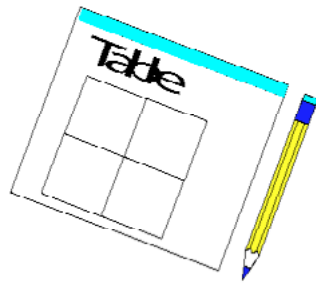# Using IT in... animals

All about animals

The CD-ROM and the **Internet** are valuable tools for children's research on animals. They can browse out of interest and your teaching will raise questions which these encyclopaedic resources may help to answer. For example: how does the animal protect itself? How does it feed? Which animals are carnivores? Which are herbivores? Which are omnivores? How are their teeth the same?

The children can use the **word processor** to record information. They can use it to build up a table from their search or add pictures from the screen.
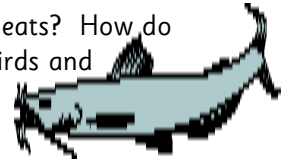
Do a habitat survey

You can do a habitat survey or minibeast safari in the park or pond to record how things live. There are many questions to ask: what animals did you see? What were they doing? Where did you see them? How many of each animal did you see? How do things change from place to place? Why might this be? How are the creatures adapted to living here? How do the animals feed? How do they move? How are the animals camouflaged? Why are they camouflaged? What do the living things here need? What do they get by living here? What happens in the winter? How did these animals get here? Which animals live in only one sort of place, which are more adaptable? Choose two animals, how are they similar? How are they different?
You will find lots to write about, lots to record and a **word processor** can help children to organize their findings. Some groups including younger groups will appreciate a computer word bank - for this you can use a **'Clicker'** grid with your word processor. When the children need a particular word, they press on the overlay keyboard to have it typed into their work. You have to prepare this in advance - you put pictures and useful words on a sheet on the keyboard and type the words into the program.

The children might use a **graphing program** to record how many of each sort of animal were found under a tree, in the open, under a hedge.
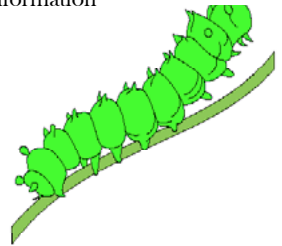
IT: Handling information

Wot eats wot?

The children can use the **Internet** to look for elusive information on animals - and you may not find what caterpillars live on, and what eats caterpillars and what eat these - but you will find other food chains. When the children use these information sources, you might give them a focus, such as these questions: what does the animal eat? How does it eat it? Where does it get its food from? Which animals eat the same sort of food? How is the animal adapted to the food it eats? How do the beaks of seed eating birds and birds of prey compare? How do beak shapes help birds to get their food. How do the teeth of the big and small cats compare? The children can use a **word processor** to help them record their finding in a table. They can use a **drawing program** to create a food chain on screen.
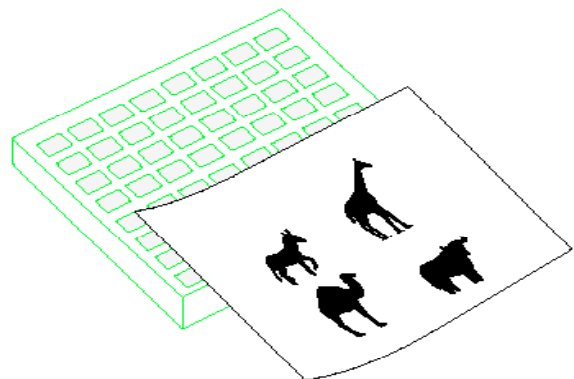
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