

Cosy Critters

Learning aims:

- Develop scientific language including terms "hibernation" and "torpor"
- Learn which animals hibernate for winter, and which do not
- Understand how and why animals build nests and dens
- Explore creative writing

Activity 1: Language (KS1&2)

Discuss the following terms with your class:

- **Hibernation** - an extended period where an animal is inactive (sleeps)
- **Torpor** - A state of inactivity, but not complete hibernation. An animal can be roused from torpor by temporary changes in their external environment such as weather or a threat
- **Migration** - an animal travels from one habitat to another when the conditions are more favourable elsewhere (i.e. swallows spend the summer feasting on insects in the UK, but migrate to Africa in the winter to escape the cold)

Activity 2: Hibernation Investigation (KS2)

Ask your class to research their favourite British animal. Does this animal hibernate, go into torpor, migrate, or none of the above? If they hibernate, find out what happens to their body and where they hibernate. If they don't, find out how they cope with changing climates.

Activity 3: Build a Nest! (KS1&2)

Find out why and how animals build nests and then try to recreate it yourselves! You can either create animal-sized nests using natural materials, or build a giant nest in your classroom using items that humans find cosy!

Activity 4: Creative Writing (KS1&2)

Challenge your class to write a story about an animal that hibernates. They can chose to focus on how the animal prepares for hibernation, what happens whilst the animal is asleep and when they wake up. Perhaps your animal can't get to sleep for some reason.

You can extend this activity by including illustration, or you could adapt it to a poem instead.