



## 2. Why is biodiversity important?

**Three activities - photo activity, research activity, worksheet activity**

**Time:** variable - depends on which activities below are used

**Resources:** (a) Photo activity - photo sheet, recording sheet

(b) Research activity - none

(c) Worksheet activity - worksheet, colours pencils/pens, scissors

Review activity - ball

**Aims:** To increase students understanding of the benefits and values associated with biodiversity, for students to be able to describe the importance of biodiversity, and to develop skill at interpreting photos.

**Suggested method:**

**Starter activity:**

For older students you could gauge the level of their opinion about this issue at the start and then also at the end of this activity by asking students to stand in position on a line to reflect their opinion. For example, ask students to consider how important they think biodiversity is. Then explain that they are going to stand in a line to show their views on this issue. For example, one end of the line would mean 'I don't think it is important at all' and the other end could be 'I think it is so important it is a matter of life or death'. Explain some of the intermediate views, then ask students to find their place in the opinion line. It would be interesting to see if their opinions changed after leaning more.

**(a) Photo activity:**

The aim is for students to think and talk about biodiversity using the photos as stimulus. There are many ways to organise this. Perhaps a class discussion using the photos as prompts, pairs or group work? This worksheet can be used as a recording sheet for students exploring the photos and will keep the task focussed. Give each pair (or three) a photo sheet and recording sheet and explain that the task is to use the photos to think



and talk about biodiversity. Students are to look at each photo, discuss what it shows and then complete the photo sheet. Emphasis should be on thinking and discussing rather than detailed writing. The recording sheet is for notes which will help the students remember their ideas during follow up discussion.

Follow up this activity with whole class discussion around the key questions: What does the photo show? How is this to do with biodiversity? Is the biodiversity in the picture important to us? Why? Summarise the main learning points to answer the key question: Why *is* biodiversity important to us?

**(b) Research activity:**

Biodiversity in our lives: How do we use biodiversity and natural products? Research activity - firstly discuss with students the difference between natural and man-made products. Explain that biodiversity is really important to man as it provides things all of us need and that they are going to find out about this in the class/school by carrying out a survey. Students will collect a list of objects that use natural products and also list what the natural product is from looking around the classroom (or other location). Then lists should be compared and discussed. The aim is for students to see how many things in their daily life are linked to biodiversity. This activity could be extended by asking students to write a diary of all things in their lives to do with biodiversity. Students could just choose one day and write down all things which are linked - e.g. food, objects used, clothes, fuel for transport used, any time spent outdoors and so on.

A follow on activity is to write a diary extract for a day when there is no biodiversity. No items or activities can be included in the diary extract which are to do with biodiversity. Alternatively students could use the list of things created in the activity above and be asked to select the top 5 things they would not like to live without. Food items could be grouped into one category, so students can choose a variety of items to 'keep'.



**(c) Worksheet classification and discussion activity:**

Provide each student with the worksheet and explain that the aim is to learn more about why biodiversity is important. The first task is for pairs to read the statements and classify each into one *or more* of the four categories at the top of the sheet (provides things we need...). They could colour code their sheet to show which group each statement(s) fits into. The idea is that students fully discuss this and its worth pointing out that there are no correct answers, just some that are better and some are worse. The most important thing is that students need to be able to justify *why* they classified the statement into each group. Discuss the results and variation of opinion.

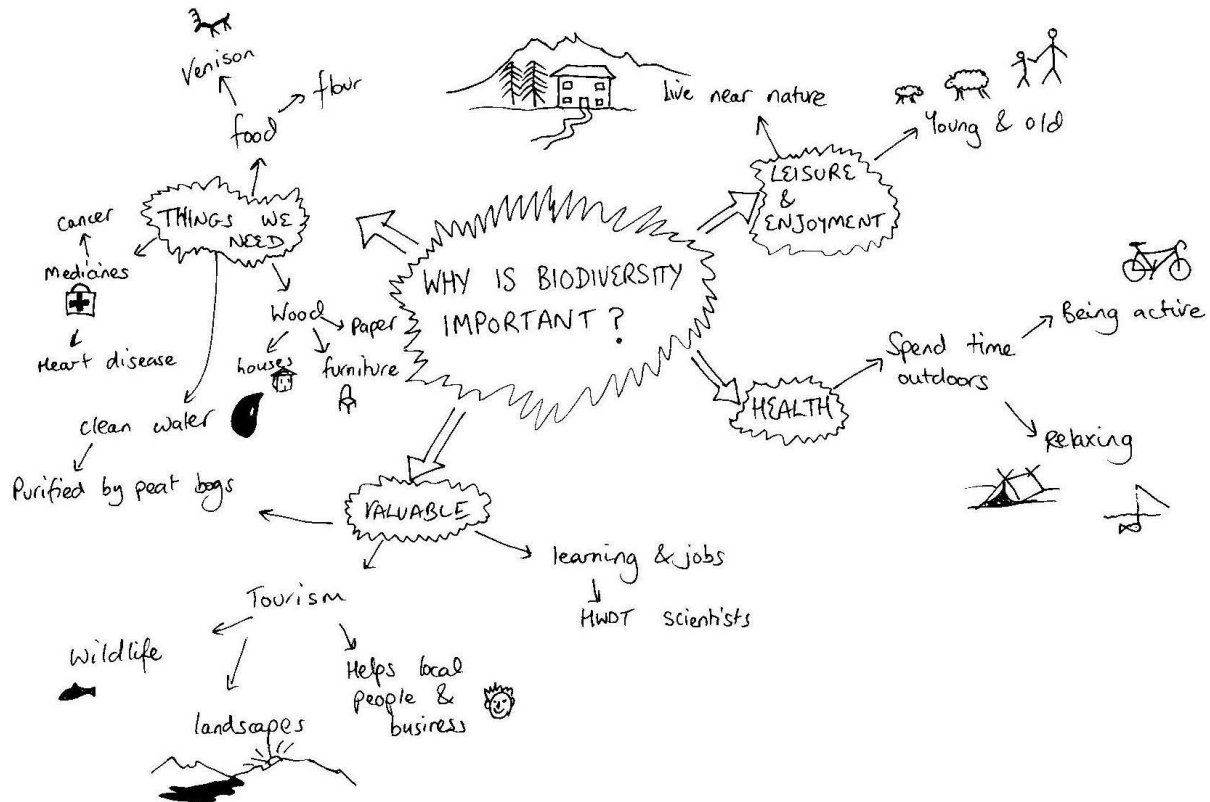
The next task is for students to consider the importance of each statement which will encourage them to think through each idea more carefully. They are to diamond rank the statements according to their importance. First it would make the task easier if students cut the sheet into cards - each with one statement on. The outcome of the activity is to end up with a diamond shape with cards organised from most to least in importance. Those placed on the same line of the diamond rank are of similar importance. For example:

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      1
     2 3
    4 5 6 7
   8 9
  10
  
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Again this would be valuable to discuss as a whole class. Students who finish earlier than others could write one statement of their own. Finally finish these activities with a review of what has been learnt about the importance of biodiversity.

Another alternative follow-on activity from classifying the worksheet is for students to create a mind map (spider diagram) to show what they have learnt about the importance of biodiversity. Here is an example:



**Review activity:**

If a soft ball is available, play a review game. Start by throwing the ball at a student and they need to tell the class one thing they have learnt and then throw the ball to someone else. Whoever catches needs to add another learning point.