Free!

Art & ecology for kids

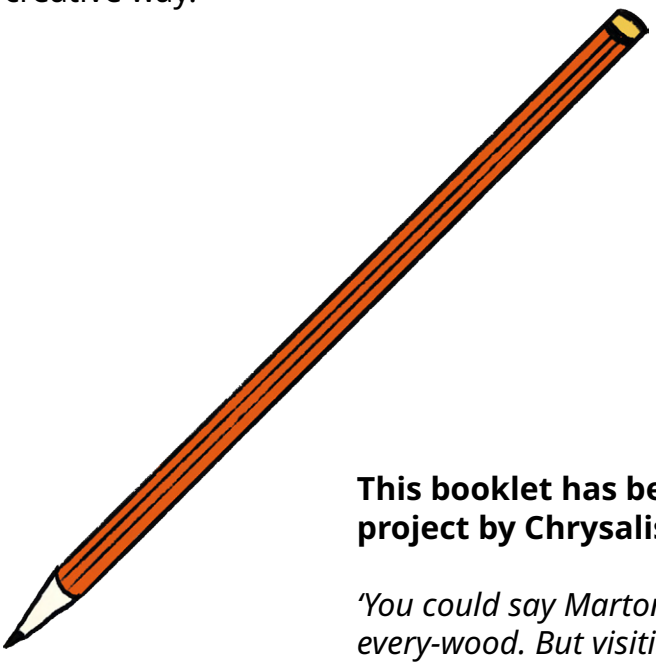
Woodland Art Adventure

Map your way through a wood near you

CHRYSALIS ARTS DEVELOPMENT

Woodland Art Adventure

Mapping your way through a wood near you
This booklet will help you explore and map a wood or natural space near you in a fun and creative way.



This booklet has been inspired by Mapping Marton Wood, a project by Chrysalis Arts Development.

'You could say Marton Wood in many ways is fairly unremarkable, an every-wood. But visiting it time and time again has revealed the wonder of the every day with so much wildlife and activity packed into its few acres. We've been able to listen to the richness of the dawn and evening choruses, as well as revealing sounds usually hidden to human ears such as bats, and the sounds of insects inside the trees.'
Sound Artist Rob Mackay for Mapping Marton Wood

Marton Wood is a small, North Yorkshire woodland leased by Chrysalis Arts as part of the company's longstanding commitment to Slow Art development programmes. Like all woodlands, when you leave the field or street and veer over the brambles into the wood, there is a moment of magic that happens. Woodlands are spaces of sanctuary for humans and wildlife.

The Mapping Marton Wood project explores the relationships people and wildlife have with this 'unremarkable' but extraordinary place. The project weaves together artists, ecologists and the people who live near Marton Wood.

As a part of the project, four commissioned artists have created work in response to the wood, its ecology and surroundings, and the community of Marton cum Grafton. Use the QR code to see their work. Learn more about the project at chrysalisarts.com/mapping-marton-wood

Through Mapping Marton Wood, we hope to delve into new connections between people and the natural world. Telling stories matters in a time when humans are increasingly isolated from, and unaware of, the ecology of a place. As the climate crisis deepens and our woodlands respond, it is vital that we recognise our interconnectedness.

Special thanks to our funders.

CHRYSALIS ARTS DEVELOPMENT

Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

COMMUNITY FUND

Preparing for Your Adventure

Step 1
Find a place to explore

This can be a small green space with a few trees, a bigger woodland or forest. Not sure where to go? Now is a great time to explore a new woodland near you, ask a grown up for help.

Where is your woodland?

.....

Step 2
Gather supplies

*A*long with this booklet gather:
❒ A pencil case with your favourite pens, pencils or crayons to draw with
❒ Spare paper
❒ You may also like to bring along a magnifying glass if you have one

Step 3
Head outdoors!

Don't forget to dress for the weather, bring a snack, and bring a grown up along.

Exploring Fungi

Let's start by exploring the woodland floor. It is full of activity!

The floor of any forest and wood is home to a special layer of leaf litter: with fungi, insects, fallen leaves, and even animal tracks.

What do you think you'll find in the leaf litter in your local wood?

Vocabulary: Leaf Litter

The layer of dead leaves on the ground.

There will definitely be fungi on the woodland floor.
Fungi are everywhere, even if you can't always see them!

They form a huge underground network, helping trees and plants to share nutrients. Some fungi also break down dead plants, returning important minerals to the soil.

A healthy wood will also have rotting trees down on the floor, with fungi living on them.

Vocabulary: Fungus

A type of living thing that helps break down dead material. When there is more than one, we call them fungi. Well-known types of fungi are mushrooms, yeast and mould.

Match these common British fungi to their pictures.

Fly Agaric: Red with white spots, often found near birch trees.

Jelly Ear: Soft and rubbery, grows on dead wood, looks like an ear!

Earthball: Round, brown, and rough, found in leaf litter.

