

PRE-SCHOOL

Active learning about animals



THE SCOTTISH SPCA AND YOU

The Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Scottish SPCA) is Scotland's animal welfare charity. Our inspectors save thousands of domestic, farm and wild animals from harm and danger every year, while our rescue and rehoming centre vets and staff look after, rehabilitate, release and find new homes for thousands more. This section allows children to learn a bit more about our work, particularly the role of our inspectors.

PETS

Scottish SPCA animal rescue and rehoming centres rehome a wide variety of animals. All animals have their own needs and are carefully matched to a new owner. Our activities encourage children to think about the various needs that these animals have.

FARM

Most farmers take great care of their animals but we occasionally have to deal with animals that are neglected on farms. We have included some activities that will get children thinking about the types of animals kept on farms and why they are kept.

WILDLIFE

Our inspectors and ambulance drivers often rescue wild animals. We have included some suggestions for activities to help children gain a better understanding of Scotland's wildlife.



The Scottish SPCA and the Curriculum for Excellence in the early years

The Scottish SPCA's objectives are to prevent cruelty to animals and encourage kindness and humanity in their treatment. While cruelty continues to be a major problem in Scotland, we strive to enhance children's existing values and promote the treatment of animals with compassion and respect. As stated in the curriculum framework, active learning in the early years can support pupils' development of the four capacities in many ways. This activity pack uses these guidelines to encourage active learning and will help children develop as:

Successful learners by using their imagination and creativity through role play as they learn what a Scottish SPCA inspector does. This pack enables them to tackle new experiences and learn from them and they can develop important skills including literacy and numeracy through exploring and investigating different facts about animals. There is a certificate at the back of this pack which can be awarded to children when they complete each task.

Confident individuals by learning to succeed in their activities.

Responsible citizens by encouraging them to see the world through an animals' eyes. Through card games they learn to share and to respect themselves and others.

Effective contributors by playing together in the role play activity, tackling problems, extending communication skills, taking part in sustained talking and thinking and respecting the opinions of others.

We hope you enjoy using this nursery pack. You can now join the Scottish SPCA Glow group to learn more about our work.

You can also visit our website www.scottishspca.org for further information and to read all the latest news.



The Scottish SPCA and you

SCOTTISH SPCA

INFO

Scottish SPCA inspectors are based all over Scotland. They rescue animals, enforce the law through the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act and make sure owners of animals are caring for them responsibly. The following activities enable children to understand the decisions our inspectors make to help animals.



The Scottish SPCA and you

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN INSPECTOR

INFO

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN INSPECTOR

The following activity will give children an idea of what it's like to be a Scottish SPCA inspector.

ACTIVITY

Max the dog has fallen down a river bank. How will the class help him?

Encourage the class to share ideas on how to help Max. Allocate roles, create props and act out the story.

Roles

- Max the dog
- Member of public who phones for help
- Animal helpline operator to receive call and let inspector know
- Inspector
- Animal rescue officer
- Animal rescue and rehoming centre reception staff
- Veterinary surgeon and vet nurse
- Animal care assistant
- New owner

Props required

- Inspector outfits (shirt, tie and hat)
- Two dog masks or face paint
- Animal rescue officer outfit (shirt, tie and hat)
- Two vans one for the inspector and one for the Animal rescue officer (you could use cardboard and chairs)
- Harness, rope, gloves, hard hat for the rescue
- Phone for the member of public
- Phone for the animal helpline staff
- Reception staff outfit

- Vet and vet nurse outfit
- Animal care assistant outfit
- Dog enclosure (you could use cardboard boxes and chairs)
- New owner outfit and paperwork for the owner to fill out
- Paper plates, straws, pens and paper (to make happy and sad dog for class)

How to make happy and sad paper plate dogs

On one paper plate draw a happy dog face, on the second paper plate draw a sad dog face.

- Tape a straw to the back of each plate, with enough hanging below to form a handle
- Secure the back of the plates together
- Attach ears to each plate

Read out loud the following story with the children acting out the role play, then have a sing along to Max the dog. Throughout the story ask the children to hold up their paper plates and decide whether they think Max is happy or sad.



