habitats

Visual Arts—Drawing, painting and colouring; Construction.

**Skills**

Questioning, observing, predicting, sorting, identifying, drawing, colouring, designing

**Time**

30 minutes to research food chain; 40-50 minutes to make the mobile

**Links to Green Schools**

Importance of plants to our environment, Environmental art

# Who eats who?

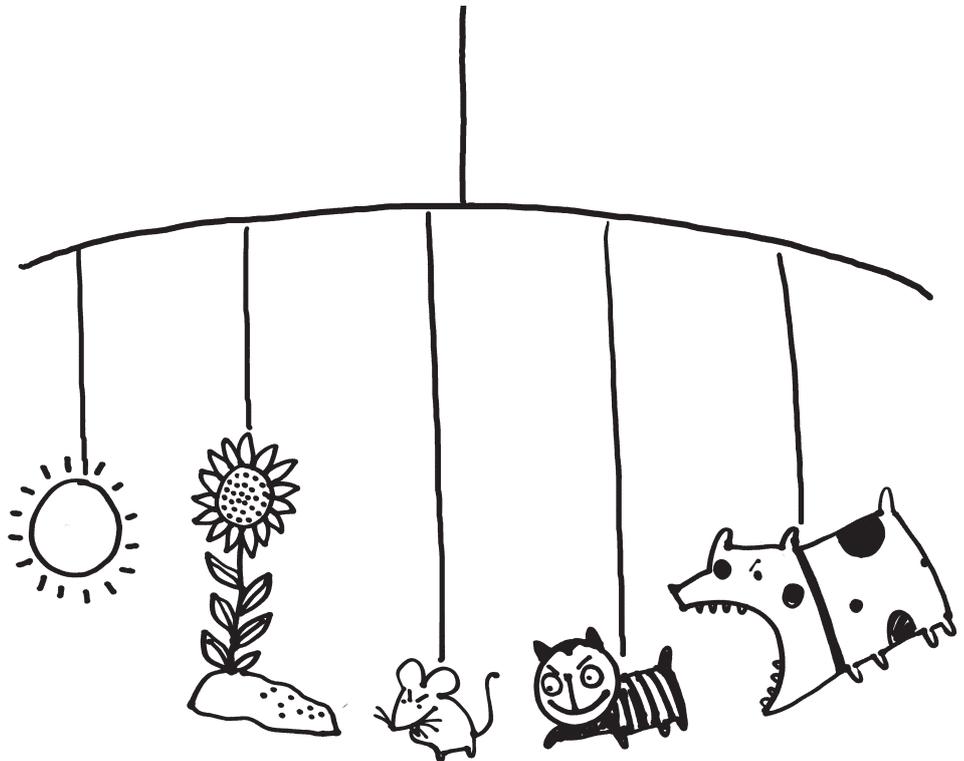
## MAKE A MOBILE OF A FOOD CHAIN

**WHAT YOU NEED**

- Magnifying glass
- Pooters for collecting insects (see [www.blackrock-edu.ie](http://www.blackrock-edu.ie))
- Habitat to study (tree, wasteland, log pile)
- Identification keys
- A3 paper
- Colouring pencils
- Photos or drawings of relevant plants and animals
- Coat hangers
- String

**WHAT YOU DO**

- 1 Explain to students that all living things get their energy from the sun. All plants need the sun to survive and grow, and all animals eat plants or other animals that have eaten plants. For example, we eat cornflakes, which are made from corn in a field, which needs the sun to grow.



- 2 Students are going to look for food chains in their habitat, where energy is passed as food from one species to another, with all energy originating from the sun.

- 3 Discuss the idea of a food chain before undertaking the habitat investigation. Some possible food chains could be presented prior to the study.

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Continued →

**Log Pile** Sun → Tree → Dead wood/leaves → Woodlice → Robin

**Tree** Sun → Leaves → Beetles → Blackbirds

**Wasteland/Grassland** Sun → Buttercup → Bee

**Woodland** Sun → Plant → Seeds → Mouse → Owl

- 4 Pick a habitat close to you or in the school grounds to study—a tree, a log pile, a pond, wasteland, a wildlife garden, woods or a river or a fallow field.
- 5 Divide the class into groups each equipped with magnifying glass, pooters, note paper and identification keys.
- 6 Tell the class they are looking for different plants and animals that live in the chosen habitats.
- 7 Students should also look for different sources of food. What do the plants need to grow? Who eats the plants? What creatures eat other creatures?
- 8 Depending on weather conditions, identifications can be made at the location or in the class room.
- 9 Pick one food chain from your chosen local habitat to make into a mobile.
- 10 Give each student an A3 piece of paper and ask them to draw different plants and animals in their food chain.
- 11 Cut out each animal shape and hang them with pieces of string from a coat hanger or in a line so they turn inside each other.

### Go further

- 1 Talk about different habitats in Ireland and the world in class. Get different groups of students to make a mobile representing each habitat, such as a rock pool, a bog or fen, a meadow, a pond, a river, an urban park, an oak forest, a mountain, the Arctic circle, a desert, a coral reef, a rain-forest and an evergreen forest.