

# Nearby nature!

## Teacher's material

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# Nearby nature! – Teacher’s material

## Introduction

This material, inspired by ECML resources and [the Scaffolding\\_reading.pdf](#) from Maledive | Scaffolding Learning, includes resources for both teachers and pupils. It is designed for 2nd and 3rd-grade students, covering the topic of local environment and nearby nature from the environmental studies curriculum. The material is divided into four sections:

- Finnish Nature & City Environment
- Trees in Finnish forests
- Berries & Mushrooms
- Animals

Each section contains concise texts for study, along with exercises to support student comprehension. The teacher’s material provides scaffolding strategies to use before, during, and after reading the texts. Additionally, it includes suggestions for whole-class activities to enhance the learning experience.

Any activity introduced in this material can be applied to other topics too. Main principle of this material is that pupils are active participants with the teacher’s support.

Activities before reading aim to activate pupils’ previous knowledge of the topic. This can be done in Finnish (or in their home languages) or in the target language. It will help pupils to comprehend the material in the target language.

Material also gives examples of how to support the pupils’ understanding of the topic while reading the text. Reading together with pupils is a great way to teach reading strategies for both technical reading and reading comprehension.

After reading activities are planned to revise the information of the texts. Also exercises for pupils are planned to support the content and language learning of the topic.

We hope this material supports your pupils in bilingual education and offers practical ideas for scaffolding both content and language learning.

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## City Environment

The City Environment worksheet helps pupils compare human-made and natural elements in their neighborhood. Students can complete it either at school or at home. The goal is to encourage pupils to observe and recognize natural elements within urban settings.

This worksheet serves as an introduction, with subsequent materials focusing primarily on nature.

For reviewing the worksheet with pupils, use the speaking frame provided in the attachments to guide their discussions.

### 1. Finnish Nature

This first chapter and text provide an overview of Finnish nature. This introductory section helps pupils develop a general understanding of Finnish nature and previews upcoming topics.

#### Before Reading the Text

To activate pupils' prior knowledge about the topic, consider these activities (which can be conducted in either Finnish or English, depending on your group):

#### Whole-group Discussion

1. "What is nature (luonto)?"
2. "What can we find from nature?" (trees, plants, animals...)
3. "What you know about these trees, plants, animals etc.?"

#### Additional Activities:

- Create a class list of nature-related words/phrases in English/Finnish
- Sentence-writing activity: Provide pupils with nature-related words (lake, river, tree, spruce, pinecone) and ask them to write sentences using these words. Note: If writing complete sentences is too challenging, pupils can:
  - Write related words that come to mind
  - Simply copy the given word

#### Picture Activity:

1. Identify nouns (things) in the picture (write these where pupils can see them)
2. Identify verbs (actions) in the picture
3. In pairs, pupils create sentences about the picture (orally or in writing)
4. Share sentences with the whole group



## While Reading the Text

Guide pupils through reading strategies and encourage discussion of their observations. This will develop their independent reading skills.

Reading Process:

### 1. Quick Text Survey

- Discuss pupils' observations about the title, text, and pictures
- Identify familiar words
- Discuss the purpose of bold words
- Examine the role of pictures

