

Schools' Country Picnic Pack



COUNTRYSIDE CLASSROOM

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Schools' Country Picnic Pack



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Things to do before the picnic

Build up an appetite by suggesting one of the activities from the following pages.

Print out things to spot on your country picnic:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Birds |  |
| Bees |  |
| Butterflies |  |
| Flowers |  |
| Ladybirds |  |
| Pondlife |  |

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Build a minibeast hotel

Homes for insects are very popular—and quite expensive—in garden centres but children can make their own and enjoy discovering the creatures that inhabit them.

Choose a sheltered site in your grounds. Use a variety of materials - old bricks, wooden crates or pallets, plant pots and small logs. These and other materials can be used to construct a minibeast shelter. Adult help will be needed to make sure the construction is safe and that children handle the materials with care. Gloves are useful to prevent splinters etc.

Gaps can be stuffed with newspaper, cardboard and sticks.

After the day of the picnic children can take turns to observe the minibeast home and to see how soon it becomes occupied by snails, centipedes, beetles and slugs. There are opportunities to record observations on graphs or bar charts.



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Make bird feeders

A simple - and messy - activity is to make bird feeders and involves using pine cones, bird seed, string and lard or vegetable fat.

Tie a piece of wool to the cone to make a loop to hang it from.
Push lard/fat into the pine cone and press the bird seed into the lard.

To speed things up you can have the lard and seeds ready mixed together so the children just squish the mixture into the cone.

Watch out for children with wheat allergies!

This is a messy activity; you will need warm water, soap and paper towels to wash hands. Make sure everyone's hands are very clean before starting your picnic.



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Create scarecrows

Scarecrow making – provide the basics collected in advance – old shirts, hats, cardboard cartons (for a head). The children can design their scarecrow in advance and then build it on the day of the picnic. This is a good problem solving, planning and collaboration activity. Give it a countryside theme!



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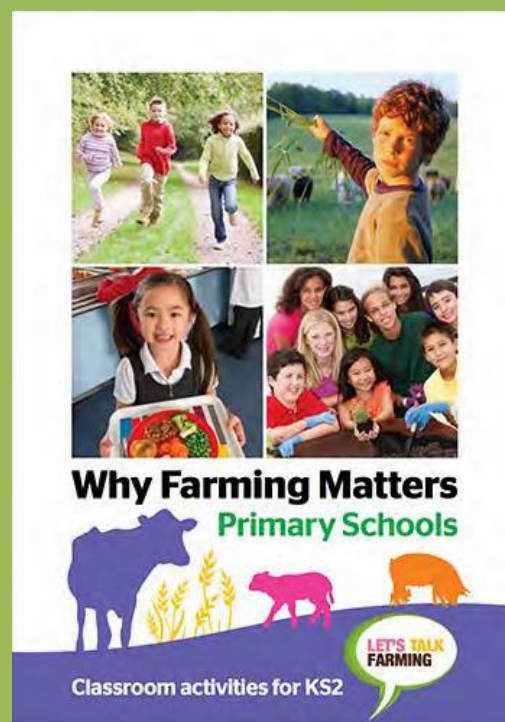


Where does your picnic food come from?

In class before the day of the picnic spend some time using the Why Farming Matters resource. In it you can explore the vital role of farming in our lives. Activities are linked to many areas of the curriculum.

In particular your pupils can explore who produces their food. Take a look at the videos of farmers in Britain explaining what they grow and rear. Will any of their products feature in your picnic?

<http://www.whyfarmingmatters.co.uk/using-the-videos>



<http://www.whyfarmingmatters.co.uk/why-farming-matters>

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Where to hold your picnic

Visitor attractions

There are many visitor attractions which welcome school groups and where you would be able to hold a picnic.

Here you will find a map which leads you to venues close to you.

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/place>

Parks and green spaces

You might not have to travel far to find a suitable leafy green space offering an ideal location for your country picnic.



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Where to hold your picnic

School grounds

By far the easiest choice is to use your school grounds. Be amazed at how quickly a tarmac playground can be transformed into a country retreat with some imagination and creativity! Even better if you have a school field or access to any green space inside the school perimeter.



Select an area that is flat. Ask the children to bring along rugs or use PE mats. You might have school picnic tables and benches that can be used.