The Scottish SPCA and you

A DAY IN THE LIFE
OF AN INSPECTOR

STORY

Max the dog does not have his own home. He is a cheeky dog who loves nothing better than to get into trouble! Max goes for a walk and finds himself in a big field. There is a river close by and Max decides he is thirsty so he starts to walk down the river bank. Before Max knows what is happening, he starts to slide all the way down the muddy river bank and he can't stop! Eventually he does come to a stop just before the river edge. After having a drink Max decides it is time to continue his journey. When he starts to climb back up the river bank he finds that he keeps sliding backwards as it is too muddy. He realises that he is stuck. **Ask the class how Max could be stuck? Get everyone to imagine having dog paws with their hands and they need to climb up a tall slippery slide.** Poor Max, he is barking loudly and is hungry! Shall we help Max? **Yes!!**

ROLE PLAY CUES

- Max is stuck down a river bank and barks.
- A member of the public hears Max barking and calls the Scottish SPCA animal helpline.
- Animal helpline staff receives the call and lets an inspector know.
- An inspector jumps into his van to go and rescue Max.
- When the inspector reaches Max he realises he needs help climbing down the river bank so he calls for an animal rescue officer.
- The inspector and animal rescue officer rescue Max and then the animal rescue officer takes him to the Scottish SPCA animal rescue and rehoming centre (ARRC).
- Reception staff meet the animal rescue officer and takes notes of what Max looks like and checks to see if he has a collar and tag or a microchip in case he has an owner.
- Max is itchy so the vet staff take a look at him. They put some flea powder on Max.
- Max doesn't have a collar and no-one knows who he belongs too.
- The animal care assistant takes Max to a kennel where he will be safe and makes sure he is given some food and fresh water. Max is sad.
- A new owner visits the centre looking for a dog and falls in love with Max.
- The new owner and receptionist fill out forms. Max wags his tail as he is very happy!
- Before the new owner can take Max home they need a few things first.
- Can you think of anything Max would like? – dog book, food, bowls, water, toys, brush, bed, lead, safe collar and tag.
- The new owner buys all the things that Max will need at the centre.
- The new owner then takes Max to the vets to get his microchip before heading home.

At last Max is happy 3 CHEERS!!



The Scottish SPCA and you

MAX THE DOG

SING ALONG

Sing this song to the tune of 'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush'.

**Max the dog is stuck and can't climb up
can't climb up
can't climb up
Max the dog is stuck and can't climb up
Who shall we call?**

**We'll call the inspector he'll help get him up
Help get him up
Help get him up
We'll call the Inspector he'll help get him up
That's who we'll call.**

**They'll use some rope to help pull him up
Help pull him up
Help pull him up
They'll use some rope to help pull him up
Max is now safe.**



The Scottish SPCA and you

LITTER

INFO

Many animals are injured or killed by carelessly discarded litter. Getting rid of rubbish safely in a bin or recycling box is something every one can do to make life safer for animals

ACTIVITY

In this activity children work in small groups and have to match the litter item to the animal it is most likely to **hurt**.

Photocopy, cut and laminate the following two sheets which make up one set of cards. Create enough sets for the class.

This activity works well in small groups of two to four children.

Why not try a playground litter hunt/pickup and then have a sing along to “who you gonna call” on page 10.



The Scottish SPCA and you

LITTER



The Scottish SPCA and you

LITTER



The Scottish SPCA and you

WHO YOU
GONNA CALL?

SING ALONG

Sing this song to the tune of Ghostbusters!



**If you see a dog
and it needs your help
who you gonna call..
INSPECTOR!**

Action: hold up sore paw

**If you see a pet rabbit
and it has no food
who you gonna call...
INSPECTOR!**

Action: rub tummy



**If you see a swan
and its all tangled up
who you gonna call...
INSPECTOR!**

Action: wrap self in arms

**If you want to help animals
be they big or small
who you gonna call...
Scottish SPCA INSPECTOR!**

Action: stand up big, crouch down small

The Scottish SPCA and you

MOTHER AND BABY

INFO

Spring is one of the Scottish SPCA's busiest times as we receive lots of calls to our animal helpline about baby animals that appear to have been abandoned. Many people try to help by taking the baby home or to a vet when in fact they are actually better to leave the baby alone as most parents will return to their young.

