



The hedgerow

Curriculum Links:

- **Science** Living things
Environmental awareness and care
- **Geography** Human environments
- **SPHE** Myself and the wider world

Lesson objectives:

To highlight the importance of the hedgerow for the survival of plants and animals. To introduce students to food chains that exist on the farm.

Teacher guidelines

It is suggested that teachers ensure all students are familiar with the vocabulary and concepts introduced in the previous modules before starting this lesson.

Keywords and concepts introduced in Module 1:

hedgerow

fields

flowers

season

overgrown

birds

Hedgerows are big bushes that divide up the farmer's fields. The farmer makes sure to care for the hedgerow by trimming it regularly.

After revision of the above, teachers could discuss the more detailed information below.

Keywords for this lesson:

shrubs

wildlife

shelter

nests

food chain

Why are hedgerows important?

Let's take a look inside the hedgerow. These **shrubs** and bushes are actually home to lots of animals, insects, plants and birds. These are great places for **wildlife** to live because they can find food and get **shelter** from the cold. Birds make their **nests** up high and insects burrow into the soil. Larger animals such as foxes and hedgehogs also live in the bushes.



Insects provide food for birds



Birds make their nests



Hawthorn flowers attract insects



Insects among the dead leaves



Hedgehogs live in the hedgerow



Foxes live in the hedgerow

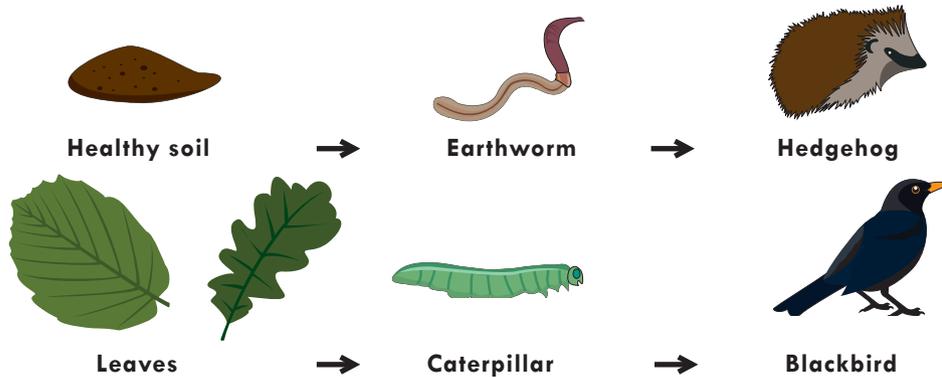
What is a food chain?

All the different creatures in the hedgerow depend on plants and each other to survive. They are linked together by what they eat and how they get their energy. This system is called a **food chain**.

Many food chains exist within the hedgerow. As you move along the food chain, the animals get bigger and fewer. For example, there are thousands of leaves on the farm which are eaten by hundreds of earthworms. Many blackbirds eat the earthworms. Foxes which are much bigger feed on the birds.

Food chains in the hedgerow

In order for there to be a balance on the farm, including the grass to grow, soil to be moist and animals to be healthy, the farmer must protect the many food chains that exist in the hedgerow by taking care of it.



Suggested activities

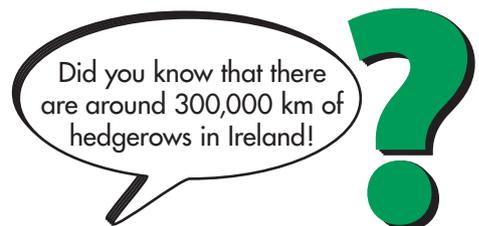
- Photocopy the activity sheet on page 53
- In art class, get the students to make mobiles of food chains
- Split the class into groups. Each group should name one animal that lives on the farm. They must then build a food chain around that animal
- Perform a drama based on a number of different animals looking for the same food. The important message that should be communicated at the end of the drama is that even though these animals fight for food, they must all still live together in harmony within the hedgerow
- Get the class to build their own bird table
- Assign each student one member of the food chain. Get the students to link arms in the order of the food chain
- For extension material, see Modules 3 and 4

Learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students should know what a food chain is and the different food chains that exist in the hedgerow.

