

# Draw your own ecosystem

Note: This activity requires a light degree of facilitation. Guidance cards are provided for visitors but younger visitors may require some guidance on how to think about the needs of different plants and creatures and how they are able to live side by side.

## Target age range of activity:

Five–11 year olds

## Equipment required

- Large sheets of paper to use for habitat sheets
- Animal and plant shapes
- Colouring pencils
- Guidance sheet (printed and laminated)
- Scissors (optional)
- Glue (optional)

## Preparation guidelines

- Write the name of different habitats at the top of large sheets of paper. You will need multiple copies of each one. If possible stick them to the wall. There are five types of habitat to choose from. You can choose to use all of them or just a selection of them. Habitats are: jungle, savannah, my garden, under the sea and in the city
- Animal and plant shapes have been provided. Either print them on to card and cut them out for children to draw around, **or** print them on to sheets as outlines, which the children can colour in and then cut out themselves. (They will need scissors and glue for this option)
- Provide the animal and plant shapes/outlines along with colouring pencils and guidance sheets
- Provide a table or other workbench for visitors to lean on when drawing their ecosystems

## Description of activity

Draw your own ecosystem is a drawing and colouring game for five–11 year olds.

Children can draw around (or colour in and cut out) animal and plant shapes provided. They should be encouraged to consider the habitat in question, e.g. my garden, and think about the types of animals and plant life that might be found there as well as physical objects such as buildings or rocks. They should then use the animal templates to start building up the ecosystem. They can also draw other elements of the habitat directly on to the paper using the colouring pencils provided.

Children should be encouraged to think about each animal and plant they draw, to ensure that there are sources of food and shelter and to consider how different species live together side by side.

The completed ecosystems can be displayed around the exhibition. Alternatively, you may wish to allow visitors to take them home with them.

Draw your own ecosystem can be both an individual or group activity, with groups either working together on their ecosystems or individuals building their own.

## Learning outcomes

Visitors will learn about the needs of different species (both plant and animal) and how different habitats present different challenges. The activity will also get them to think about the fine balance of an ecosystem, the symbiosis between species and how survival is dependent on factors, including shelter and the availability of food.