

# Countdown to Spring



**Fun activities to do at home  
linked to Springtime on the farm.**



Springtime on the farm is a wonderful time: the weather is improving, plants are growing and there's lots of new life.

This resource pack encourages children to document the changes in their local area in the run up to Spring.

There are 10 activities to do at home that link to the changes we see on the farm.

Whilst children are completing their activities, they may like to complete a "Countdown to Spring Log Book", a great place to document their findings all in one place.



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## The Seasons

- What are the four seasons?
- What months do each season cover?
- What is the weather like in each season?
- Can you draw or find a picture that represents each season?
- What changes will happen in your local area leading up to Spring?
- What changes will happen on the farm leading up to Spring?
- Have a look below at what farmers look forward to in Spring.
- What do you look forward to in Spring?

A video to help.....

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/geography-ks1--ks2-the-seasons/zk8thbk>

<https://visitmyfarm.org/classroom-posters> Have a look at the "Year on the Farm" poster.

Can you make a Countdown to Spring log book? Can you make a poster about the seasons and put it in your log book?

## Why do farmers like Spring?

### Farmer Edwina

"Spring provides the start of a new season with a new beginning of growth from the trees budding to lambs arriving to play in the sunshine"



### Farmer Bobbie

"For me, the best thing about winter turning into spring is seeing the sun come up earlier each morning. It's so much easier to look after animals when you can see them in the daylight. Then in April it is time for my sheep to start giving birth to their lambs - this is my favourite time of year!"



## Weekly Diary

Let's go on a walk each week and notice things that are changing as we get closer to Springtime.

Aim to go on the same route each week. It doesn't matter where you live. You can spot changes anywhere.

Remember to:

- Look
- Listen
- Smell
- Feel or touch – check it is safe first!

You can write notes in your logbook. You may like to record the weather too; is it rainy, sunny, cold, warm windy?

Why not take pictures at the same place on each walk (e.g. buds on a tree or shoots of a plant / flower). What do you notice? Are there any differences?



## Activity 1

**Make a map** of the route you use on your weekly walk. You can put your map in your log book. Use pictures or things that you find on your walk to add to your map. What symbols might you use to show places on your map? Which way is north? What features or landmarks should be included on the map?

Some ideas to help:

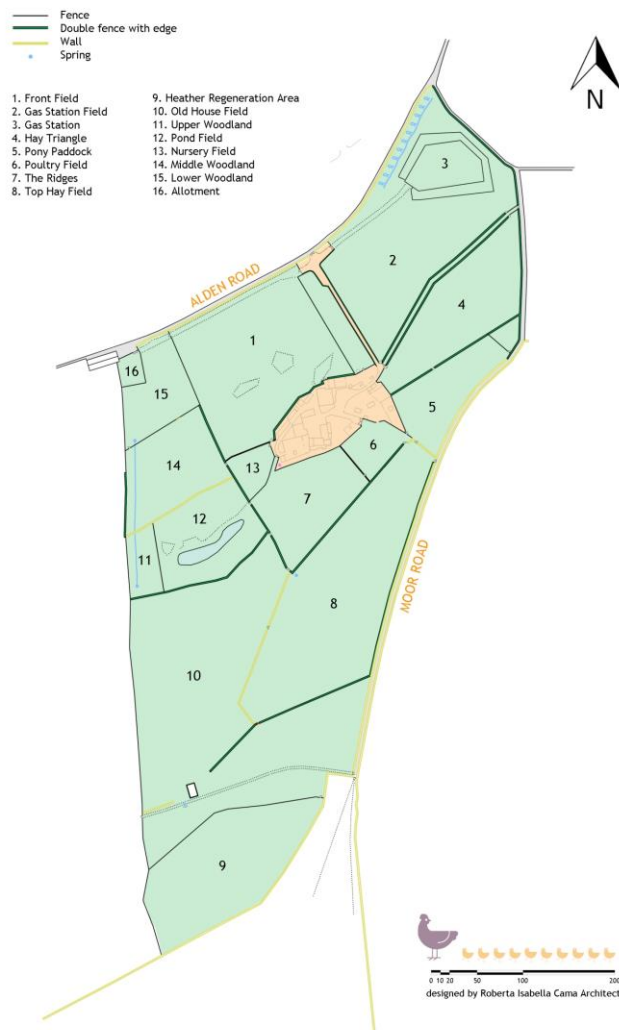
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/geography-ks1--ks2-maps/zdwhpg8>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/z8ngkqt>

<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

**Farmers use maps of their farm too.** It's interesting to look at old farm maps and look at the field names. The names of fields often changed over time. What are the fields called at Cronkshaw Fold Farm? Why do you think they were given these names? What other features would you find on a farm map?

