



# slow down

LEARNING RESOURCES FOR  
TEACHERS AND PARENTS

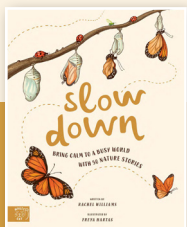


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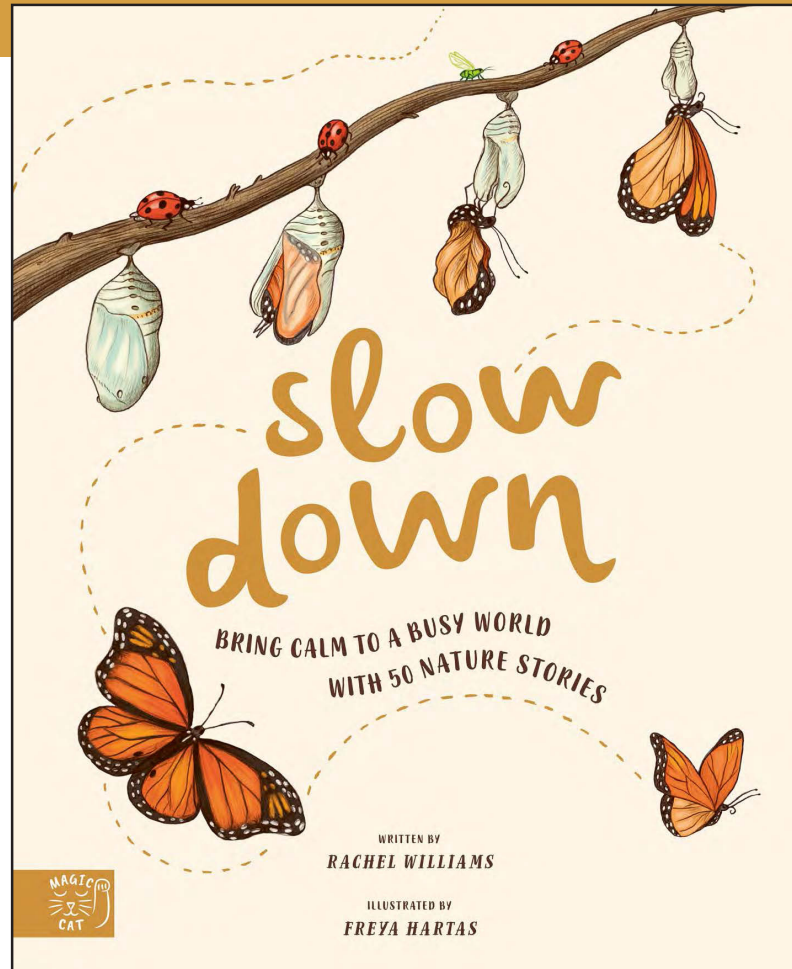
LEARNING RESOURCES BY EVA JOHN



# INTRODUCTION

Take some time to think about the natural world around you and the wonders that can be found outside, every day.

Included in this resource pack are prompts for discussion, creative and craft challenges, observational journal ideas, and fun research activities.



TALK FOR  
THOUGHT



Have a good look at the cover of the book.  
What do you understand by the words 'calm' and 'busy'?

What sort of things and activities make you feel a sense of calm?

Which things in nature do you associate with calm?

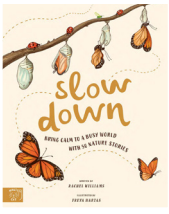
What type of sounds and music would you associate with calm?

What sort of things and activities make you feel busy?

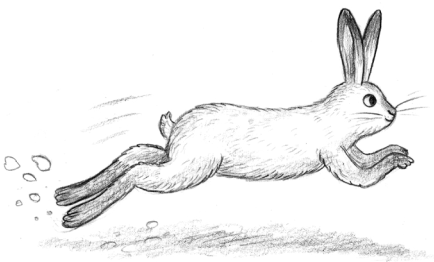
Which things in nature do you associate with busy?

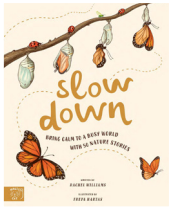
What types of sounds and music would you associate with busy?





LOOK AROUND YOU. WHAT THINGS IN NATURE REPRESENT A FEELING OF CALM TO YOU? NAME THEM HERE AND COLOUR THEM IN. ADD IN SOME OF YOUR OWN TOO.





NATURE IS FULL OF AMAZING DETAILS THAT WE ARE OFTEN TOO BUSY TO NOTICE. LOOK CLOSELY AT THE THINGS AROUND YOU, IN THE GARDEN, OR AT THE PARK. DRAW AND WRITE WHAT YOU SEE ON THIS PAGE.



How many petals can you count on the flowers that you see?



How many birds can you count outside?  
Can you name the birds you see outside?



# OBSERVATION LOG



Using the chart, tick off the things you see. It is unlikely that you will see everything, but you can add categories of your own.


CREATIVE  
CHALLENGE

Look at the design the illustrator has created for the endpapers of the book.