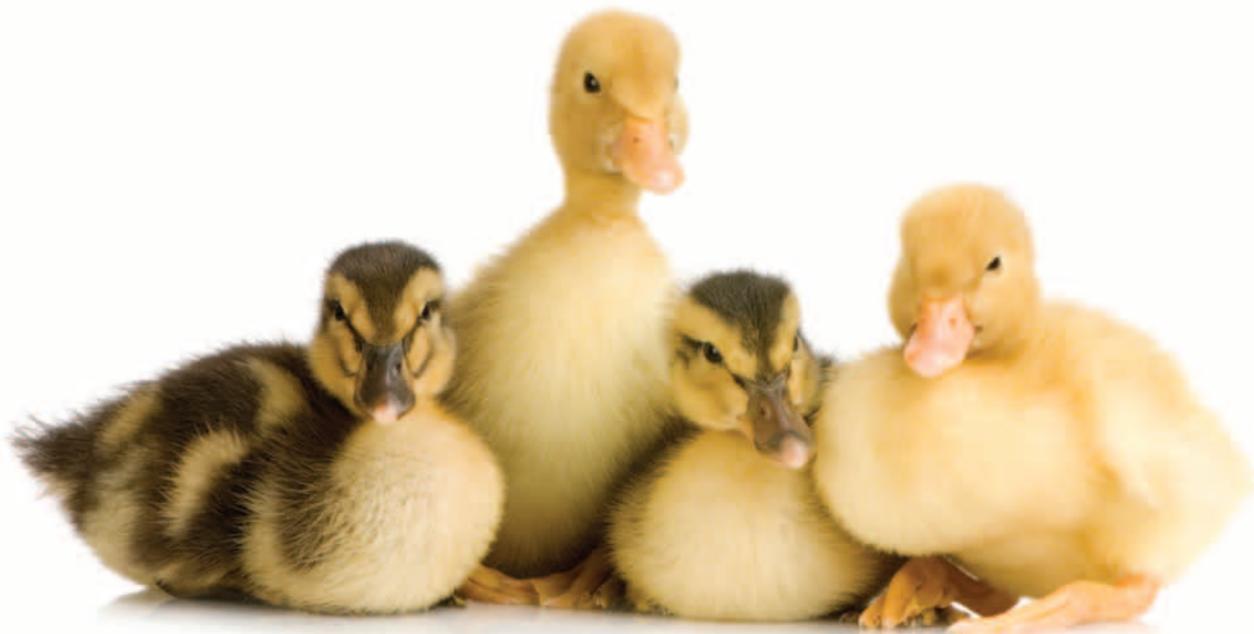
ACTIVITY

On the next page there are cards featuring mums and babies. Photocopy, cut out and laminate the cards.

Then turn two cards at a time to try and match the mum to the baby.

EXTRA ACTIVITY

Ask the children to see if they know what the babies are called. For example, a baby fox is called a cub.



The Scottish SPCA and you

MOTHER AND BABY



The Scottish SPCA and you

MOTHER AND BABY



INFO

Cats are the most popular pet in Scotland. They are playful, inquisitive and make great companions. The following activities encourage children to think about the various needs cats have.

ACTIVITY

Cats need food, water and exercise. Use Monty on the next page to discuss what he would need to keep him happy and healthy. Alternatively, photocopy the picture on the next page and ask the children to draw the items Monty needs.

CAT NEEDS

- Food
- Fresh, clean water
- Bowls for food and water
- Bed
- Toys
- Scratching post
- Regular veterinary checks
- Microchip
- A collar with bell and name tag
- Litter tray
- Brushes
- Cat carrier
- Get your vet to neuter your cat

Can anyone think of anything else Monty would need?



INFO

What does Monty need to keep him healthy and happy?



INFO

Dogs are pack animals. This means dogs see their families as packs and will want to be involved in their owner's activities

ACTIVITY

Choose a pack leader. The teacher gives the leader an action and the leader calls out the action to the rest of the class. Everyone copies the actions.

Actions:

- Bark
- Whimper
- Wag tail
- Growl
- Eat dinner
- Listen with head to one side
- Give a paw
- Lie down
- Look scared
- Sniff the air
- Dig
- Chase a ball
- Scratch
- Lie on back wriggling legs in air – tummy tickle please!

Can anyone think of any other dog actions?

Discuss dog behaviour and dog safety. Do not approach or touch dogs you do not know. Never go near any dogs that show any signs of being scared for example (showing teeth or growling).