Community event

Make your picnic into a community event held one evening after school. Families bring blankets and their own food. Your PTA might like to get involved to raise some extra funds by supplying drinks and/or food. This is a great opportunity for parents to get to know each other better.

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Lots of good advice

Thank you to Learning through Landscapes for the following:

Food always tastes better out of doors and a picnic is a fun and easy way to make good use of your school grounds.

Whatever type of school grounds space you have, you can create a cosy place to sit and eat lunch.

For the more adventurous you may even be able to grow your own lunch and cook it on a camp fire or cooking stove.

The first stage is to decide how many people you want to accommodate – is this a whole school affair? Are you inviting the community and families in to join you or is this something that you will do one class at a time?

Whatever the answer make sure that you have enough space for everyone to sit down and eat.

If the weather is fine then you should be fine to sit out on grass, if you only have tarmac then consider bringing chairs out into the playground. You might want to provide carrier bags to sit on or squares of material, old newspapers and magazines are also good.

If children are bringing a packed lunch then it is straightforward but how about planning in advance and growing some of your own salad stuff to add to your picnic – even if you only have window box space fresh leaves and tomato plants can make a great addition to a meal. Potatoes, carrots and leeks can be whipped up into a tasty soup with some fresh herbs.

If you want to go one step further and cook out of doors then see our helpful Fires and Cooking resource: <http://www.ltl.org.uk/pdf/Fires-and-Cooking-Activity1421850222.pdf>

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Simple bread can be made easily and quickly using a pack of ready mix bread maker flour from your local supermarket, just add water and twist around a stick then toast in your fire.

Bananas wrapped in silver foil and baked at the edge of a fire make for a super sticky sweet treat – do watch out though as they are hot when they first come out.

A traditional barbecue is always a good way to get your local community involved, or maybe talk to your school food provider to see if there is something that can be arranged with them to help everyone enjoy eating in the fresh air.

Please note that anyone cooking for others needs to hold the appropriate food hygiene and health and safety certification – see your health and safety lead in the school.

Picnics do not have to be an all singing/all dancing occasion just once a year – why not thinking about taking lunches outside every day if the weather permits?

Logs and old tyres make great seating spots as do turf piles and old scaffold plank benches – do make sure that if using wood you ensure that all surfaces are smooth and splinter free.

Some people worry about wasps in the summer weather – provide a pot of honey water some way away from your picnic spot and they will head over there and leave you well alone.

And don't forget – if the sun is strong you will need sun protection....

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Bunting

Use roller blind fabric* and cut out triangular shapes for the bunting. Hang long strings or ribbons of fabric on which to attach the bunting Instructions.

Books, pictures etc. of the countryside to provide inspiration.

*To source roller blind fabric and other art materials, see if you have a Children's Scrapstore in your area.

Children can paint straight onto the fabric triangles or their artwork can be stapled on instead. Attach the triangles to the string with pegs or pre punch holes and tie to the strings.

This makes a very colourful display. Suggest the works of art include landscape features such as hedges, trees and flowers plus animals like cows and sheep alongside birds, bees and butterflies.

Thanks to Bobbie Harvey, LEAF Education East Midlands



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Picnic games and activities

Keep it simple by providing hula hoops, skittles and bean bags.

Unless you have a large area available, footballs etc are probably not a good idea next to your picnic spot. Remind the children that picnics are all part of rest and relaxation!

Take some books outside and let the children enjoy some quiet time reading alone or to each other.

Make a story. Provide artefacts (or illustrations) with a countryside theme which have to be included in a short story or a play: a wellington, a flowerpot, a watering can, a signpost, a horse/cow/pig, a tractor, a barn.....



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Animal Sounds

Ask the children to stand in a circle.

The group leader goes to each child around the circle and whispers in their ear the name of the animal.

Two children should be assigned the same animal so that the children are secretly paired.

Ask the children to move around and weave in and out of each other as they do so all the time making the noise of their animal whilst listening for their secret pair.

Ask the children to stand in pairs once they have found their partner.

This game works well with younger children. Use pictures of the animals to create a matching exercise as a follow on activity.



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Teddy Bears' Picnic

Early years children might like to bring their teddy bears along to make it a real Teddy Bears' Picnic.



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Picnic Weather

Be prepared for hot, sunny weather (be optimistic!) Make sure there is shade available (think in advance about a makeshift canopy) and remind the children to use sunscreen and bring hats.



