

Hbk: 978-1-8381381-3-4  
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## READING COMPREHENSION



### Lead-in activity

Before reading *The Most Important Animal of All* help children identify the title, author, illustrator and blurb on the front and back covers. Study the front cover and ask:

- What animals can you identify?
- Why do you think these animals are on the front cover?
- Looking at the title, what do you think the book will be about?

### Main activity

Enjoy reading the story out loud. Pause after reading the relevant pages and ask the following questions to check for understanding, promote deeper thinking and prompt further discussion. Alternatively, these questions can be provided along with copies of the keystone species pages from the book.



#### *The elephant:*

- What are the two species of elephant?
- How do elephants use their trunks?
- How do elephants find water?
- How do elephants help other animals?
- What can elephant poo be made into?

#### *The bee:*

- What does a bee drink when it visits a flower?
- What happens to the pollen that gets stuck on a bee?
- Can you name three types of bee?
- Why do farmers like bees?
- Where do wild bees live?



### English National Curriculum links:

- understand both the books they can already read accurately and fluently and those they listen to by:
  - drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
  - discussing the significance of the title and events
- answering and asking questions
- discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary

### ***The shark:***

- How many species of shark can you name?
- What is an apex predator?
- What do sharks eat?
- Why are sharks important?
- What would happen to the population of groupers if there were no sharks?



### ***The beaver:***

- Why do some people call beavers 'nature's engineers'?
- What is a beaver's home called?
- How do beavers cut down trees to build their dams?
- How have beavers adapted to live in the water, be strong swimmers and build dams?
- How many trees can beavers cut down each year?

### ***The bat:***

- How do bats navigate in the dark?
- What would happen to lots of cocoa beans without bats?
- Why do bats have claws?
- How does bat poo help the plants and trees in their habitats?
- How do bats help to protect people from certain diseases?



### ***The tiger:***

- What is special about each tiger?
- Why are Sumatran tigers endangered?
- What has happened to the population of tigers in India and why?
- Why do tigers like to swim in the water?
- How many cubs does a female tiger have at one time?

### ***Krill:***

- Which two species of whale travel to Antarctica to eat krill?
- Can you name three animals that rely on Antarctic krill?
- How do blue whales and humpback whales eat krill?
- How big is an Antarctic krill?
- How can you tell the age of an Antarctic krill?



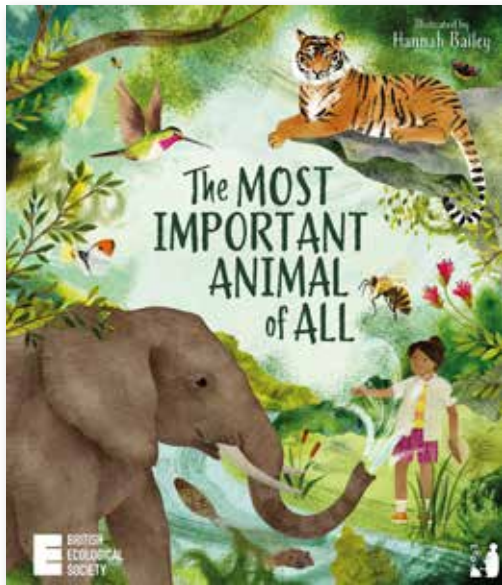
### **Extension activity**

Provide a copy of the key vocabulary cards for children to cut up and match the key terms with the correct definition. These are taken from the glossary in ***The Most Important Animal of All*** and build understanding of the scientific terms used throughout the book.

## Key vocabulary

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>apex predators</b>   | The number of any single species in one place or in total around the world.                             |
| <b>conservation</b>     | Changed in a very small way from one generation to the next.  |
| <b>diversity</b>        | An animal that spreads seeds, often by eating fruits and dropping the seeds in their poo.               |
| <b>ecosystem</b>        | A person or animal who designs, builds and maintains buildings, machines or structures.                 |
| <b>endangered</b>       | An animal that is hunted by a predator.   |
| <b>engineer</b>         | All the animals and plants living together in one place.  |
| <b>evolved</b>          | An animal or plant that has a very large effect on the place and wildlife where it lives.               |
| <b>keystone species</b> | Protecting and restoring nature and wildlife.   |
| <b>pollinator</b>       | A specific type of animal (or plant) with different characteristics to another type of the same animal. |
| <b>population</b>       | A wide range of different species.  |
| <b>predator</b>         | Predators at the very top of the food chain that have no natural predators themselves.                  |
| <b>prey</b>             | An animal that helps to spread pollen from one plant to another.  |
| <b>seed disperser</b>   | In danger of becoming extinct.  |
| <b>species</b>          | An animal that preys on and eats other animals.   |





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## GUESS THE ANIMAL



### Lead-in activity

Look at one of the animal photographs from the book, *The Most Important Animal of All*. Ask the children to make a list of words, phrases and sentences to describe the animal. Include appearance, diet and animal classification.

### Main activity

Cut out and place the *Guess the Animal* cards in a bag. Invite one child at a time to choose a card and describe the animal to the class without saying the name or showing the picture. Key terms have been provided in the helpful hints box to promote the use of scientific vocabulary. The forbidden words increase the challenge.



### Extension activity

The blank cards are for children to draw and name their own animal, adding in helpful hints and forbidden words. Enjoy playing with a whole new collection of animals.

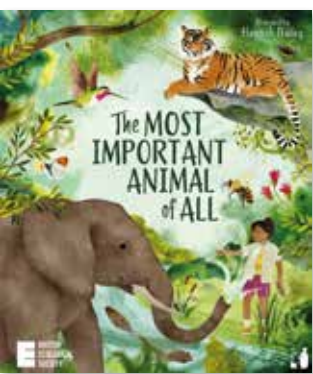


### English National Curriculum links:

- identify and name a variety of common animals including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals
- identify and name a variety of common animals that are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores
- identify and name a variety of plants and animals in their habitats, including microhabitats
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- give well-structured descriptions
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas



# GUESS THE ANIMAL



## How to play

Cut out the cards to play a fun card game that develops an understanding of animal characteristics and classifications. All the animals are featured in *The Most Important Animal of All*.