Botanical Drawing

Botanical drawing is a way of carefully observing and recording plants and fungi. Artists and scientists use it to study nature.

Once you start looking for fungi, you will find lots!

Now it's your turn. Try recording the fungi you find in your woodland.

Tips and hints for drawing fungi

- Look closely at the shape, size, and texture.
- You'll need a variety of drawing pencils. Start with light pencil lines before adding details.
- Use shading to show different textures, like smooth caps or rough stems.

Hatching

Draw parallel lines close together to create shading.

Stippling

Use dots to create shading. Denser dots make it darker.

Cross-hatching

Layer crisscrossing lines for darker shading.

Blending

Smoothly move from dark to light, using your finger to blend.

Sketch your fungi here

Become a Woodland Detective

Hunting for fungi requires a lot of looking at the ground. As you look, you might find lots of other things as well as fungi.

A healthy wood will have biodiversity. You have probably come across all sorts of clues about the different animals living in the wood.

What animal signs have you found?

Tick off any that you have ever spotted in your wood.

❒ Footprints in mud or soft soil
❒ Droppings (Poo) – Different shapes for different animals!
❒ Fur, feathers, or even shed skin (from snakes!)
❒ Gnawed nuts, stripped bark, or half-eaten fruit
❒ Burrows, nests, or tunnels in grass

What animal signs have you found?

Draw lines to match these tracks to their animals.

Fox

Narrow, diamond-shaped prints with claws.

Badger

Large, wide tracks with long claw marks.

Deer

Small, pointed hooves in a heart shape.

Rabbit

Small round prints in pairs.

Draw your footprint below!

Look carefully underneath your own shoes to work out the track you might leave in a muddy patch of your wood.

Wonderful Wildflowers

When you think about woods, you probably picture trees. But if you look down near your feet or around the edge of paths you'll often find that there are wildflowers growing.

Tip! They are easier to spot when you slow down and look closely.

Mindful Moment
Wildflower Watching

Slowing down and noticing small details in nature can help us feel calm, focused and happy.

You've probably come across the word mindfulness. It can sound a bit confusing, but being mindful is just about paying attention to what's happening now. It means that we don't miss things and that we can enjoy the moment.

People who spend time being mindful often find that they react more calmly to stressful situations at other times too.

This quiet activity helps you practise mindfulness.

What to Do:

1. Find a wildflower in the wood
2. Sit or crouch quietly nearby.
3. Look closely at your flower, without picking it:
   - What colour is it?
   - How many petals can you count?
   - What shape are its leaves?
   - Is anything crawling or flying nearby?
4. Breathe slowly as you watch it.
5. Try to sit still for one whole minute.

What do you notice by the end?

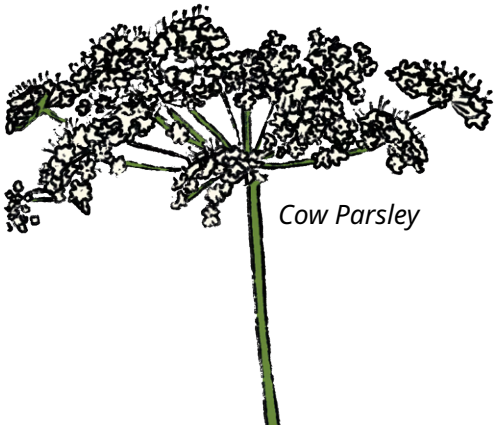
I feel .....

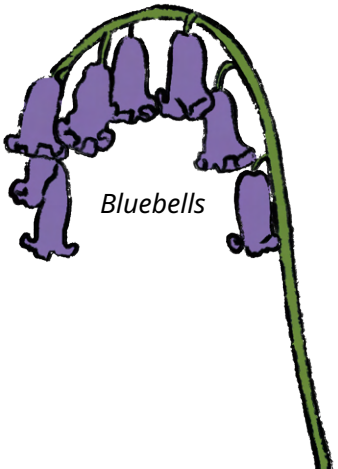
QUIZ

Which flower has a name that sounds like it belongs in a wizard school?

A) Enchanter's Nightshade
B) Fireweed
C) Sneezing Nettle
D) Broomstick Blossom

Find the answer in the back of the booklet.


Cow Parsley


Bluebells

Red Campion

Foxglove

Embrace the Mess!

During your mindful walk around the wood, you may have noticed other things along the woodland floor, such as fallen branches, rotting logs and piles of leaves on the ground. You might even think they are a bit messy.

Well, for once, being 'messy' is actually a really good thing.

This natural mess gives tiny creatures a place to hide, live, and grow. It makes a brilliant habitat for insects, fungi and even small animals that use these messy bits as their homes.

Dead wood might look lifeless, but it's full of life!

- Fungi grow on it
- Insects burrow inside it
- Birds and mammals hunt for food around it

Exploring Insects, Moths & Climate Clues

Some of the most important parts of a woodland are also the smallest. They're not always visible to us, but within even a small wood, thousands of tiny insects are always close by.