INFO

Rabbits are very intelligent, curious and playful animals. They often don't like being picked up so are not suitable pets for young children. The aim of this section is for children to gain a better understanding of how to care for rabbits.

ACTIVITY

Rabbits need food, water and exercise. Use Jasmine on the next page to discuss what she would need to keep her healthy and happy. Alternatively, photocopy the picture on the next page and ask the children to draw the items Jasmine needs.

RABBIT NEEDS

- Food
- Fresh, clean water
- Water bottle
- Toys
- Large hutch
- Sawdust
- Hay
- A run for exercise
- Vegetables
- A friend
- Chew sticks
- A tunnel (somewhere to hide)

Can anyone think of anything else Jasmine needs?



INFO

What does Jasmine need to keep her healthy and happy?



INFO

Rabbits hop, they don't leap like frogs. Their back legs are longer than their front legs which is why they need to hop, unlike frogs which leap using all four feet off the ground. Rabbits hop in a zig zag, not in a straight line.

ACTIVITY

Ask the class to sit on the floor and imagine they are rabbits. Shout out a rabbit action and ask the children to do the action to learn how rabbits move.

- Hopping
- Scratching your ears
- Clean your face
- Thump your feet
- Hide in your burrow
- Sit still
- Ears up
- Ears down
- Move your eyes and remember they are at the side of your head not the front
- You are feeling sleepy so close your eyes
- Twitch your nose
- Eat some vegetables
- Clean your fur
- Tickle other rabbits with your whiskers
- Twitch your tail
- Cuddle up to another rabbit to keep warm
- Wake up and stretch like a rabbit
- Do the rabbit dance



INFO

The idea of this game is to familiarise the children with common pets and their basic needs.

ACTIVITY

Photocopy, cut and laminate the following four sheets which make up one set of cards. Create enough sets for the class. This activity works well in small groups of two to four children.

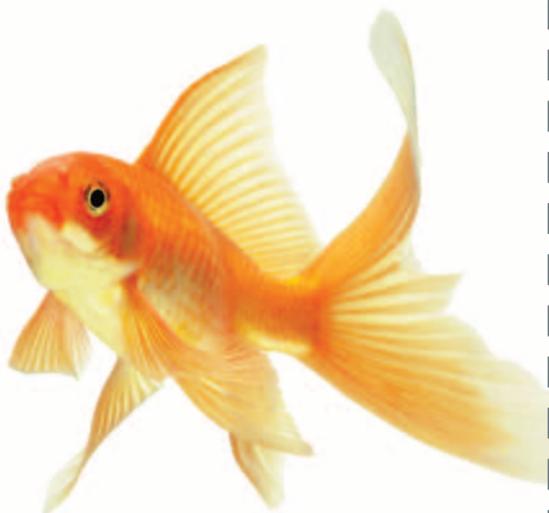
Deal a pack of cards equally between the children. When the pet and one of its items appear together or if two items belonging to the same pet appear together the children can shout **'SNAP'**.

Alternatively, the cards could be used for a matching or grouping activity, perhaps with some teacher input to discuss the various pets and items.









ACTIVITY

This activity is used to help recognise farm animals.

It can also be helpful when working on numbers, colours and grouping exercises. This can either be used as a verbal activity or the sheet of animals on the next page can be photocopied and laminated for use with marker pens.

Firstly ask the children to identify all of the different animals and answer the following questions.

- How many lambs can you see?
- How many pink animals are there?
- How many two legged animals can you see?
- How many different types of animals have four legs?
- How many cows can you see?
- How many animals are white with black spots?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Each child chooses their favourite farm animal. Ask them to draw a picture of that animal and the items it needs to keep it healthy and happy.

The class may enjoy singing along to 'this little piggy' on page 26.