Choose different things from the animal and plant world that you find interesting and create a design showing them in different stages of development or movement below.

A large, empty rectangular area with rounded corners and a yellow border, intended for the student to create their own design.

TALK FOR  
THOUGHT

# HAVE A LOOK AT THE CONTENTS PAGES...



Which of these things have you already seen in nature?

Are there any that you are unlikely to see?

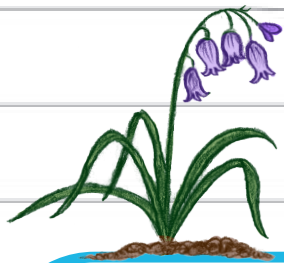
Which would you like to see most?

Which do you think would be the most soothing?

Which would be the most exciting?

Which things happen every day?





Start to keep a journal of jottings, drawings and photos of your observations, thoughts and feelings.

Record your own nature stories; they might be about very small things that only you may have noticed.

Note something down every day this week if you can.



Find out more interesting facts and add them to your journal. You could introduce fold-outs, lift-the-flaps, envelopes - or even specimens.

Plan your ideas and then create your own journal book to show all of the things you find.





WORD  
WIZARDRY

As you dip into the book, identify any words that are new or that you are not quite sure of. Create your own glossary.

## ✂ GLOSSARY ✂

TALK FOR  
THOUGHT

## WHAT THINGS HAVE YOU NOTICED TODAY?

Could you list the things that you see on a short journey, perhaps to school or to the shops?

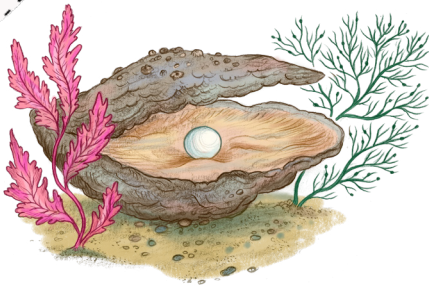


OBSERVATION  
CHALLENGE

Go outside to stand and stare... and listen.

List the different interesting and beautiful things you can hear and see.

How do they make you feel?



Create a list poem of your observations.

Think about how to describe them to include details that will help the reader to visualize what you have seen.

Try arranging your words and lines in different order, thinking about the sound and the rhythm of your words.

Add your poem to your journal and illustrate it.



CREATIVE  
CHALLENGE



## A BEE POLINATES A FLOWER

SOW &  
GROW



Find out which flowers are particularly attractive to bees. Make a note of them in your journal.

Find one or more that you can grow in a pot or a garden. You might be able to harvest some wildflower seeds to grow.

When your flowers are in bloom, keep a record of which animals come to visit it.



Information and advice about bees from Friends of the Earth: [bit.ly/31DrPEP](https://bit.ly/31DrPEP)

## A SQUIRREL BURIES AN ACORN IN AUTUMN



In the autumn collect a few acorns and grow your own oak tree in a pot. It will take a few weeks to germinate.

After a few years, you will need to find a suitable place to plant your home-grown tree, which has plenty of space for it to grow over the next nine hundred years!





# THE DAWN CHORUS

PERFORMS

INVESTIGATION



Use the official RSPB online bird song identifier to listen to the songs of the birds mentioned on the dawn chorus page:  
[bit.ly/31J9h66](https://bit.ly/31J9h66)

Which of these do you find easiest to recognise?

Try listening outside, to find out whether you can hear any of these birds.



# A THUNDERSTORM ON

A SUMMER'S DAY

TALK FOR  
THOUGHT



How do storms make you feel?

Make a collection of stormy words  
and a contrasting collection of calm words.

CREATIVE  
CHALLENGE

Create word clouds, either by hand or digitally, of the words you collected. Use colours carefully to suggest the mood of the words.



# MOSS DRINKS IN A WOODLAND RAINSHOWER

OBSERVATION



See how many different kinds of moss you can find outside in damp and shady places. You might find some interesting creatures too.

Examine them closely with a magnifier.

Log them in your journal, noting the date and where you found them.



## FINAL THOUGHTS



What is the most surprising thing you have discovered?

What else would you like to find out about?

Look at the recommended websites and bibliography at the end of this book. There are lots of very interesting pathways to new discoveries.

TALK FOR  
THOUGHT







## A SPIDER WEAVES A WEB

and so  
can you!

### MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED:

3 sticks of roughly the same length  
String or yarn  
Scissors

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Overlap the sticks to make the spokes of the web, so that they cross at the middle and are evenly spaced, making a star shape.

Placing the string under the sticks at the centre, wind it diagonally through the gap between two sticks and tie to secure.

Move on to the next two sticks and repeat until all the diagonals are secure.

Take a long piece of string, tie to the middle.

Working gradually outwards, twist the string around each stick in turn, pulling tight, before moving on to the next stick.

Keep the string close together at the start of the web, moving wider as you go towards the edges of the sticks.

Tie off, leaving a long string to hang your web, either outside or inside.