BEE

### HELPFUL HINTS

insect  
hive  
pollen

### FORBIDDEN WORDS

honey  
buzz  
fly



ELEPHANT

### HELPFUL HINTS

mammal  
herd  
tusks

### FORBIDDEN WORDS

trunk  
grey  
big



BEAVER

### HELPFUL HINTS

rodent  
engineer  
waterproof fur

### FORBIDDEN WORDS

teeth  
dam  
build



BAT

### HELPFUL HINTS

mammal  
nocturnal  
sense of hearing

### FORBIDDEN WORDS

wings  
upside down  
brown



KRILL

### HELPFUL HINTS

crustacean  
transparent  
ocean

### FORBIDDEN WORDS

small  
shrimp  
pink



SHARK

### HELPFUL HINTS

fish  
predator  
sense of smell

### FORBIDDEN WORDS

bite  
swim  
fin



**BEAR**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

mammal  
carnivore  
cubs

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

paws  
fish  
growl



**TIGER**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

carnivore  
predator  
powerful paws

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

cat  
stripes  
orange



**WOLF**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

predator  
canine  
forests and mountains

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

howl  
moon  
dog



**PRAIRIE DOG**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

rodent  
burrow  
grassland

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

furry  
squeak  
dig



**EARTHWORM**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

burrow  
compost  
prey

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

dirt  
wiggly  
slimy



**SEA OTTER**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

mammal  
float  
shellfish

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

long tail  
small ears  
brown



**CORAL**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

tropical  
grow on rocks  
reef

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

colourful  
plants  
seaweed



**HUMMINGBIRD**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

nectar  
long beak  
fly backwards

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

colourful  
nest  
hum



**SEA STAR**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

five (or more) arms  
suckers  
saltwater

**FORBIDDEN WORDS**

star  
crawl  
bright colours

HELPFUL HINTS



HELPFUL HINTS



FORBIDDEN WORDS



FORBIDDEN WORDS



HELPFUL HINTS



HELPFUL HINTS



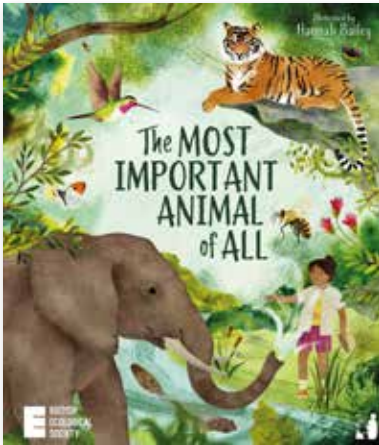
FORBIDDEN WORDS



FORBIDDEN WORDS







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## DATA COLLECTION

### Lead-in activity

Ask a handful of children to choose one of the principal keystone species as their own most important animal of all. Explain that often opinions differ and the best way to find out is to conduct a questionnaire and collect data to find out.



### Main activity Part A

Photocopy the blank *Keystone Species Tally Chart*. Look at the tally chart together and model how to add a tally mark each time a child chooses a particular animal as their most important animal of all. Allow time for children to personally ask every classmate, "What do you think is the most important animal of all?" and record their findings. Provide each child with a class list to allow them to check off the names of the children as they are asked. Look at the final column of the tally chart and work together to calculate the totals.

### Part B

Photocopy the blank *Keystone Species Block Diagram*. Focusing on one animal, work together to transfer the total from the tally chart onto the block diagram. Use a colour pencil to fill in one block for one tally. Children should use a different colour for each animal and may wish to choose a colour to represent that animal. Ask the children to identify the most important animal of all within the class and use their categorical data to support their conclusions.



### Extension activity Part A

Provide a copy of the blank *Animal Tally Chart* for the children to choose their own animals for a second questionnaire. These could be pets, farm animals or animals linked to a specific country or habitat being studied. Conduct the data collection process as above.

### Part B

Provide a copy of the blank *Animal Block Diagram* for the children to independently record their questionnaire results.



### English National Curriculum links:

- gather and record data to help in answering questions
- use results to draw simple conclusions and raise further questions
- interpret and construct simple pictograms, tally charts, block diagrams and simple tables
- ask and answer simple questions by counting the number of objects in each category
- ask and answer questions about totalling and comparing categorical data



# Keystone Species Tally Chart

Name .....

| Keystone Species | Tally | Total |
|------------------|-------|-------|
| bee              |       |       |
| elephant         |       |       |
| tiger            |       |       |
| beaver           |       |       |
| bat              |       |       |
| shark            |       |       |
| krill            |       |       |

# Keystone Species Block Diagram

|    |     |          |       |        |     |       |
|----|-----|----------|-------|--------|-----|-------|
| 15 |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 14 |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 13 |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 12 |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 11 |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 10 |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 9  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 8  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 7  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 6  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 5  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 4  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 3  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 2  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
| 1  |     |          |       |        |     |       |
|    | bee | elephant | tiger | beaver | bat | shark |
|    |     |          |       |        |     | krill |

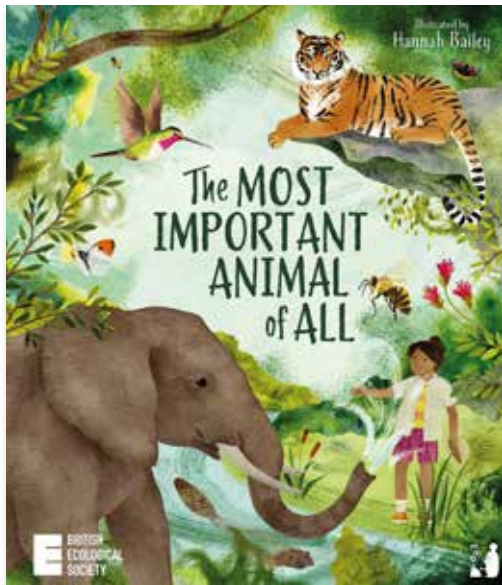
Animal Tally Chart

Name .....

| Animal | Tally | Total |
|--------|-------|-------|
|        |       |       |
|        |       |       |
|        |       |       |
|        |       |       |
|        |       |       |

Animal Block Diagram

|    |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 15 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|    |  |  |  |  |  |  |



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## ANIMAL FACT FILE



### Lead-in activity

Share the example elephant *Animal Fact File*. Discuss the headings used to organise the information and which sources of information would work well.