Farm

SPOT



SING ALONG

This little piggy

**This little piggy wanted water
This little piggy wanted food
This little piggy wanted clean straw
This little piggy wanted friends
...and this little piggy went 'weeeeeee' all have what we need!**

**This little piggy wanted room to play
This little piggy wanted somewhere to sleep
This little piggy wanted mud
This little piggy wanted toys
...and this little piggy went 'weeeeeee' all have what we need!**

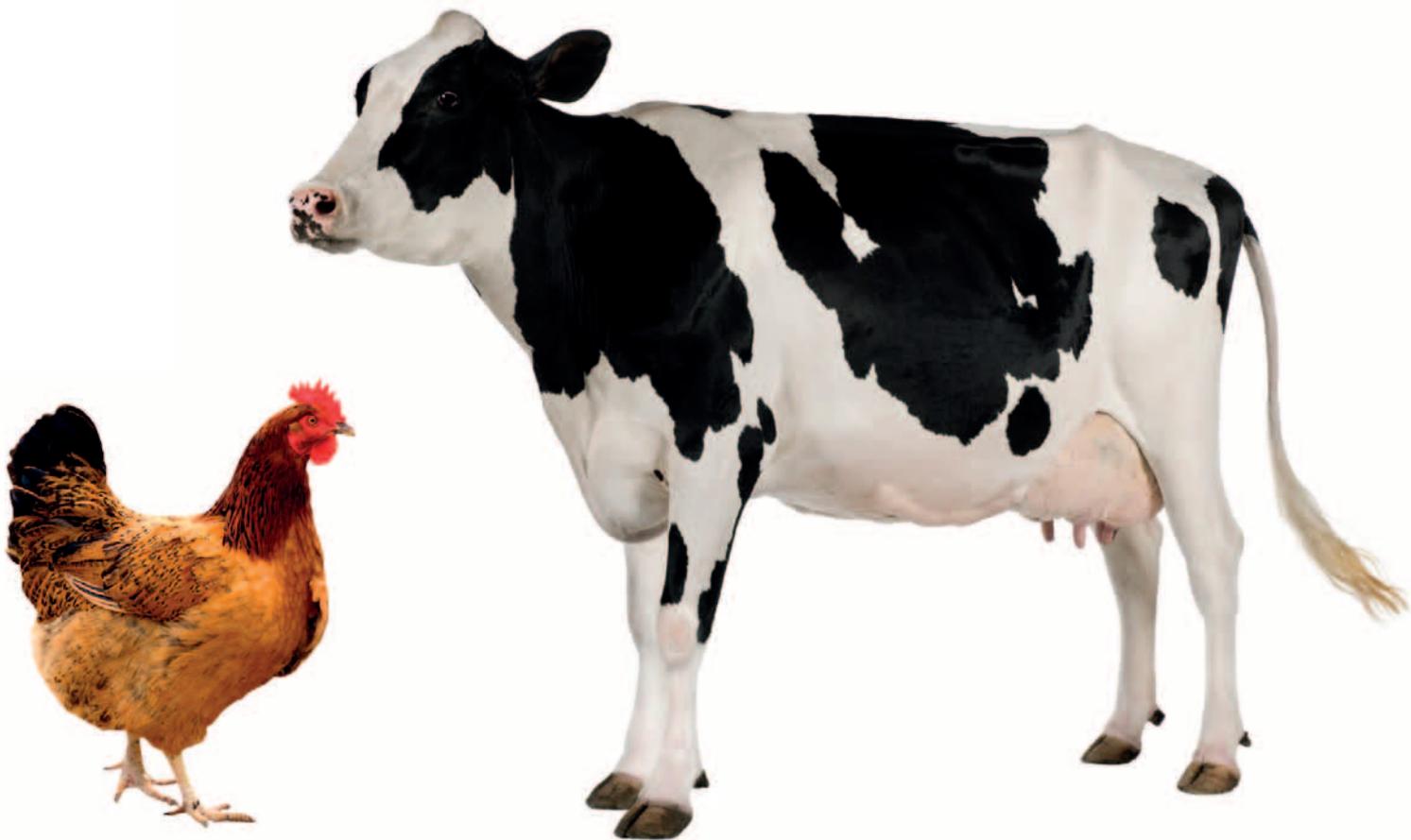


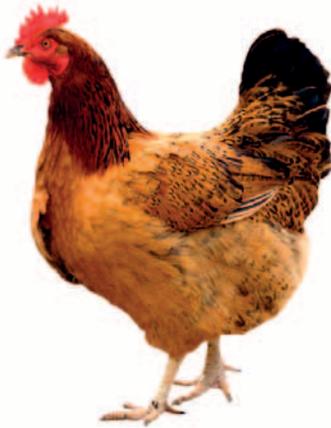
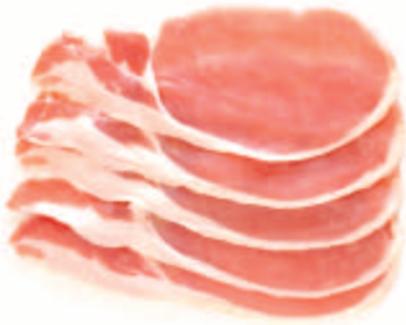
INFO

People like to know where their food comes from but children are often confused by the link between food and farm animals. This activity is a gentle introduction.

