

British Wool LEARNING



On the Farm

Aims and Objectives:

Children will:

- consider living things, their characteristics and variation
- begin to understand how to classify and sort animals
- begin to understand about the different environments animals live in
- begin to identify life processes and the differences between living and non-living things
- be introduced to sheep and their specific environment

Introduction:

In the past, people were very aware of the role farming and agriculture played in their lives. Men, women and children all worked the land, it was essential to their survival. Today children tend to be far removed from this way of life and often have no contact with farm animals or farming.

Farm animals are a favourite with younger children and feature prominently in games, learning activities and in early literature and rhymes. Children may well be familiar with the names and appearance of the more common farm animals but they are often unaware of the importance and impact farming has on our society and way of life. Learning about farming, sheep and wool helps children to begin to understand the characteristics and structure of living things. They will begin to understand the processes of life, how living things interact with each other and with their environment.

Activity One:

Begin by talking to the children about animals generally. What is an animal? What do animals look like? Do all animals look the same? How can we tell an animal is an animal? What are the differences between animals (living) and non-living things? Discuss these questions with the children and ask for their answers and ideas. In basic terms, explain that all living things move, breathe, feed, reproduce, respond and react to their environment, excrete (poop!) and grow. Write this list on the board to be clearly seen. You may want to use simpler words or recap on the meaning of each one in turn.

Ask children to use the list now written on the board to help them decide which of the following are living or non-living things:

- | | | | | |
|----------|----------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| • Dogs | • Humans | • Balloons | • Pencil | • Book |
| • Stones | • Pizza | • Birds | • Gold Fish | • Car |
| • Trees | • Shoes | • Insects | • Snake | • House Plant |

This part of the activity can be done as a class, using a show of hands to vote, or by each of the children holding up 'living' or 'non-living' paper signs they have made to show their answer. Alternatively, children could form pairs or small groups to discuss their thoughts. A simple 'living and non-living' sorting sheet is available in this document. Children may enjoy drawing the living and non-living things in the correct boxes. Can they think of any of their own examples to add to the lists?

Activity Two:

Start this activity with a class discussion. Can they think of any places that might animals live. Suggestions might be: in the jungle, the desert, the sea, our homes, in trees, in woodland, underground, in fields, in ponds or on farms. If the children do not mention farms put the suggestion forward and ask them which animals might live on farms. Suggest sheep if the children do not offer the suggestion.

What do the children know about sheep? What colour are they? What noise do they make? Where do sheep live? What do they eat? Are all sheep the same? Ask the class to describe a sheep. Show the page in this document that shows 4 photographs of very different breeds of sheep. Discuss these photographs with the class. Do all these sheep look the same? Do they all look like the sheep the class described? What differences do the class see and what similarities are common to all 4? Discuss why the children think the 4 sheep look different. Could it have anything to do with where they live? Why? Why might some sheep have a thicker coat than others? Why might some have bigger ears etc.? You will find helpful factsheets (with images) on the breeds of sheep found in the UK at www.britishwoollearning.com/pdf/sheepbreeds_factsheets.pdf

Some sheep live on hills, some on mountains, some on low land etc. and they need special coats and characteristics to survive. Sheep that live on mountains in exposed areas will need warmer, thicker wool to cope, for example. A sheep's wool can also keep it nice and dry in wet weather. The coats of sheep have evolved to provide them with the protection they need to suit their environment. No other country in the world has as many pedigree breeds of sheep as the UK.

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Activity Three:

Provide the children with the **On the Farm Matching Game** worksheet. Ask them to cut the pictures of the animals out or alternatively, lines can be drawn on the sheet to link them.

The top line of images shows one product we might get from each of the animals on the middle row. The bottom 3 illustrations show the young that belong to the adult animals shown. Children should be asked to sort these pictures into 3 groups. Once this activity is complete, discuss the names of other young animals, particularly farm animals to continue the theme. Concentrate on the 3 pictures showing the eggs, chick and hen. Explain the process of the hen laying the eggs, the eggs hatching, the chick growing into a hen which begins the whole process again. It might be fun to ask the children if they know which came first, the hen or the egg!