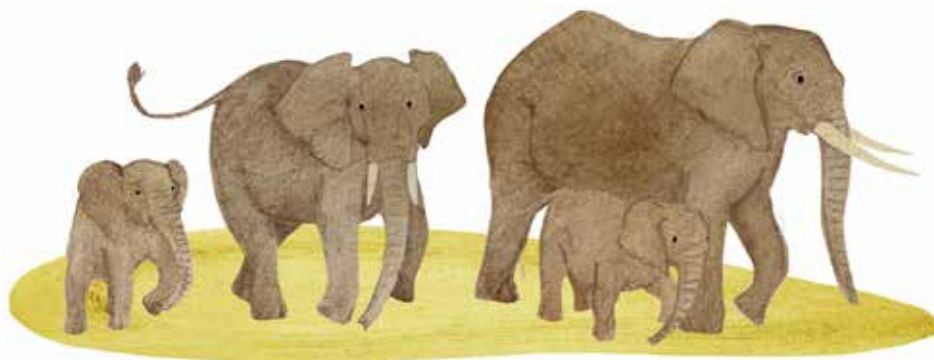
### Main activity

Photocopy the blank animal fact file. This activity can be completed by individuals, pairs or small groups. Children use *The Most Important Animal of All* to research

information about one of the keystone species from the book. Provide additional non-fiction texts and access to the internet to give further opportunities for children to find things out using secondary sources of information and complete their fact files.

### Extension activity

Photocopy additional blank animal fact files for children to use to independently research their own most important animal of all.



### English National Curriculum links:

- identify and name a variety of common animals including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals
- identify and name a variety of common animals that are carnivores, herbivores and omnivores
- identify and name a variety of plants and animals in their habitats, including microhabitats
- develop their understanding of scientific ideas by using different types of scientific enquiry to answer their own questions, including finding things out using secondary sources of information
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- writing for different purposes

# ANIMAL FACT FILE

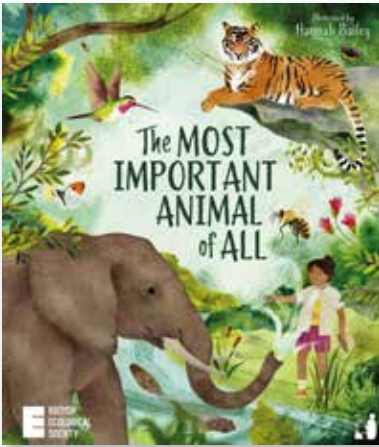


|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>NAME</b>                         | Elephant   |
| <b>SCIENTIFIC NAME</b>              | <i>Loxodonta</i>   |
| <b>TYPE (mammal, insect...)</b>     | mammal   |
| <b>HABITAT</b>                      | savannas, grasslands, forests and many others                                  |
| <b>AVERAGE LIFESPAN IN THE WILD</b> | 48-70 years  |
| <b>DIET</b>                         | Elephants eat lots of things like roots, grasses, fruit and bark.              |
| <b>INTERESTING FACT 1</b>           | African elephants are the largest land animal on Earth.                        |
| <b>INTERESTING FACT 2</b>           | When there is no rain, elephants remember where there is water and dig for it. |
| <b>INTERESTING FACT 3</b>           | People use elephant poo to build homes and make paper.                         |



# ANIMAL FACT FILE

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
|                              |  |
| NAME                         |  |
| SCIENTIFIC NAME              |  |
| TYPE (mammal, insect...)     |  |
| HABITAT                      |  |
| AVERAGE LIFESPAN IN THE WILD |  |
| DIET                         |  |
| INTERESTING FACT 1           |  |
| INTERESTING FACT 2           |  |
| INTERESTING FACT 3           |  |



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## DEBATE

This is a 'race to the top' debate, pitting two teams against each other to put forward their ideas for why their animal is the most important animal of all. The remaining children award marks to decide on the winning team for each round.

### Activity preparation

Group children into teams of three to five and assign each group an animal from ***The Most Important Animal of All***. The recommended number of groups is six, which allows for a

semi-final with one team promoted straight to the final from the first round. Plan the groups in advance and provide a copy of the relevant animal page from the book for children to use to form their arguments.



### Main activity

Each group has an assigned animal, copy of the relevant animal page from the book and a planning sheet. Teams should plan a minimum of five arguments each for why their animal is the most important animal of all. During the debate, each team has the opportunity to put forward an argument, taking turns. The remainder of the children complete a Debate Record to encourage them to listen and reflect on the arguments presented. Continue to hear all the debates in each round with the audience deciding which teams win and progress in the race to the top.

### Extension activity

A debate could be carried out based on the children's individual research of their own animal. This would work well as a follow-on activity from **Activity 4: Animal Fact File**.



### English National Curriculum links:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others

Our animal is \_\_\_\_\_

Argument 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Argument 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Argument 3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Argument 4: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Argument 5: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Extra arguments:

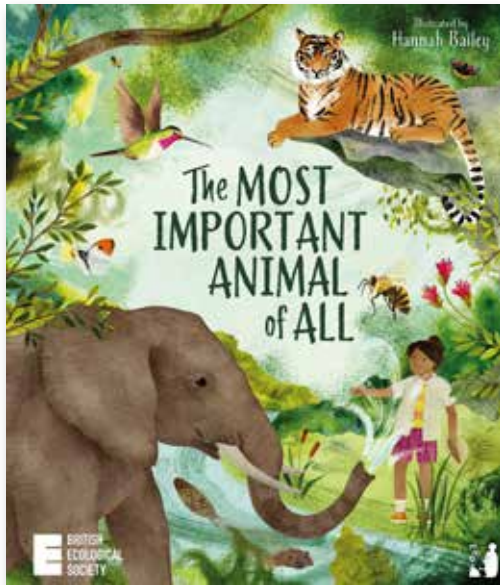
# How to play

Name .....

| Group | <b>Debate mark</b><br>✓ = quite good argument<br>✓✓ = good argument<br>✓✓✓ = very good argument | Strongest point |
|-------|---|-----------------|
| 1     |   |                 |
| 2     |   |                 |
| 3     |   |                 |
| 4     |   |                 |
| 5     |   |                 |
| 6     |   |                 |
| 7     |   |                 |

| Group | <b>Debate mark</b><br>✓ = quite good argument<br>✓✓ = good argument<br>✓✓✓ = very good argument | Strongest point |
|-------|---|-----------------|
| 1     |   |                 |
| 2     |   |                 |
| 3     |   |                 |
| 4     |   |                 |
| 5     |   |                 |
| 6     |   |                 |
| 7     |   |                 |





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## CREATE A PIECE OF MUSIC

### Lead-in activity

Enjoy reading *The Most Important Animal of All* and identify all the animals within the book. Discuss the known noises that the animals make (sharks and krill cannot produce sounds) and listen to clips available online. After listening to each clip, talk about the pitch (high/low), dynamics (loud/quiet) and tempo (fast/slow) of each noise.