### CRONKSHAW FOLD FARM FIELDS



## **Activity 2**

**Make a rain gauge** so that you can record the amount of rainfall each week.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdeKdTOwvow>

You can measure rainfall daily or weekly. Whichever you choose, just remember to measure it at the same time each week / day. You may also prefer to dig a hole in the ground and place your rain gauge in it so that it doesn't blow over in the wind.

Record your findings in your log book.

**Do farmers need to know how much rain is falling on their land?** The amount of rain falling on farmland is crucial. If there is too much rain, soil can be washed away and crops damaged. If there's not enough rain plants can't grow properly.



### **Activity 3**

**Make a Journey Stick.** By now you will be familiar with your walking route and hopefully starting to notice lots of things along your walk. Why not make a journey stick and collect things as you walk? You can use the things you collect to help create a story of your walk. Can you recount the walk using the items on your journey stick?

[http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf\\_journey\\_stick.pdf](http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_journey_stick.pdf)

If you would like to develop your storytelling further, have a look at the Storytelling resource on the Countryside Classroom website.

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1404>

To add a farming theme, try the Fun with Farm Words resource.

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1510>





#### **Activity 4**

**Make a bird feeder.** During late winter and early spring the natural supply of bird food is depleted. Birds will therefore welcome any bird food put out for them. Try making one of the bird feeders described in the Springtime activity resource.

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1019>

Keep an eye on your bird feeder. Can you identify the birds that visit the feeder? Which bird did you see most often?

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/identify-a-bird/>

**Many birds make farms their home.** One of the most noticeable is the Swallow. Can you use the RSPB website to research the Swallow? Can you find another farmland bird and make a fact file for that bird?

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/swallow/>



## **Activity 5**

**Spotting trees and buds.** Can you identify the tree? Use the Woodland Trust identification sheets and find out which trees are in your local area.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/tree-id-kids/>

Trees on farms are important too. Trees provide shelter for livestock and a habitat for wildlife. They provide food for pollinators and extend the growing season by keeping the soil warm. They are also great at preventing soil erosion.

Can you think of a food that is grown on a tree in the UK?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y44vwWNkVm4>

Can you research the life cycle of an apple and record it in your log book?





## **Activity 6**

**Investigating Bees.** Bees are important pollinators and play a vital role in fertilising the plants that produce our food.

Have a look at the “23 Days of Bees” resource and have a go at a couple (or more if you like!) of the activities.

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1414>



## Activity 7

### Maths Walk

By now you should be familiar with your walk route and hopefully you are getting better at spotting all sorts of things. But how many shapes can you see on your walk? Can you see any squares, rectangles or circles? Are there any numbers? It's surprising what you can see. Take photos or make sketches of what you find and add them to your log book.



Farmers use maths all the time. They need to work out how much feed to give to the animals or how many seeds they need to plant.

Did you know,

- 250 wheat seeds need to be planted to give us enough flour to make 2 loaves of bread. We eat lots of bread every day, so the farmers need to plant enough seeds each year.
- A dairy cow gives us 25 litres of milk every day. But to do this she must drink 10 – 20 litres of water. That's a lot. How much do you drink each day?



## **Activity 8**

**Spotting spring flowers.** As we get closer to spring, flowers are in abundance. How many of the spring flowers can you spot on your walk? Which is your favourite? Take a picture of your favourite and add it to your log book.

<https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/sflowers.jpg>

Make your own mini garden meadow – use the link below and scroll to the bottom of the page. Find out how to make your own mini wildflower meadow. If you don't have a garden, don't worry, you can use pots or planters to grow your meadow in.

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/where-to-see-wildflower-meadow>

Did you know there are farms that grow just flowers for shops and florists!

<https://leafuk.org/news-and-media/videos/leaf-marque-daffodils>

And some farmers grow flowers for other reasons..... a farmer in Wales grows Daffodils which produce a natural alkaloid called glanthamine which can be used to help treat Alzheimers.



## **Activity 9**

**Lambing time** is a busy but wonderful time on the farm. Have a look at the resources connected to sheep, lambing and wool. Why not try some felt making or even make your own flock of sheep using the 3D template in the link below (the last link).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t504SAEMuVE>

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1399>

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/1393>

<https://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/resources/658>





## **Activity 10**

**Make a seed bomb** and watch your flowers grow. April to June is the best time to make your seed bombs. Remember to get permission from the person who owns the land / area before you throw your seed bombs there.

<https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-06/SEED-BOMBS.jpg>

Spring is also an important time on the farm for planting seeds. Have a look at the Farming Year and Farm Visit Poster on the link below. On the farming year diagram, can you work out what crops the farmer is planting in Spring? During which other season does the farmer plant crops?

<https://www.visitmyfarm.org/getting-equipped/262-farmvisitandfarmer-syearposter>