Vocabulary: Ecosystem

A community of living things and the places that they live.

Insects might be tiny, but they play big roles and are vital for keeping ecosystems healthy. They:

- Pollinate plants, so they can make seeds
- Help break down dead plants and animals
- Provide food for birds, bats and other creatures

Night-Time Nature

Sometimes we don't spot insects because they are living under the surfaces of the woodland.

But sometimes, there's another reason. Lots of woodland insects come out at night, at a time when people have often gone inside their homes.

Catch a glimpse of this nocturnal world!

- Try leaving a light or torch on outside when it's dark
- Next, turn all the lights off inside your room and open the curtains
- Look closely at the creatures flying about, you may well see some moths!

Tip! It's easier to try this in winter, when it gets dark earlier!

Bug Hide-and-Seek!

Choose a small area of the forest floor and look closely. If you have a magnifying glass, now is a great time to use it.

Tip! They are easier to spot when you slow down and look closely.

- Gently lift a large stick or peek under a small stone (you can put them back when you've finished)
- Look at the bark on fallen branches

❒ Tick the ones you've spotted

❒ Earthworm

Slippery and pinkish, helps keep the soil healthy.

❒ Woodlouse

Looks like a tiny grey armadillo with lots of legs!

❒ Centipede

Fast-moving with lots of legs and a long, thin body.

❒ Millipede

Slower than a centipede, two pairs of legs per body section.

❒ Beetle

Shiny or bumpy, often black or brown, with hard wing covers.

❒ Ant

Small and speedy, usually found in groups.

QUIZ

How many legs does a millipede have?

A) A million
B) 100
C) Depends on the species
D) Just two (but they run really fast)

Find the answer at the back of the booklet.

Identifying moths

What's the difference between a moth and a butterfly?

You may be wondering, what's the difference between a moth and a butterfly. Often, it can be quite hard to know! They're part of the same insect family, but there are some clues to help you tell them apart:

Butterflies		**Moths**	
			
Usually fly in the day	Rest with their wings closed	Often fly at night	Rest with their wings open or flat
			
Thin antennae with lumps at the ends	Often bright colours	Feathery or straight antennae	Usually earthy or soft colours

But nature doesn't always have fixed rules. Sometimes it changes them! You might find moths that fly in the day or have bright colours too.

Exploring colours and patterns

Moths are definitely not all brown or 'earthy'. They can come in different colours and patterns. In Marton Wood, moth experts have found:

Yellow Tail

White with a fluffy yellow body

Flame Carpet

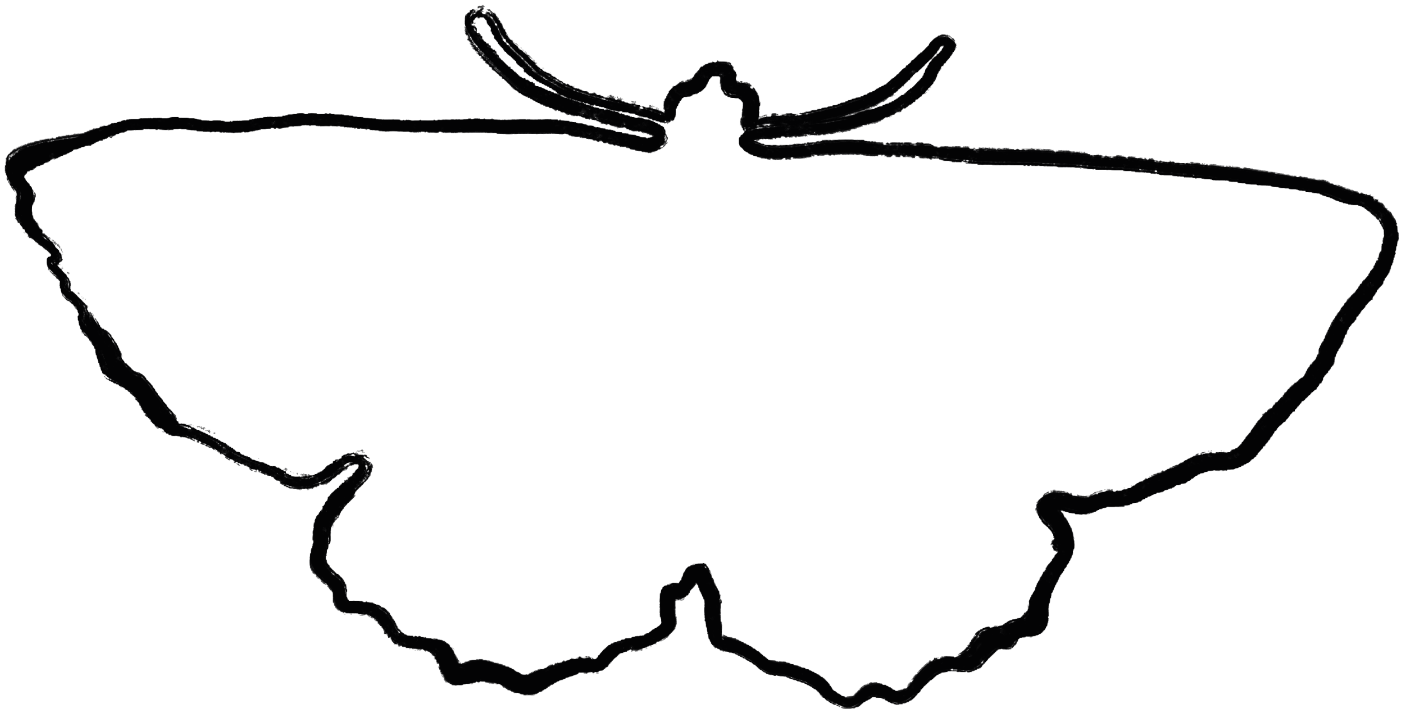
Pale with bright red or pink

Cinnabar

Black with red wings

Poplar Hawk-moth

Big with pointed wings



Design your own moth

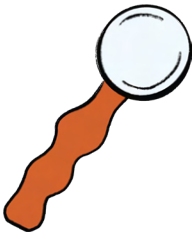
Before you design

• Where does your moth live? On tree bark, in leaves, or in grass?
•Does it want to blend in or stand out and warn off predators?
•Will it be big and bold like the Poplar Hawk-moth or delicate like the Cinnabar?

Your Moth Masterpiece

Name of my moth:

Fun fact about my moth:



Vocabulary: Camouflage

Colours or patterns that help an animal blend in with its surroundings, so it's harder to see.

Many moths have clever patterns to help them survive in the wild and sometimes they might even be camouflaged. Others have bright warning colours to send out a warning: "I taste bad!" or "Stay away!"

Credits: Image 1 and 4 Charlie Fletcher, Image 2 and 3 Ian Kimber via UKMoths

Climate Clues

Fun Fact!
The moth Metalampra italica was first seen in the UK in 2003. Moving up from mainland Europe, it was first found in the south of England. More recently, it has been spotted here in North Yorkshire.

Why is this interesting?
As the climate changes and temperatures rise, some animals that would normally live further south are moving north. Scientists call this a sign of climate impact.

Vocabulary: Climate impact

The way changing weather patterns affect plants, animals, and people.

What other clues of climate change might you spot in nature?

Tick ones you've seen or experienced:
❒ Warmer winters
❒ Insects appearing earlier in the year
❒ Flowers blooming earlier than usual
❒ New plants or animals in your area that you didn't see before
❒ Unusual weather (very dry, very wet, or very stormy)

Fun Fact!

There are more than 2,500 species of moths in the UK. Many of them are important pollinators, just like bees!

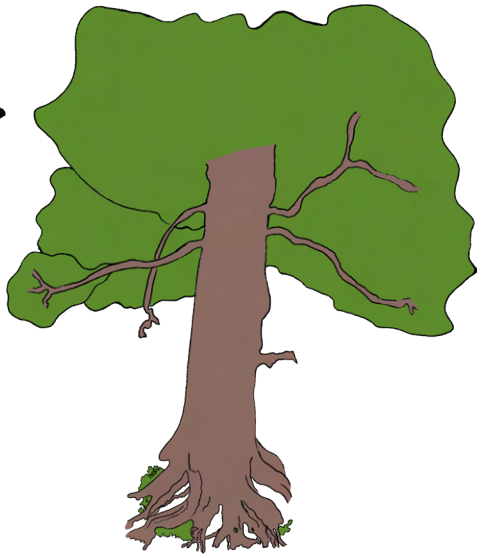
Mapping the giants on the lookout for trees

Trees form different layers in a wood

Canopy: The top branches and leaves.

Understory: Small trees and shrubs.

Forest Floor: Where fungi, moss, and roots grow.



Common British Trees

Bark Rubbings
Place paper over tree bark and rub it with a crayon to capture the texture.

Try different trees and compare their patterns.

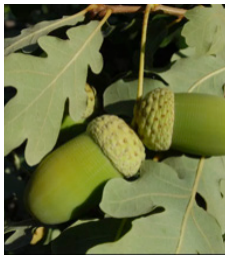
It's very likely that your woodland map will include some trees! These are usually the largest things we find in a wood.

Experts on trees can often tell what type of tree they are looking by the patterns on the bark. But the rest of us have to use other methods.

Many people can identify trees from their overall shape or size, or by looking at their leaves. Explore some common British trees below.


Silver Birch

White peeling bark, delicate leaves.

Oak

Deep grooves in bark, twisting branches, acorns.


Beech

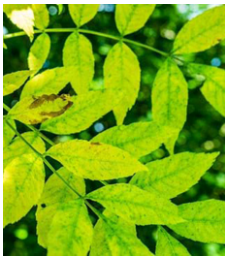
Smooth grey bark, wavy leaves, sometimes covered in moss.