### Main activity

Listen to samples of classical music inspired by animals. Examples include:

- Camille Saint-Saëns – The Carnival of the Animals
- Ottorino Respighi – The Birds
- George Crumb – Vox Balaenae (Voice of the Whale)
- Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov – Flight of the Bumblebee

Provide a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. Children work in small groups to experiment, create and combine sounds to represent a chosen animal or collection of animals. Provide time for each group to perform their musical creations and give and receive feedback.



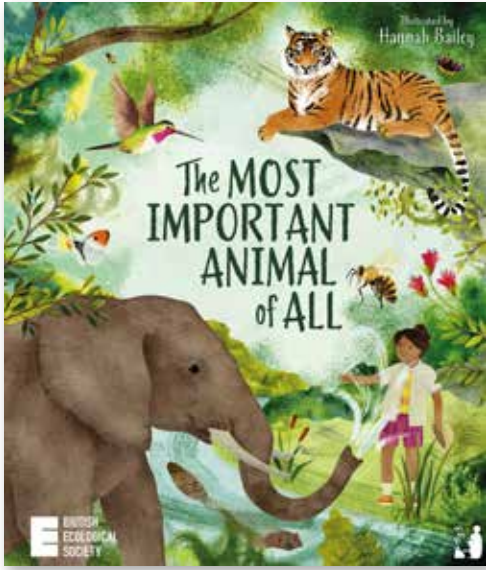
### Extension activity

Link this activity to exploring a wider variety of sounds by creating homemade instruments. These could include straw pan flutes, tin can drums, water-filled glass containers, elastic band guitars, rice filled shakers. Discuss the pitch of the sounds created with the homemade instruments and which animals they best represent.



### English National Curriculum links::

- experiment with, create, select and combine sounds using the inter-related dimensions of music
- play tuned and untuned instruments musically
- find patterns between the pitch of a sound and features of the object that produced it



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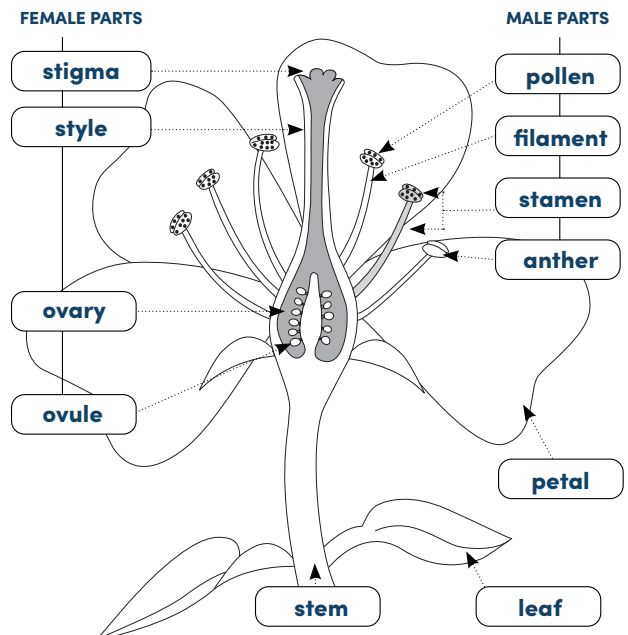
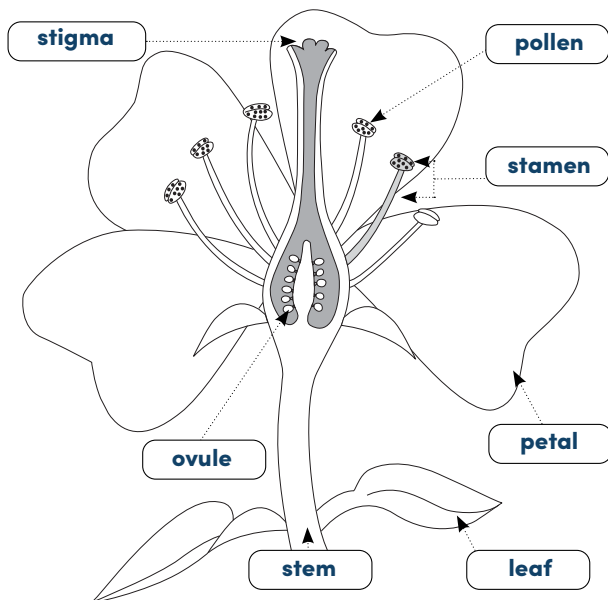
## PARTS OF A FLOWER

### Lead-in activity

In *The Most Important Animal of All*, Nimmie describes how a bee pollinates a flower as it searches for food. You can see some of the parts of a flower labelled, but not all. Look at a flower together and point to its petals, stem, leaves and pollen. For older children, point to the reproductive parts and explain how flowers need pollinators like bees to help them make seeds.

### Main activity

There are two worksheets to label and colour: one for younger children and another for older children. There is a list of words at the top. Explain that each word describes a part of the flower and ask them to copy the words into the boxes to correctly label the flower.