If children enjoyed this task they could be asked to draw and colour their own young and adult pictures for a farm animal of their choice.

Activity Four:

What Are We?

The **What are We?** game can be found at britishwoollearning.com/interactive/whatarewe and has been developed to be used as an additional learning tool to complete this section and to help assess knowledge and understanding. The game provides children with 3 clues to help them to decide which living or non-living thing is being described. If the children only need one clue to guess the answer correctly they will score the maximum of 3 points, if it takes 2 clues they will gain 2 points and using all 3 clues will score them 1 point. Points will be added at the end to create a total score.

This game should be used as a fun way for children to answer questions that bring together many of the aspects of learning covered in the previous activities; characteristics and variations of animals, living and non-living things, life processes, adaptation and the farm as an environment.

The game can be used by the children on personal computers or tablets, or can be presented as a class activity on the whiteboard. The second of these two options offers the opportunity to discuss each of the clues in turn with the class as you use the activity. This may be particularly beneficial for less-able children or children that have struggled with the learning in previous activities.

An example of the questions:

What Am I?

1. I have fur
2. I have strong teeth to eat meat and chew bones
3. My young are called puppies

The user will be given 10 questions but the game can be played numerous times as questions and the selection of images to choose from are generated randomly. The children will find some questions harder than others.

Activity Five:

A matching pairs game can be found at britishwoollearning.com/interactive/matchingpairs. This activity is a simple but fun way to improve concentration and memory. Players are required to spot the identical pictures of farm animals and farm produce. Contains colourful illustrations and large, easy to select buttons. There are two levels to play with randomly selected image cards.

Activity Six:

To conclude this section, provide the children with some of the keywords and vocabulary used in these activities. It is suggested that you either recap the meaning of each word in turn or ask if there are any words the children do not understand.

Ewe	Ram	Lamb	Life Processes
Flock	Wool	Move	Webbed
Breathe	Feed	React	Non-living
Excrete	Grow	Reproduce	Fleece
Young	Grazing	Living	Yarn

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Living or Non-living?

Living

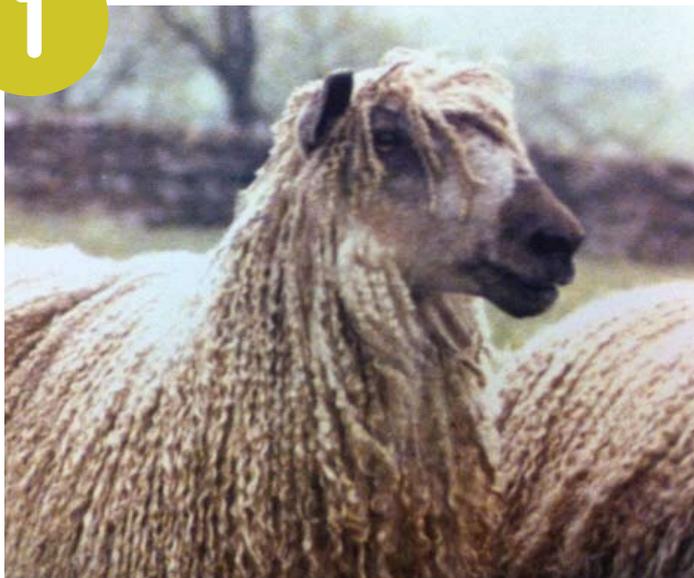
Not living

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Sheep Breeds

1



2



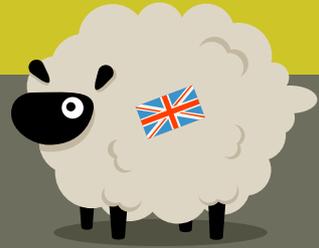
3



4



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On the Farm Matching Game