ACTIVITY

In small groups children can match up the food with the animal that provides it. Using the next page, photocopy the sheet and ask the children to draw a line from the food to the animal.





ACTIVITY

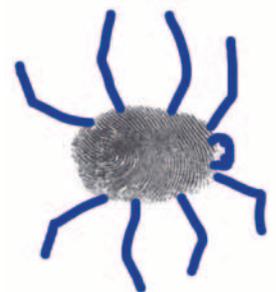
This is a fun craft activity for all the class.
With imagination this can work for any animal.

You will need:

- Ink pads (or paint if prepared for a lot more mess!)
- Strips of paper
- Animal fact books or sheets
- Animal facts pre-prepared onto paper notes
- Pens, pencils, crayons

Instructions

- Discuss some interesting facts about the animal you are studying
- Give everyone a long strip of paper
- Children press thumbs onto an inkpad and then place along the paper strip in several places. This is their animal thumb body. They may also want a separate thumb print for the head depending on the animal
- They then draw on the rest of the details, such as whiskers, eyes, legs, and ears
- Once complete, they can write an interesting animal fact such as pigs like mud or sheep eat grass
- Finally they can decorate the border and display their work



INFO

Foxes have excellent hearing. This helps them to listen out in case there is danger around. Let's see if you can listen as carefully as a fox!

ACTIVITY

A twist on the classic 'Simon Says'

Choose a child to be the 'fox'

Choose a starting point in the room and have everyone line up. For each command everyone moves one step only.

The class must do as 'Fox Says' and only when 'Fox Says'. The fox must try to catch the rest of the class out by sometimes saying an action, without first saying 'Fox Says'. If anyone carries out actions when there was no 'Fox says' they go back to the start.

Use the examples below for some fox movements

- Sniff the air
- Stalk prey (crouch, creep forward)
- Nose twitch
- Pounce
- Look around
- Wash your big ears
- Whiskers are twitching
- Lie down on your side all relaxed
- Clean your face
- Stand still and listen
- Dig a hole
- Squeak because you are annoyed
- Drink water



ACTIVITY

Children can try to guess the animal being described in the following poem. A teacher could pause briefly so the children can think about the creature in question.

**We went down to the woods one day
We met an animal on the way
It had a fluffy red tail and was rather shy
It was a **SQUIRREL** I saw go by**

**We went down to the woods one day
We met an animal on the way
It fluttered its wings and flew up high
It was a **BIRD** we saw go by**

**We went down to the woods one day
We met an animal on the way
It bounced around and made us smile
It was a **RABBIT** and we watched a while**

**We went down to the woods one day
We met an animal on the way
It hung from a big long sticky thread
It was a **SPIDER** that fell on my head.....eeeeeeek!**



INFO

Many animals have their babies in Spring when it is warmer and there is lots of food around.

Nests are where they can keep their young safe and warm. Nests are built from all sorts of material like grass, leaves, twigs, feathers, wool and anything else that can be found.

ACTIVITY

Try to make your own nest. Go on a walk and collect items such as leaves and twigs to make a nest. Alternatively, draw a picture of a nest and use cotton wool, string and other craft materials to decorate your picture. Don't forget to draw the animal that lives there.

Remember it is not just birds that build nests. Other animals like squirrels, hamsters and even pigs do as well.