### English National Curriculum links:

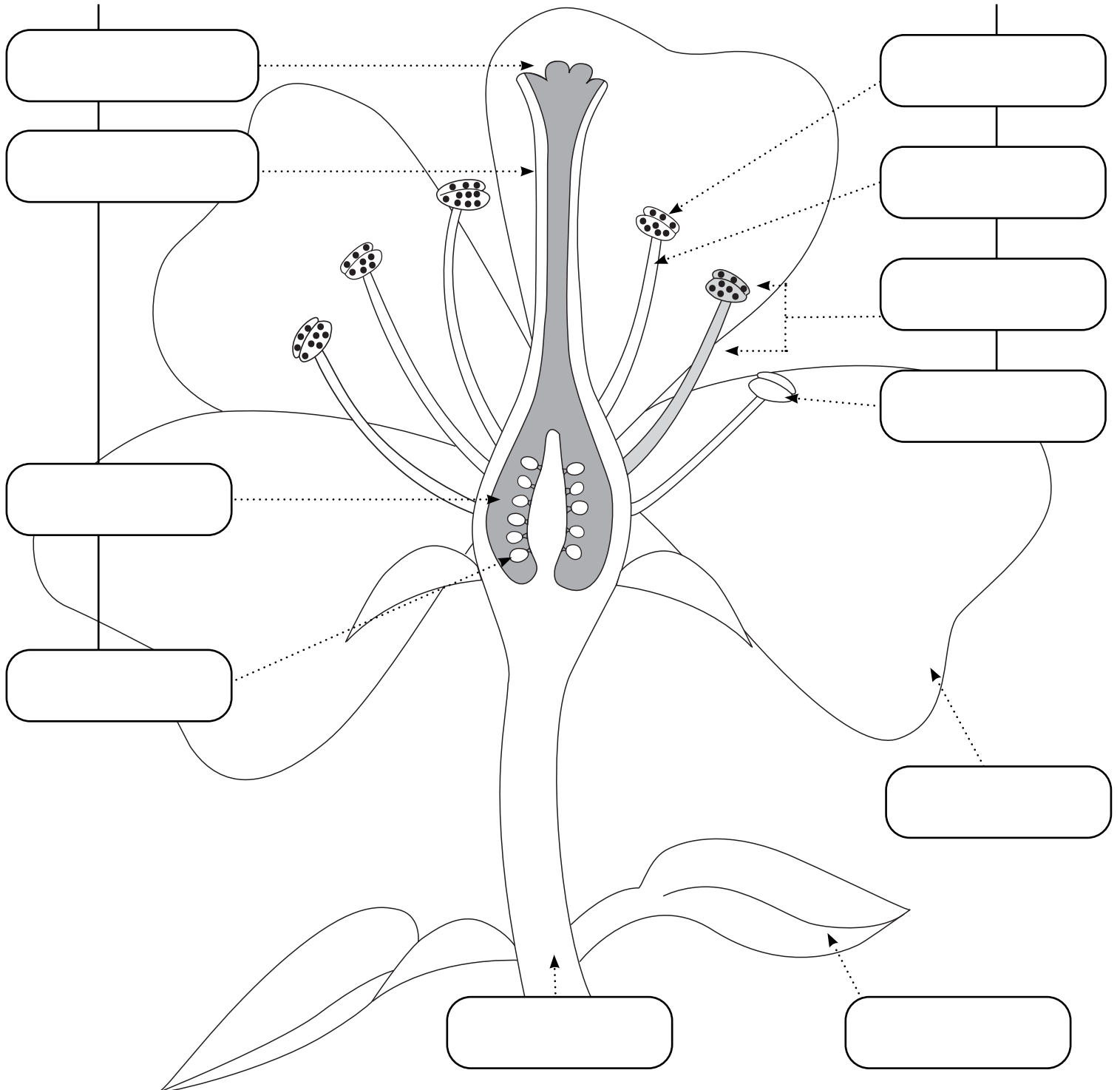
- identify and describe the basic structure of a variety of common flowering plants
- recording findings using simple labelled diagrams
- explore the part that flowers play in the life cycle of flowering plants, including pollination and seed formation
- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants

# LABEL PARTS OF A FLOWER

anther filament leaf ovary ovule petal  
pollen stamen stem stigma style

## FEMALE PARTS

## MALE PARTS

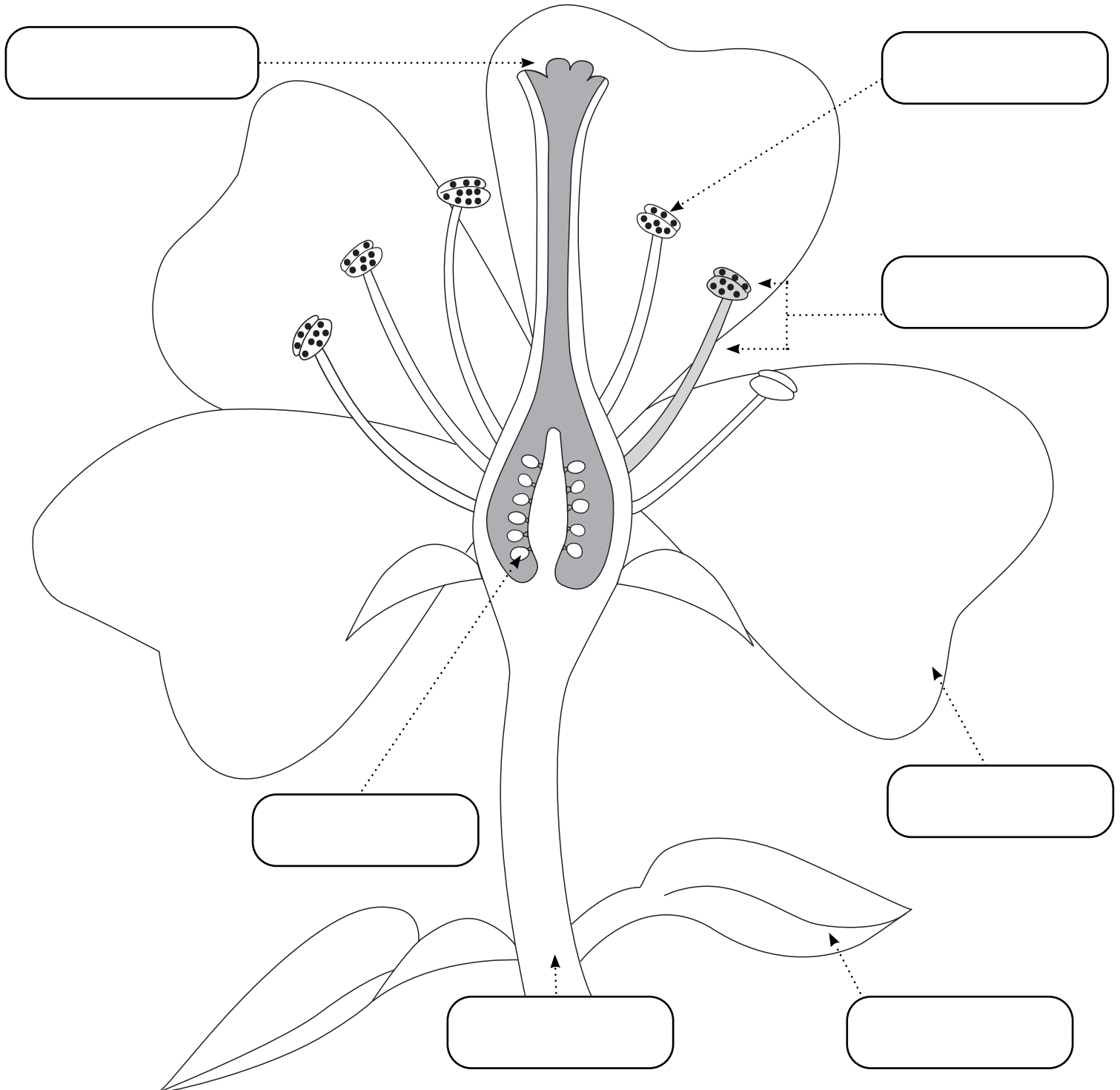


Name .....

# LABEL PARTS OF A FLOWER

**petal**   **leaf**   **ovule** (turns into a seed)

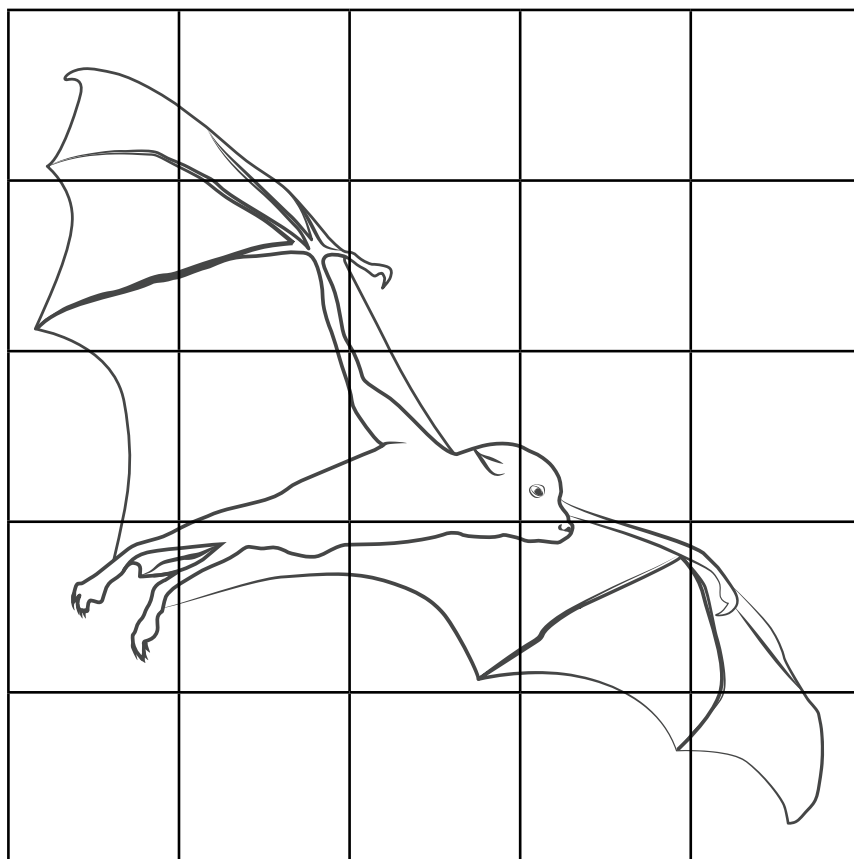
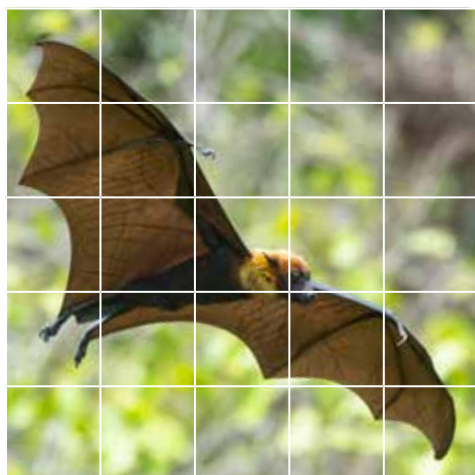
**pollen**   **stamen**   **stem**   **stigma**



Name .....