# A THUNDERSTORM ON A SUMMER'S DAY

CREATIVE  
CHALLENGE



## MAKE A RAINSTICK

### MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED:

- A long, sturdy cardboard tube
- Thick brown paper
- Twirled pipe cleaners
- Rubber bands
- Filling such as dried beans, peas, rice, small pebbles
- Pens/paints to decorate
- Ribbon and threads to decorate

### INSTRUCTIONS

Create decorations on your tube with pens or paint.

Cut two circles from brown paper that are more than twice the size of the circle at the end of the tube.

Attach one circle to one end of the tube securely with a rubber band.

Pour your filling into the tube, filling to about 1/8 way up.

Try adding twirled pipe cleaners, as this affects the quality of the sound.

Fix the second circle at the open end of the stick securely.

Decorate with coloured yarn.

Tilt your stick and listen to the sound it produces.

Experiment with different fillings for different qualities of sound.

Make other instruments using different utensils and found objects so that you can create a storm soundscape followed by a period of calm. You could work out a musical notation, perhaps using weather symbols, so that you can remember how to play the same piece more than once.

# AN OCEAN WAVE FORMS

## DESIGN AN OCEAN DRUM

CREATIVE  
CHALLENGE



### MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED:

A large shallow container with a lid

Filling: e.g. dried peas, beans or rice, sand, sunflower seeds, small pebbles

Pens or paints to decorate the drum

### INSTRUCTIONS

Part fill your container with your chosen contents.

Secure all openings.

Decorate.

Experiment with the different sound-effects you can create.

Create a soundscape of different sea states.





# A RAINBOW APPEARS



Go outside on a sunny day, when the sun is low in the sky, with a water spray.

Turn your back towards the sun, and spray a stream of water.

Watch for the rainbow to appear!

## CREATE A RAINBOW IN DIFFERENT WAYS

### MATERIALS

- A glass of water
- A sheet of white paper
- A sunny day or torch

### INSTRUCTIONS

If using sunlight, hold the glass so that it is half on/half off the edge of a table or window sill, so that the sun shines directly through the water, onto a sheet of white paper on the floor.

Adjust the position of the glass and paper until a rainbow appears on the paper.

If using a torch, find a darkened space and place the glass of water on the white paper, moving the torch around until a rainbow is formed.

### MATERIALS

- A sunny day
- A small mirror
- A bowl of water

### INSTRUCTIONS

On a sunny day, place a small mirror in a bowl of water tilted at an angle towards the sun.

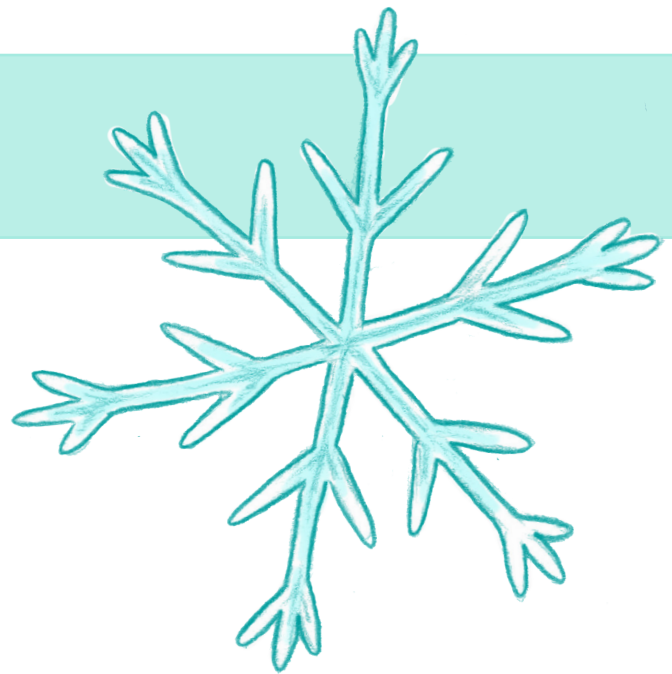
Using a piece of white card or paper, try to capture the rainbow that is formed.

If there is no sunshine, find a darkened space. Using a torch, shine it on the tilted mirror in the water, until a rainbow is formed.



# A SNOWFLAKE FALLS

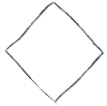
## MAKE SNOWFLAKE DECORATIONS



### MATERIALS

A square of plain white paper  
Scissors

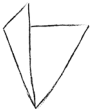
### INSTRUCTIONS



If you are starting out with a piece of A4 or rectangular shaped paper, make it into a square by folding one corner down to the bottom to make a triangle then cut off the remaining strip of paper.



Once you have your square piece of paper, fold it in half diagonally to make a triangle.



Fold the triangle again, this time into three from left to right. Try to make the sections as even as possible.



Cut across the paper to make a straight edged triangle.

Give your snowflake a pattern but cutting straight or curvy lines into the edges of your paper. Be mindful not to chop right across though or your snowflake might end up being very small!

Gently unfold your paper to reveal your unique snowflake design.



Watch snowflakes bloom video by New Scientist: [bit.ly/3jv8fB3](https://bit.ly/3jv8fB3)