INFO

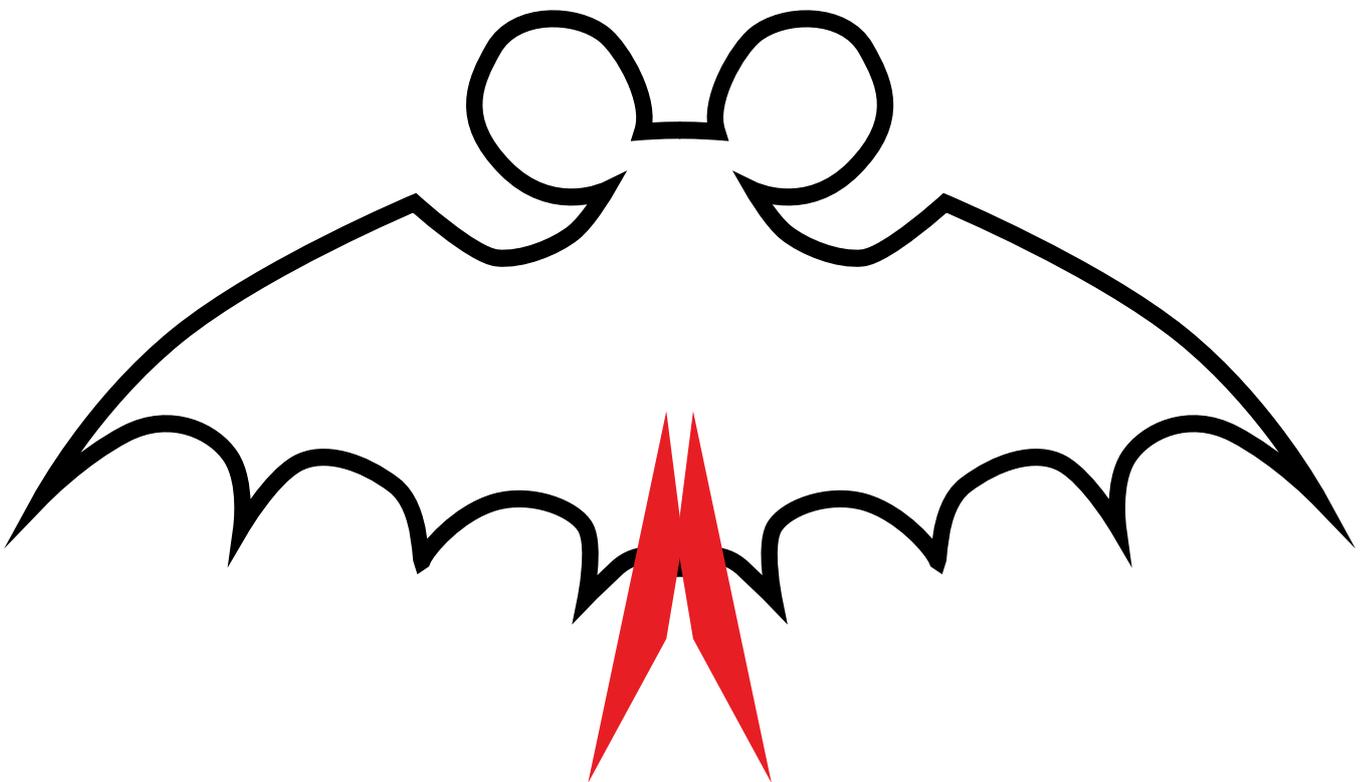
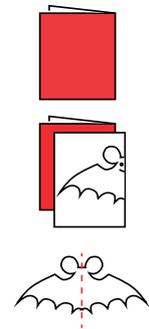
Bats are amazing creatures and use their excellent hearing to find their way. They are nocturnal so take over from birds as the nightshift of insect hunters. Pipistrelle bats eat hundreds of midges every night!

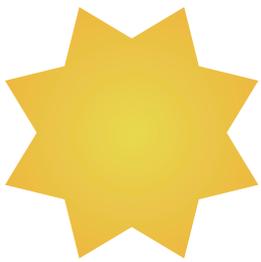
Many bats may hang upside down when sleeping.

ACTIVITY

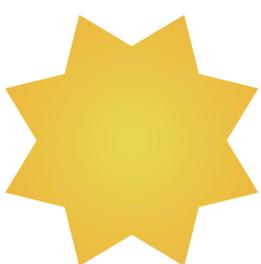
Try to make your own bat. Perfect as a Halloween decoration!

- 1 Fold a sheet of A4 paper or card.
- 2 Place the bat template over folded paper or card and trace an outline.
- 3 Cut out the bat. Unfold and then decorate it.
- 4 Glue or tape a peg to the back of the bat and hang it upside down.





**THIS ANIMAL AWARD
GOES TO**



FOR

DATE

SIGNED



SCOTTISH SPCA ANIMAL AWARD

