

# the outdoor classroom

## the river as a habitat

**Curriculum Focus:** Science, Art

**Keywords:** Rivers, Habitat, Vegetation

**Skills learnt in this worksheet include:**

- Observing and questioning
- Collecting and recording evidence
- Classifying, representing and interpreting data
- Undertaking field work
- Use ICT for data handling and interpreting
- Environmental education
- Learning technical language related to rivers habitat
- Art and design
- Identifying and comparing land use

**Resources needed:**

- Summary sheet
- Habitat sheet
- Map
- Pencils
- Camera
- Collecting bag
- Blank postcards and sticky back plastic or cardboard and double sided sellotape.

**Further information about river habitat can be found at:**

[www.wildlondon.org.uk/habitatsandspecies](http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/habitatsandspecies)

There is a description of river habitat and the animals that can be found in London. Crane Park Island Nature Reserve is included on this website.



**Ideas for activities on site:**

### 1. Discussion and investigation

**On arriving at the site break into small groups and look around to see what characteristics of a river habitat can be identified.**

Discuss and record your findings on a summary sheet and base map.

Draw in the vegetation that you have seen / observed on the river bank.

This might include grasses, shrubs, trees.

If you have a camera you could also record your findings this way.

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**Below is a list of questions which the teacher can pose while children look at habitat.**

- What vegetation can you see in the channel? Can you identify any of it?
- What are the river banks like?
- Are there any holes where animals might live? What size creatures would live in these holes?
- Is the vegetation adapted to the river in any way? (Willow and black poplars are traditional riverside trees and can both be found in Kneller Gardens)

**Using the map draw in the land use surrounding the river**

**Using the map draw in the wildlife that can be found in the river e.g. fish, moorhens, ducks.**

**Using the map draw in the wildlife that can be found on the banks e.g. water voles, bats (there are bat boxes on the Mereway side of the Duke of Northumberland's River), herons, kingfishers.**

**Discuss how these animals are adapted to their habitat.**

**Photograph your findings.**

*The information can be collated to create a database or graphing program.  
Use the results to develop presentations in class.*

## **2. Art activity**

**Using a collecting bag, collect items found on the site which reflect the vegetation and flora that you have identified, e.g. grasses, leaves, twigs etc.**

**Use these to create collage pictures which reflect what you have discovered. For example you could depict the river and the vegetation or animals found there such as ducks, fish, etc.**

**On a day which is not windy larger pieces could be laid out in the park on an area of grass, or could be collated as a more permanent piece in the classroom as a follow up activity.**

**Small pieces of grass, sticks, seeds etc could be made into a picture and mounted onto sticky back plastic and a post card or as crowns. Display cards could be made in the same way.**