### 2. Reading Aloud

- Either teacher or pupils can read the text aloud

### 3. Content Understanding

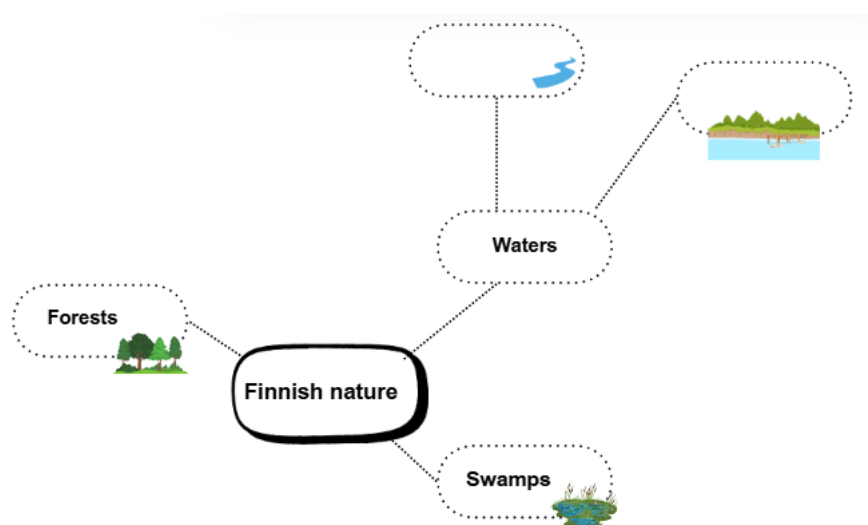
- Read together, pausing after bold words
- Connect words to pictures
- Ask pupils to explain their strategies for understanding new words

## After reading the text

Mind Map Activity

- Use the worksheet provided in the pupil's material
- This helps pupils review the text and identify key information
- Can be completed:
  - \* Independently
  - \* In pairs
  - \* In small groups
  - \* As a whole class with teacher guidance

**Finnish nature**



## 2. Trees in Finnish forests

This chapter includes a main text, glossary, and two pages of exercises. It introduces five common Finnish trees and teaches pupils to classify trees as evergreen or deciduous. Pupils learn to identify the main characteristics of each tree.

- Supplementary Materials:
- Flashcards/memory game
- Speaking frame for tree descriptions
- Reading Coach guide (lukuvalmentaja).

### Before Reading the Text

Vocabulary Practice:

1. Use flashcards for games such as:
  - KIM [Memory game where items are removed]
  - Poisonous Word [Word elimination game]
  - Other familiar vocabulary games
2. Review the glossary:
  - Ensure understanding of all terms
  - Ask questions and request examples (Finnish responses acceptable)
  - Have pupils explain terms to each other (Finnish explanations acceptable)

### While reading the text

Reading Options:

- Independent reading
- Pair reading

Scaffolding Support:

- Digital Support: Provide a digital version of the text for use with Reading Coach (lukuvalmentaja)
- Teacher Support: Read the text aloud first

### After Reading the Text

3-2-1 Method:

Ask pupils to write:

- 3 main points from the lesson (in their preferred language)
- 2 new terms learned (in English)
- 1 previously known term (in English)

### 3. Berries and Mushrooms

This chapter contains two texts, which should be taught separately. It includes:

- Two pupil worksheets
- Teacher flashcards
- Comparative worksheet for berry plant and mushroom parts

#### Before reading the text Berries

- Use flashcards to practice berry names

#### While Reading:

Complete three readings:

##### 1. First Reading:

- Teacher reads while pupils circle unknown words
- Review circled words together

##### 2. Second Reading:

- Teacher reads while pupils focus on identifying the meanings of "stem" and "leaf/leaves"

##### 3. Third Reading:

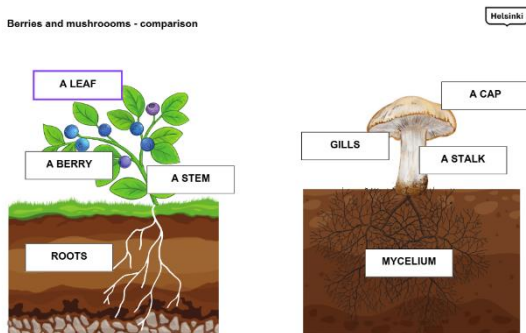
- Independent pupil reading

#### After Reading:

- Complete exercises (text provides answers)

#### Before reading the text Mushrooms

1. Use the comparative worksheet to learn plant and mushroom parts
  - You can use the name tags.
  - You can use "juoksusanelu" -method to activate pupils
2. Display mushroom parts diagram during reading



#### While Reading:

1. Read together as a class
2. Point to relevant parts in the diagram while reading
3. Allow independent reading time

#### After Reading:

- Complete exercises

## 4. Animals

This chapter contains six short texts about common Finnish forest animals, including those that have adapted to urban environments. Each text includes a scaffolding exercise.