Sycamore

Thick, ridged bark, broad lobed leaves, winged helicopter seeds.


Horse Chestnut

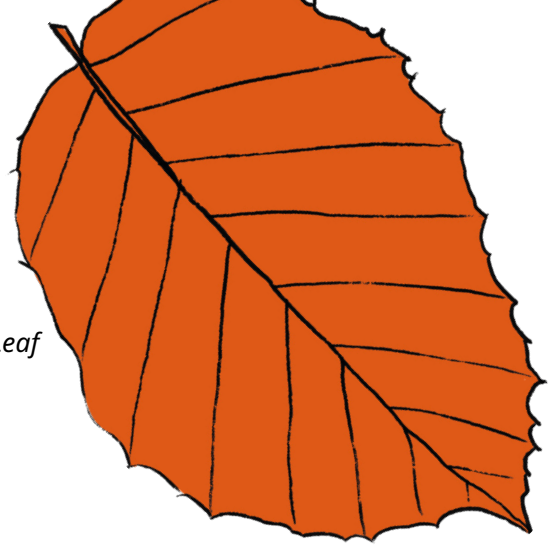
Deeply furrowed bark, large serrated leaves, spiky green conker seed cases.

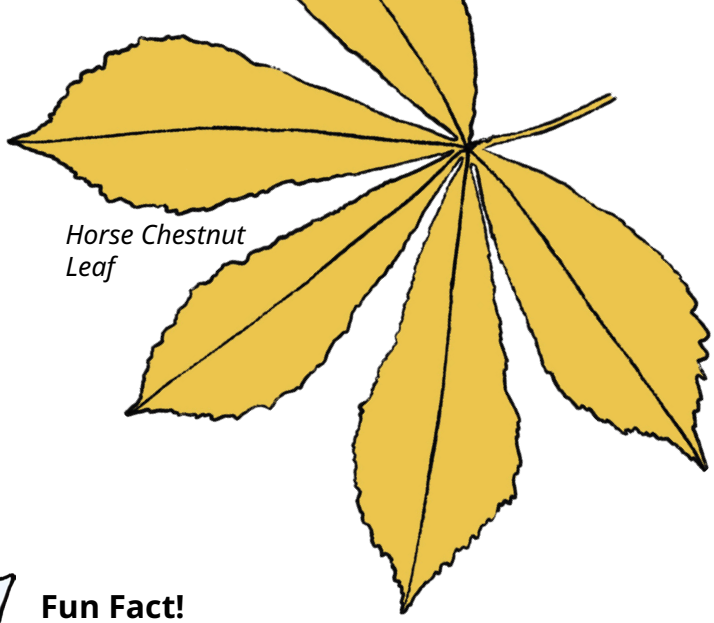
Ash

Smooth pale grey bark, feather-like leaves, clusters of key-shaped seeds.

Credits: Silver Birch: Bark, Tree Guide UK. Leaves, Nature Photographers Ltd via Woodland Trust. Oak: Bark, Gardens Illustrated. Leaves, Woodland Trust. Beech: Bark, Tree Guide UK. Leaves, Kew Gardens. Sycamore: Bark, Tree Guide UK. Leaves, Forestry England. Horse Chestnut: Bark, Tree Guide UK. Leaves, Woodland Trust. Ash: Bark, Tree Guide UK. Leaves, Ben Lee via Woodland Trust.



Beech Leaf



Horse Chestnut Leaf

Fun Fact!
Did you know trees can communicate?

They release chemicals into the air to warn nearby trees about dangers like insects or disease!

Oak Leaf

Mark Making with Leaves

Leaf Printing
Step 1. Paint the underside of a leaf
Step 2. Press the painted side firmly onto paper.
Step 3.Whilst it's on the paper, hold it in place and push down firmly.
If you have a roller, you could use that too for extra pressure.

Leaf Rubbing
Step 1. Place a leaf under a piece of paper
Step 2. Rub onto the paper with a crayon.
Tracing paper works best, and a dark-colour wax crayon.

Listen to a Tree

Choose a tree on a calm, quiet day in early spring. Good trees for this activity include birch or sycamore and the best time of day is often during the morning.

Place your ear gently against the bark to listen. You could even use a paper cup or stethoscope if you have one.

What can you hear?
- ❒ Crackles?
- ❒ Gurgles?
- ❒ Tiny pops?

How would you describe the sound? .....

In early spring, something very special happens to trees. Their sap begins to rise up through them as they 'wake up' from the winter. As the days get warmer, this moisture is needed to help them grow new leaves and buds.

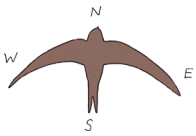
Incredibly, it is sometimes possible to hear this happening. If you press your ear gently against the trunk of a tree, you may be able to make out the sound of the sap rising.

