

Building a shelter

Design and build your own shelter

Great for...

- Design and technology
- Language and Literacy
- Citizenship and PSHE

Activity

- Discuss and explore the constructions of shelters by looking at books and websites illustrating the variety and diversity of shelter building around the world.
- Get the pupils to each design a shelter on paper – they should think about its purpose, what it could be made of, its features such as ventilation etc.
- Gather materials – ask pupils to bring in what they have at home that might be suitable; make links with your local scout group, forest school, woodland management team, scrap store etc.
- Go outside and identify good spots for shelter building – up against a fence or wall, between two shrubs, under a tree.
- Make all the materials readily available and get the pupils in groups to construct their shelter.
- Once the shelters have been built, discuss ways in which to evaluate each one. For example, is it waterproof? How can you prove this? Does it enhance the environment? How stable is it?

What you need

Item(s) – Blankets, curtains, bedspreads, sheets, tarpaulin, camouflage material, corrugated plastic sheets etc., straw bales, evergreen prunings, pegs, bamboo canes, hazel and/or willow sticks, long and short ropes, string, strong elastic bands, masking tape, pulleys, scissors

Extensions

- Use giant construction kits to make shelters and explore how these compare, especially in terms of stability.
- Give the pupils a stack of old newspapers. Is it possible to build a framework and covering from just these?
- Invite a professional such as an architect to visit and talk about design and construction.

Your notes

Use this space to evaluate the activity