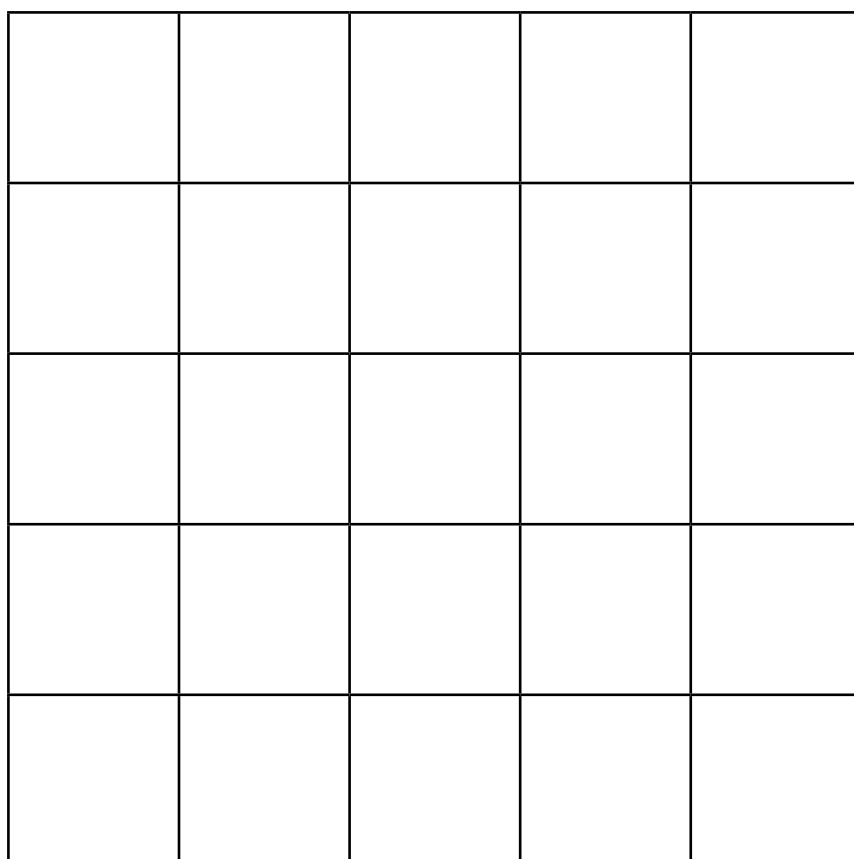


## DRAW A FRUIT BAT



Use the squares to help you draw this fruit bat into the grid below. Then add these word labels, drawing arrows to the right places on your bat.

- ear eye arm
- nose foot tail
- fingers furry body
- wing membrane



***The Most  
Important  
Animal of All***

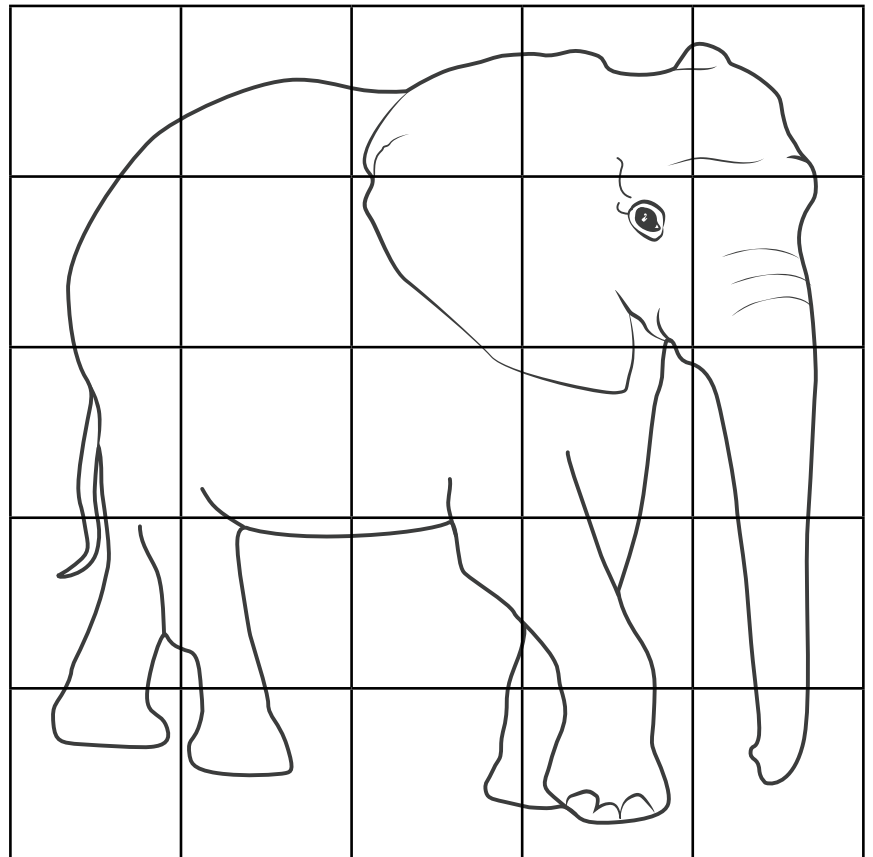
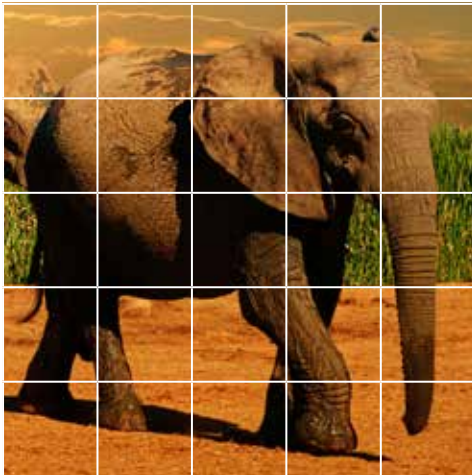
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Bat © Independent birds/Shutterstock.com

Name .....

# Activity 8b

## DRAW AN AFRICAN ELEPHANT



Use the squares to help you draw this young African elephant into the grid below. Then add these word labels, drawing arrows to the right places on your elephant. When its tusks grow, where will they be? *Clue: they are teeth that grow outside their mouths.*