Two suggested teaching approaches are provided below. Choose the one that best suits your pupils' needs.

### Approach 1: Individual Text Focus

#### Before Reading

##### 1. Knowledge Activation:

- Pupils share prior knowledge about the animal
- Can work in pairs or small groups
- Discussion can be in Finnish

##### 2. Text Preview:

- Pupils scan the text to identify:
  - \* Familiar words
  - \* New terms

##### 3. Preparation:

- Explain instructions for the scaffolding exercise
- Clarify expectations

#### While Reading

- Pupils should read each text twice:

1. First reading: For general comprehension
  2. Second reading: While completing the scaffolding exercise
- Reading Coach support available if needed

#### After Reading

1. Review the scaffolding exercise as a class
2. Complete additional activities such as sentence writing

### Approach 2: Group Text Study

#### Before Reading

1. Divide class into small groups
2. Assign each group one animal text
3. Groups begin by:
  - Discussing their animal
  - Creating a mind map
  - Activating prior knowledge

## While Reading

- Groups read their assigned text together
- Complete the scaffolding exercise collaboratively

## After Reading

Whole-Class Comparison Discussion:

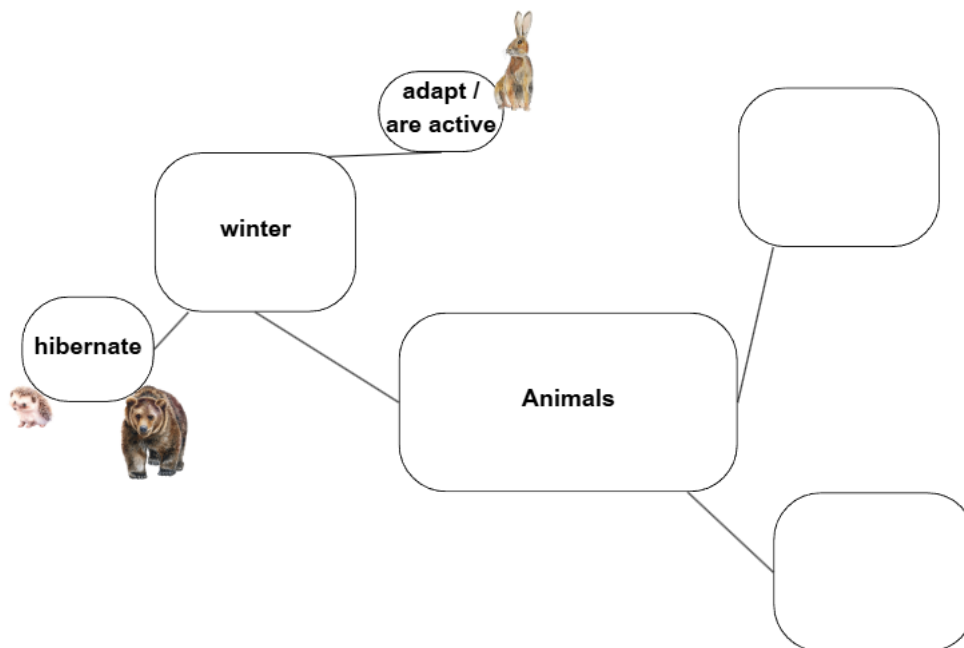
Compare texts using these guiding questions:

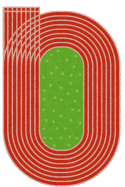
1. "Which texts mention animal babies? What are they called?"
2. "Which texts describe the animals' diets?"
3. "According to the texts, which animals hibernate?"
4. "Which animals stay active during winter?"
5. "What different English words are used to express 'sopeutua/sopeutunut' (adapt, well-adapted)?"
6. "Which animals are solitary? Which live in groups? What terms are used for these groups? (pack, leash)"

Additional Teaching Notes:

- Encourage pupils to use both Finnish and English when needed
- Support vocabulary development through visual aids
- Make connections between Finnish and English terminology
- Build confidence in using scientific language

**Animals - mind map**





is human made.  
are human made.

can be found in forest.  
is part of the nature.



