

Autumn

Craft activities

Hedgehog

What you will need

- * Photocopiable hedgehog template (page 127)
- * Thick paper or thin card
- * Paper straws (art straws are easily available from pre-school catalogues and are excellent value)
- * Sheet of paper (optional)
- * Dried leaves (optional)

What to do

Flatten the straws and cut them into short lengths, approximately 3–4cm (these can be prepared in advance), and glue them to the body of the hedgehog. Leave to dry.

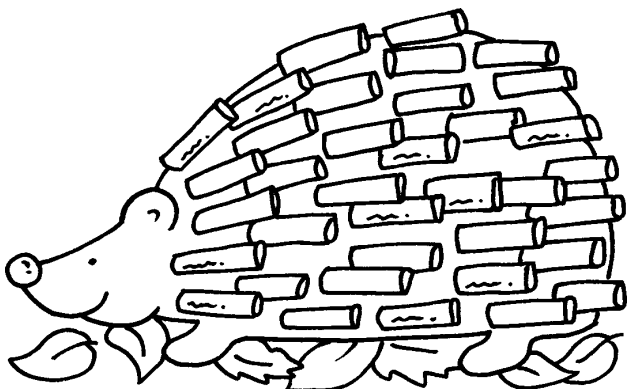
Tip

Start at the tail end and work forward overlapping slightly for a more realistic effect.

Paint with brown paint add eyes and feet. Leave to dry. You could glue the hedgehog onto a sheet of paper and glue dried leaves around him for his bed.

Tip

Dried leaves need lots of glue!



Planting bulbs

What you will need

- * Small spring-flowering bulbs (1 or 2 per child and a few spare)
- * Soil (grow bags are excellent value and last for ages)
- * Plastic plant pots measuring about 10cm across (these can be picked up very cheaply from boot fairs or jumble sales) or large yoghurt pots cut down a little
- * Sticky labels, or small twigs and paper

Tip

Ask the children about a week in advance to bring in a suitable pot.

What to do

Put the bulbs, pots and soil, together with a light trowel or large spoon, where the children can reach them. Choose somewhere where the soil won't spill and make too much mess. Allow the children to plant their own bulbs.

Decorate the labels and attach one to each pot, or fix a small paper flag to a twig and push into the soil. If the children are unable to write their own name encourage them to draw something on their label or flag.

Tip

Hold this activity away from the others, perhaps on a plastic sheet on the floor in a corner.

Tip

Don't water the bulbs until the pots are safely home.

Conkers

What you will need

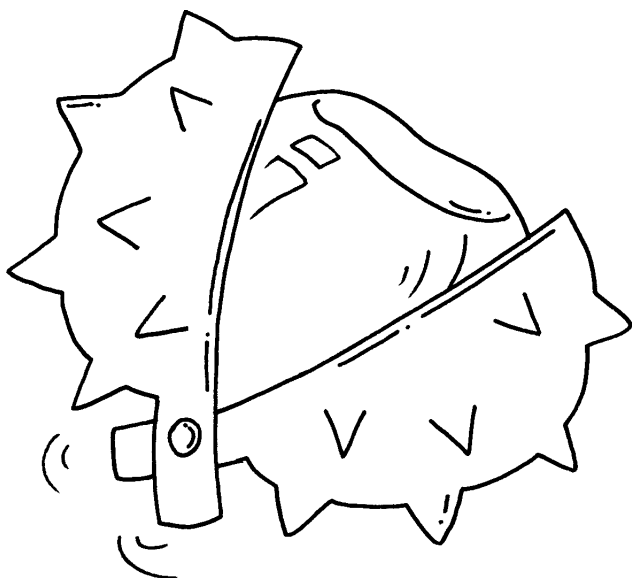
- * Photocopiable template for conker and case shapes (page 128)
- * Stiff paper
- * Butterfly clips (paper fasteners)

What to do

Cut out the conker and case shapes from thick paper. Colour the cut shapes, brown for the conker and green for the case. Draw on a few spikes if you like. Assemble two cases on top of a conker and join at the stalk with a butterfly clip. Spread open the cases to reveal the conker inside.

Try this idea!

Collect a pile of real conkers for the children to handle or suggest they bring some in.



Painting activity

Leaf-printing: place a large pile of leaves (as many different types as possible) on the painting table and allow the children to brush the paint onto the leaves. Press the leaves, paint-side down, onto sheets of paper.

Tip

Use leaves as fresh and as large as possible.



Talk about

- * Bulbs: how to plant them with the root pointing down
- * How bulbs stay underground through the winter months and grow into flowers in the spring
- * Conkers: how they are seeds of the horse chestnut tree; talk about their beautiful colour and how squirrels like to eat them
- * How animals such as hedgehogs, hibernate through the winter months and wake up in the spring. Think of other animals that hibernate.

Stories

- * *Mr Bear to the Rescue* by Debi Gliori (Orchard Books)
- * *Platypus and the Lucky Day* by Chris Riddell (Puffin Books)
- * *Bear in Sunshine* by Stella Blackstone (Barefoot Books)

Songs and rhymes

There's a hedgehog in the grass

For the third line, curl up tightly with arms over heads.

There's a hedgehog in the grass –
Do you think he'll let me pass?
Or will he curl up in a ball,
Pretending I'm not here at all!

Brown Bear's snoring

This song can be sung or chanted slowly.

Brown Bear's snoring,
Brown Bear's snoring,
In his winter sleep.
Brown bear's snoring,
Brown bear's snoring,
In his winter sleep.
But snow and ice are melting,
Icicles are dropping,
Brown Bear's ears are listening
And his eyes begin to peep.

Other suggestions

- * Oranges and lemons
- * Here we go round the mulberry bush
- * Underneath the spreading chestnut tree
- * The wonderful thing about Tiggers
This song is short, but great fun to 'jig about' to.

Finish with the Good-bye song on page 8.

Flippy floppy hands

This simple action song fits well into any session and may soon become a favourite! Add the actions to the words.

Flippy floppy hands, flippy floppy hands,
Floppy hands, floppy hands,
Flippy floppy hands.

Nodding nodding head...

Shaking shaking shoulders...

Waving waving arms...

Wobbly wobbly legs...

Stretching stretching fingers...



Flippy floppy hands

The musical notation is written on two staves in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the song: 'Flip - py flop - py hands, flip - py flop - py hands,'. The second staff contains the melody for the second line: 'Flop - py hands, flop - py hands, Flip - py flop - py hands.' Chords are indicated above the notes: F, C, F, C in the first staff, and F, F, F7, F in the second staff.