It can sound like fizzing or crackling noise, or even like tiny bubbles popping beneath the surface of the tree.

Vocabulary: Sap
Sap is a liquid that carries nutrients up a tree from its roots.

Listen to the birds

Your woodland will be home to a wide variety of birds.
Some will migrate, coming and going in different seasons. Others will make their home in the wood throughout the year.



Vocabulary: Migration
When birds travel long distances for different seasons.

There are lots of places to look for clues.

Look Up
You might find their nests

Look Down
You might find their feathers

Ask a grown up to download the Merlin App.
You can use the app to listen to bird calls.

Shut your eyes in the wood

What sorts of bird sounds can you hear?

Perhaps you've heard some of these:

- The warbling year round tune of a robin
- A rich, flute-like song in the spring and summer that might be a blackbird
- A loud, rapid trilling year-round song with a buzzing quality, that's a wren
- The cheerful descending song of a chaffinch, ending in a flourish in spring and summer

If you want to include the bird calls you can hear on your map, you can come up with a symbol for them. A symbol is a picture to represent something.

This is the symbol we often use for music.

Draw your birdsong symbols below.

Type of Bird

.....

Type of Bird

.....

Type of Bird

.....

Birdy Business

What is your favourite bird song you've heard? .....

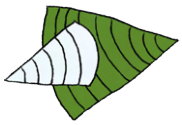
QUIZ

Which bird can mimic car alarms and mobile phones?

A) Robin
B) Blackbird
C) Starling
D) Owl

Find the answer in the back of the booklet.

Fun Fact!
Some birds, like jays, help plant forests by burying acorns, which then grow into new trees!



Vocabulary: Echolocation
A way some animals use sound to find their way or catch food.

Twilight Flyers
Brilliant Bats

As day turns to night, a new group of woodland animals comes out to play. Bats are mammals that are able to fly. They come out at dusk and use a special system called **echolocation** to find their way in the dark and catch insects.

Lie on your back in the wood just as the sun is setting. Look up to the canopy. Can you see any flying shapes? What do you hear?

Did you know? Bats help control insect populations. One bat can eat hundreds of insects in just one night!

Canopy Shyness and Sky Gazing

The canopy is the top layer of the woodland. Up in the canopy, the tallest trees are able reach their branches wide. Sometimes, if you look up, you might see tiny gaps between the branches, even when the trees are close together. This is called **canopy shyness**. A healthy canopy helps protect the whole woodland, keeping it cool, moist and safe for plants and animals.

Draw the canopy from underneath

Lay on your back and look at the sky through the trees. In the circle above draw what you see. Include branches, clouds, light, and any shapes.

What shapes do you see?
Can you spot birds flying or insects hovering?
What does it feel like to lie still in the wood?
What can you hear? Wind in the leaves?
A bird calling? Buzzing insects?

Loopy Lipograms

When you come to make your map, you can be inventive and creative by adding your own descriptions.

A lipogram is a type of constrained writing. To write a lipogram choose a letter from the alphabet to avoid. Then banish that letter! Lipograms are a very fun way of writing. They really get your brain working.

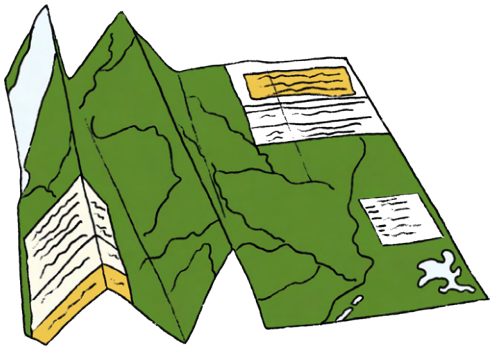
Here is a description of Marton Wood without using the letter S.

Wandering around the wood,
I found...
Golden light where cool air curled,
Damp bark dark on fallen oak,
A fungi ring in earthy twirl,
And the crow that dipped and flapped—no cloak.

What letter (or letters) are you going to avoid? .....
Choose a part of your wood to write about.

Hint: if you choose a very common letter like E or T, your writing will be extra hard. Start with less common letters to practise with.