You will also need a wet weather contingency plan. Can you shelter outdoors? If not, bring your picnic inside. Use the school hall or other large space. It will soon be transformed with your rugs, blankets and bunting. How about playing bird song CDs?



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Picnic Food



If you're packing a picnic, advises the NFU, don't forget to look out for the Red Tractor logo on the foods you buy. The logo is a guarantee you are buying quality food and drink, and combined with the Union flag, it's a sure way to know the product can be traced back to British farms.

Bored of soggy sandwiches and looking for some new, inspiring picnic ideas to show off to your friends and family? Red Tractor have a collection of delicious picnic recipes for you to try this summer.

<https://www.redtractor.org.uk/recipes/picnics>

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More food ideas

Thanks to Stephanie Wood of School Food Matters for this [Kitchen Garden Idea](#) . It's got a lovely pizza that was made with primary school children so easy peasy and relies on summer produce.



You can find more picnic recipes here:

<http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/healthy-lunchbox-picnic.aspx>

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Barbequed Chicken

Here's a recipe submitted by our good friend Idris Caldora of the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts—Chefs Adopt a School.
This is probably one for the adults to prepare in advance of the picnic.

This is a simple but flavoursome chicken that can be eaten hot or cold. It has many uses, it can be thinly sliced and placed into sandwiches or wraps, it can be diced and placed into salads or cut into slightly thicker slices and accompanied with a verity of salads which all can be taken on a picnic.

- 1.2k Good Quality Whole British Chicken
- 150ml Rapeseed oil
- 1teasp Chopped Rosemary
- 1teasp Chopped Basil
- 1teasp Chopped Marjoram
- 1teasp Oregano
- 1teasp Chopped Savoury
- 1teasp Thyme
- 2 Cloves of garlic that has been crushed to a paste
- Salt and pepper

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Method

Firstly you need to debone the chicken, I would recommend that you get your butcher to do this. If you wish to have a go then you need to remove the wish bone by scraping the meat that surrounds the wish bone to expose it and then you can use your finger and knife to ease it away. Turn the chicken over onto its breast bone and you will need to cut through the skin from the back of the neck along to the parson's nose. Using the point of your knife work down one side and follow the shape of the carcass by doing small cuts as you make your way around freeing the meat from the bone. As you get to the wing bone joint and thigh leg joint, you will need to wiggle these around so you can insert the point of your knife to release the ball from its socket. Continue working against the bone until you reach the breast bone. Then do the same on the other side until you reach the breast bone and gently remove the carcass. You should now have a butterfly shape with the skin intact. Now you need to remove the thigh bone and leg bones. Start with one leg and feel where the bone is and cut along the bone to expose it. Now work with the knife against the bone to remove it from the flesh, do this for both legs. The bones now can be used for making a stock.

Now you need to marinade the chicken for about 4 hours. Mix all of the remaining ingredients and then massage it into the chicken on both sides. Cover and place into the fridge.

Once marinated, heat up your BBQ and place the chicken skin side down, at which point you need to lower the heat and gently cook until the skin becomes golden brown, this should take about 20 minutes if you have regulated the temperature correctly. This will protect the meat, retain the moisture and develop a crispy skin that adds depth to the overall flavour. Turn the chicken over and cook on the flesh side until you have a golden colour and then flip back onto the skin side until the chicken is cooked. The process should take around 40 minutes to complete.

Once the chicken is cooked you can slice it and serve immediately or you can allow it to cool quickly and then refrigerate for your picnic and use as suggested above.

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Picnic checklist

- ☐ Picnic blankets/rugs/mats
- ☐ Plates
- ☐ Cups
- ☐ Napkins/kitchen roll
- ☐ Knives, forks, spoons
- ☐ Rubbish bags
- ☐ Bottles of water etc.
- ☐ Food items (see all the recipe ideas)
- ☐ Fun activities: hula hoops, skittles, beanbags etc.
- ☐ Books
- ☐ Hats
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Jackets or sweaters
- ☐ First aid box
- ☐ Camera

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Thank you

We greatly appreciate the contributions made to this e-publication by our Countryside Classroom partners.

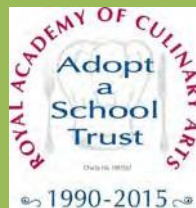
Learning through Landscapes



National Farmers' Union



Royal Academy of Culinary Arts—Chefs Adopt a School



School Food Matters