Additional resources:

- www.agriaware.ie



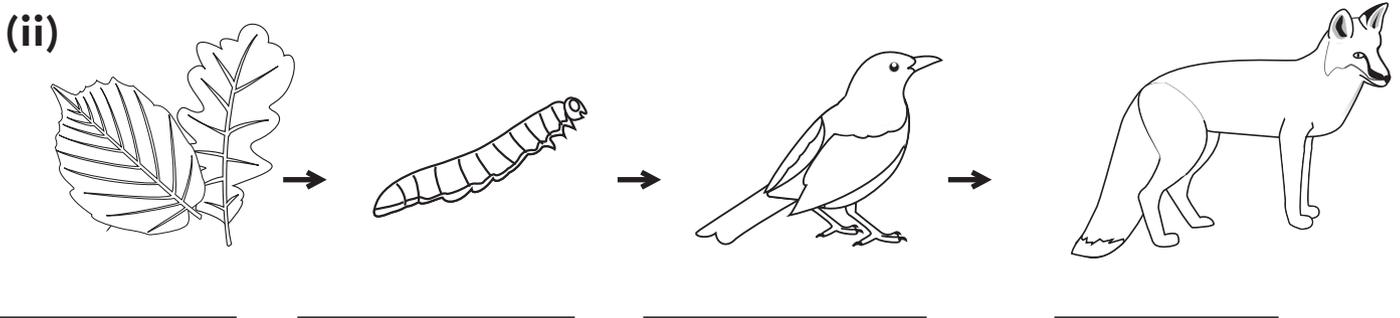
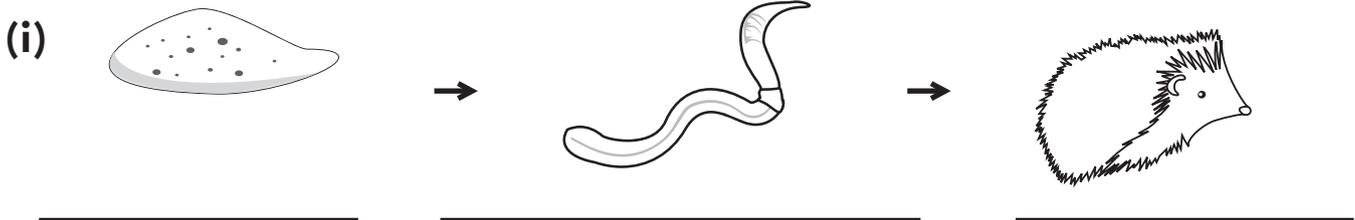


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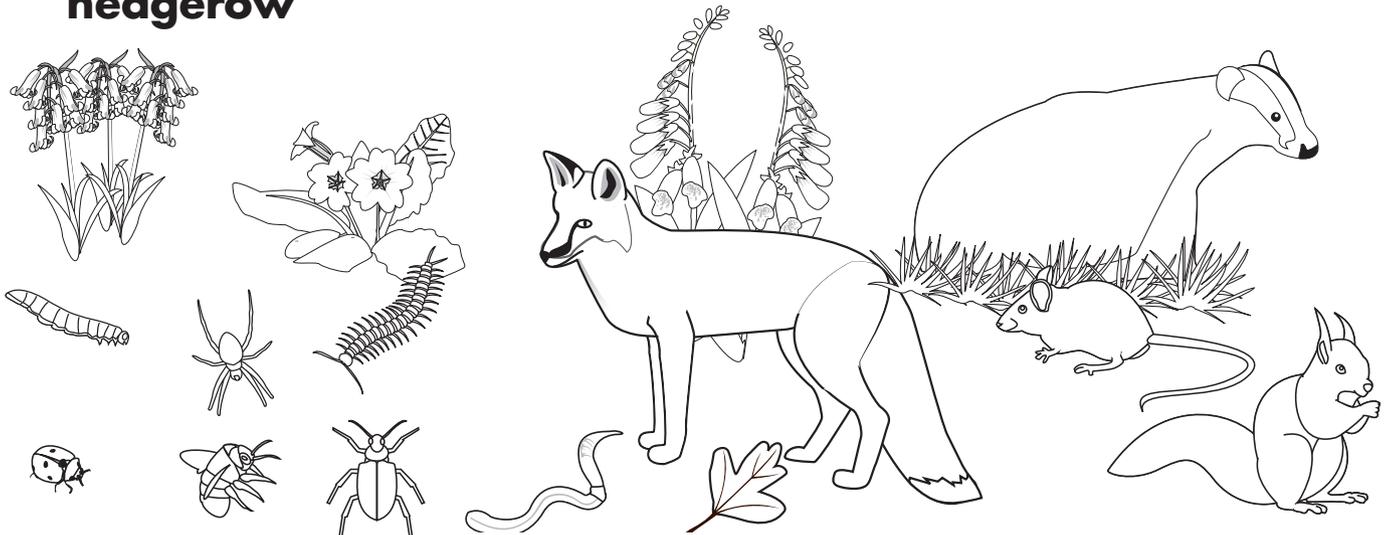
Name: _____

Date: _____

1 Label the different items in the food chains below



2 Colour the different plants and animals that live in a hedgerow



*To be used with teacher guidelines, page 26