Your Final Map
Bringing It All Together



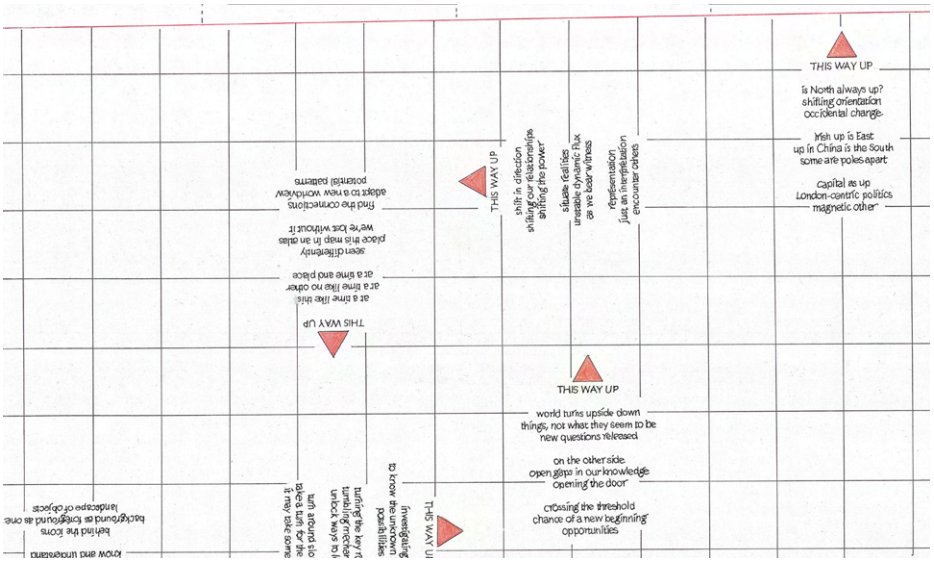
You can now pull all your ideas together to make a special map.

You will need:

- ❒ A large sheet of paper
- ❒ Colouring pencils
- ❒ Crayons or pens
- ❒ Your notes and booklet activity pages

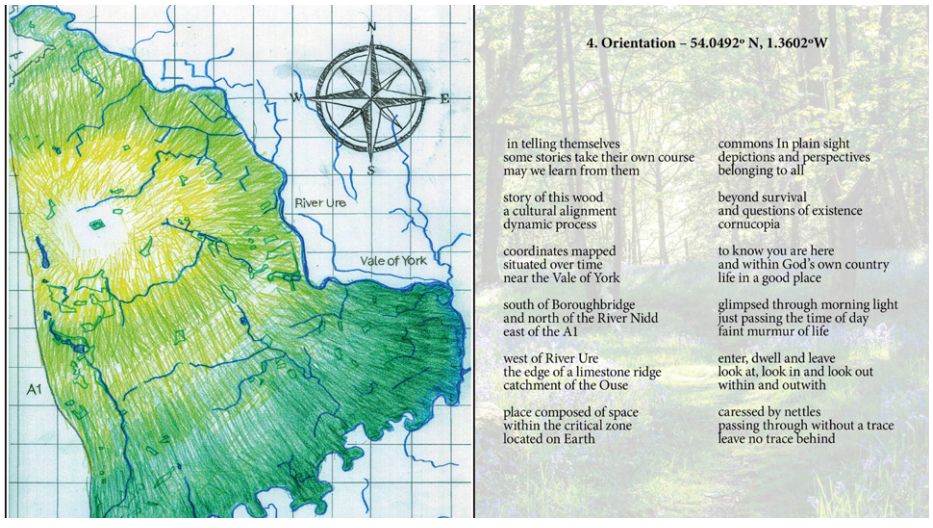
What is a map?

Many maps are made up of pictures, but there are other types too, like these:



Artist David Haley used words and symbols to map.

Claire Lamkin used textiles and embroidery to map.



Artist David Haley used drawings and poems to map.

Artist Alice Fox used paint and drawings to map.

What kind of map might you want to make?

Your map could include:

- Trees and their bark textures
- Birdsong locations
- Animal tracks and trails
- Fungi and where they grow
- Moth and bat sightings
- A favourite quiet spot
- Weather or instances of climate impact
- Labels with your special place names and descriptions in swirling letters
- Anything else important

Your map may be finished now. Or, it might be time to make your map look like an old treasure map. The choice is yours!

Final Details

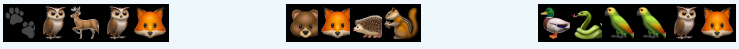
If your map has lots of symbols, you can add a key to help people understand your map. Your key will explain what each of your symbols represents.

Tea staining your map
Take a large piece of paper and brush cold tea onto it.
Let it dry, then scrunch it for a weathered effect.

A secret message

Nature is full of secrets and clues. Perhaps you'd like to keep some things secretive too! If you want to write a secret message on your map, you can use symbols or pictures to represent the letters.

First, to get into a secretive mood,
have a go at solving our secret message.
Hint: our message is a good tip to help keep a wood safe and special.



Use this key

D = E= I = L= N = O= P= R= T= V=

What does it say? .....

Once you've solved our message,
have a go at writing your own in
symbols to add to your map.

Glossary

Biodiversity – The variety of life within an area.

Canopy – The top layer of a forest or wood.

Camouflage – Colours or patterns that help an animal to blend in with its surroundings.

Climate Impact – The way changing weather patterns affect plants, animals and people.

Ecology – The study of how living things (like animals, plants or fungi) are connected together and with their environment.

Ecosystem – A community of living things and their environment.

Echolocation – The use of sound by some animals to find their way or help them catch food.

Fungus (Plural - Fungi) – A type of living thing that helps break down dead material. Well-known types of fungi are mushrooms, yeast and mould.