ear

eye

foot

tail

mouth

trunk



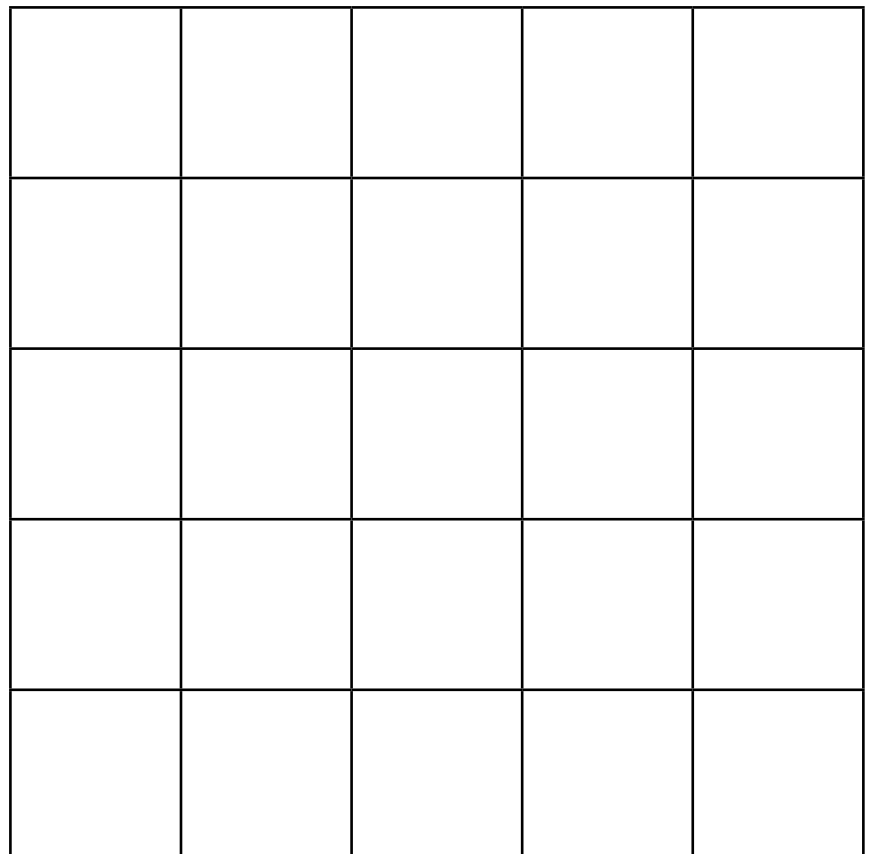
***The Most Important Animal of All***

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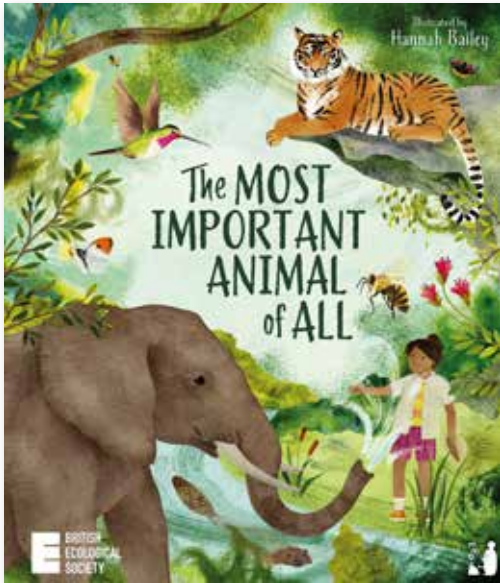
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Elephant © Hajakely/Shutterstock.com



Name .....

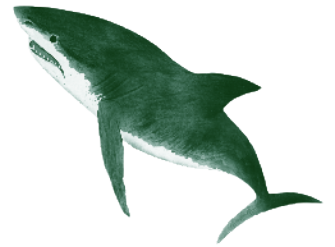


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## DESIGN A BADGE

### Lead-in activity

After reading *The Most Important Animal of All*, ask the children to decide which animal they would like to champion from the seven keystone species featured, or from the eight on pages 36–37.



### Main activity

Photocopy the attached design sheet for each child, telling them they can copy the badge shown and draw the icon in the middle that represents their chosen animal. If they are feeling creative, they can make up their own design. Ask them to think about:

- **Colour.** Do they want to choose colours that represent the animal or just colours that complement one another?
- **Typography.** It needs to be clear so people can read it, but do they want to use capital letters or a fancy font copied from the front cover of a book?
- **Central image.** This should be something that represents their animal. It could be a silhouette of the animal or a paw print or any other idea they have.
- **Pattern.** What pattern do they want to use around the edge of the badge? It can be a pattern associated with their animal, such as stripes for a tiger, waves for krill, or flowers for a bee, or it just a pattern that they like.

### Extension activity

If they enjoy this activity, they could design a whole set of badges for each animal. Let their imagination run wild!!



### English National Curriculum links:

- use a range of materials creatively to design and make products
- use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination
- develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space, exploring ideas



# DESIGN A BADGE

Choose an animal and design your very own animal champion badge. You can copy this or make up your own design.



shark



elephant



bee



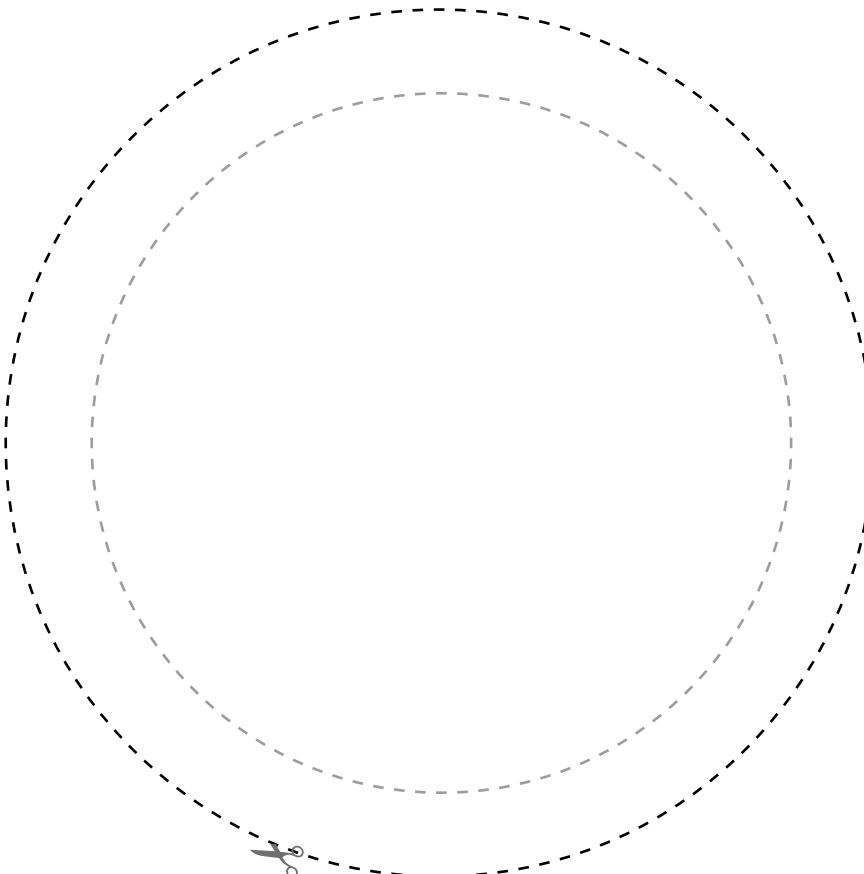
beaver



krill



bat



Name .....