Habitat – The natural 'home' of a plant or animal.

Leaf Litter –A layer of fallen leaves on the ground. (It doesn't mean actual rubbish!)

Migration – When birds travel long distances for different seasons.

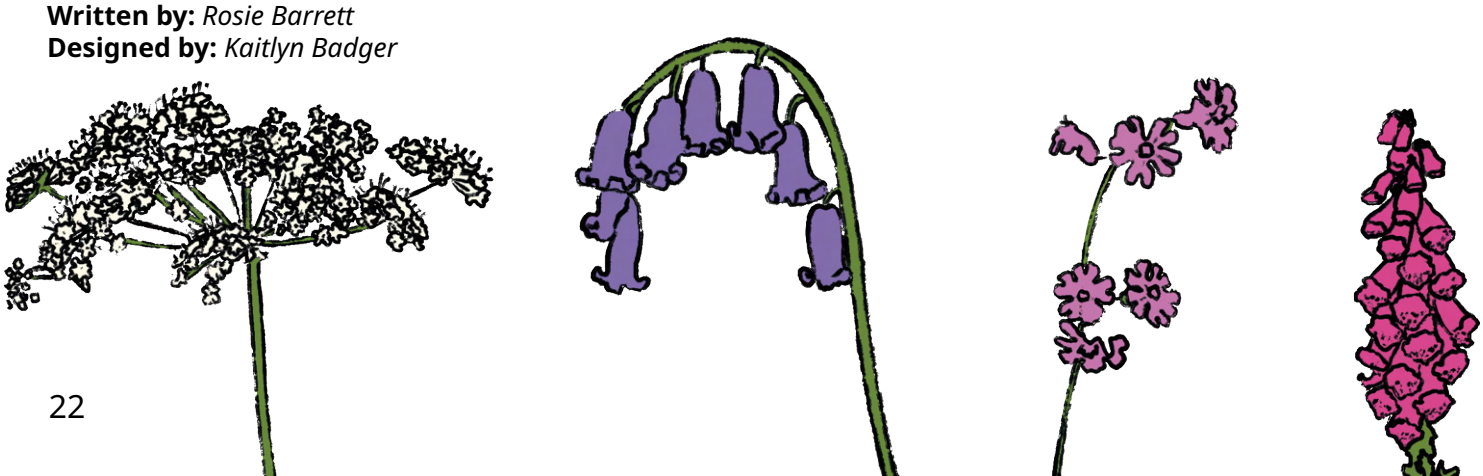
Nocturnal – Awake and active during the nighttime.

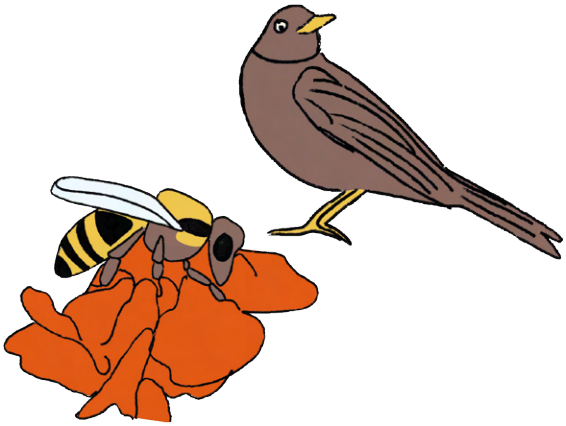
Sap –A liquid that carries nutrients up a tree from its roots.

Credits

Images *Page 4, Fungi. Jelly Ear: Chrysalis Arts Development. Earth Ball: Matthijs Wetterauw via Woodland Trust. Fly Agaric: Chrysalis Arts Development. Page 6, Animal Tracks. Deer: New Forest Explorers Guide. Badger: Philip Precey via Wildlife Trusts. Fox: Darren Tansley, Wildlife Trust. Rabbit: Darren Tansley, Wildlife Trust. Page 9, Bugs. Earthworm: Rob Hille via Wikipedia. Woodlouse: North East Wildlife via Wildlife Trusts. Centipede: Whiteknights Blog at University of Reading. Millipede: North East Wildlife via Wildlife Trusts. Ant: Don Sutherland via Wildlife Trusts. Beetle: Bruce Shortland via Wildlife Trusts. Page 14, Mark Making with Leaves: Woodland Trust.*

Written by: *Rosie Barrett*
Designed by: *Kaitlyn Badger*





Have fun mapping your woodland art adventure!

Keep exploring. Keep creating.

Quiz Answers

Fungi Fun: C – Sadly, there's no such thing as a Unicorn Pancake mushroom (yet).

Flower Power: A – Enchanter's Nightshade is a real woodland plant.

Creepy Crawly Count: C – Millipedes can have anywhere from 30 to 750 legs, depending on their species.

Birdy Business: C – Starlings are amazing mimics. They've been caught copying all sorts of strange sounds.