Helsinki



**A ROWAN**


**A BIRCH**

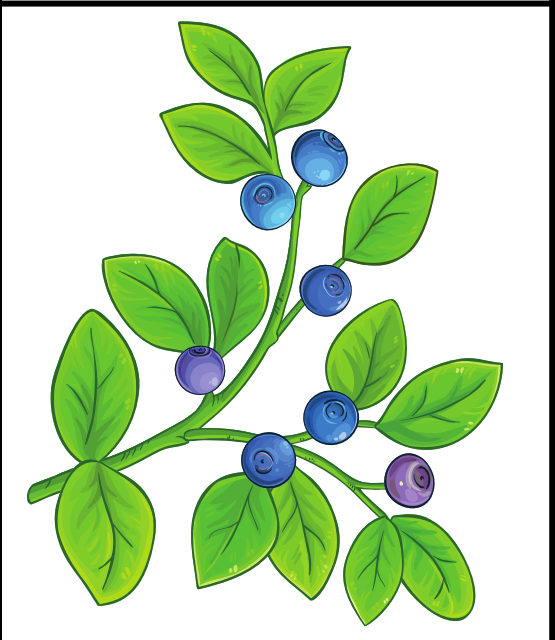
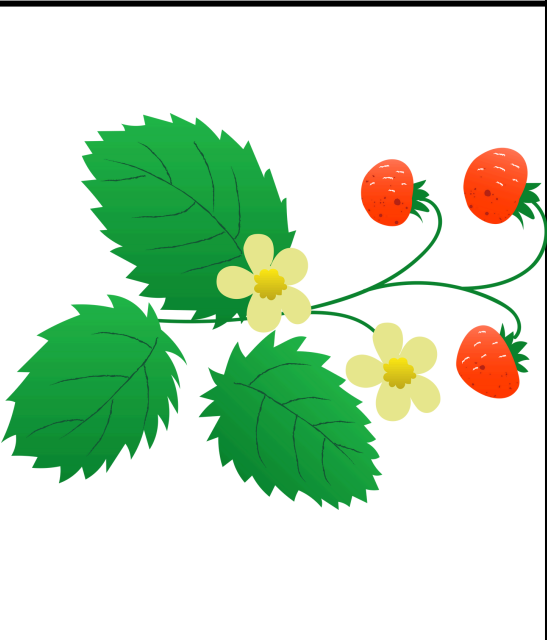
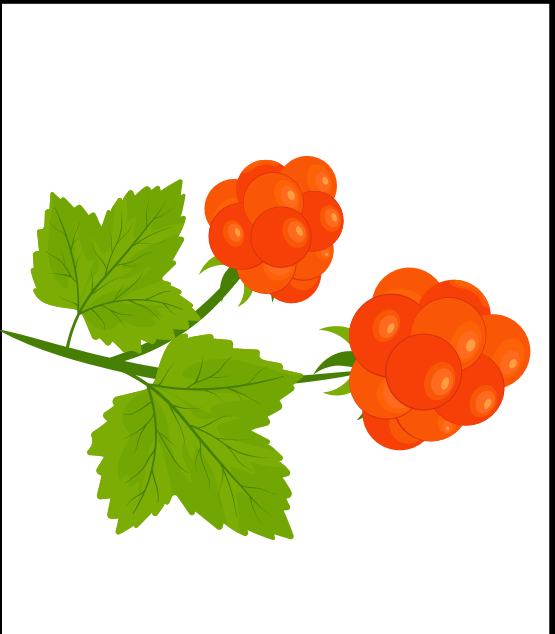
**A SPRUCE**

**AN ALDER**

**AN ASPEN**

**A PINE TREE**

	<p>has/have leaves. is deciduous tree.</p> <p>has/have needles. has/have pine cones. is evergreen tree.</p> <p>has brown/white/grey trunk.</p> <p>are round/oval/triangle shape.</p>
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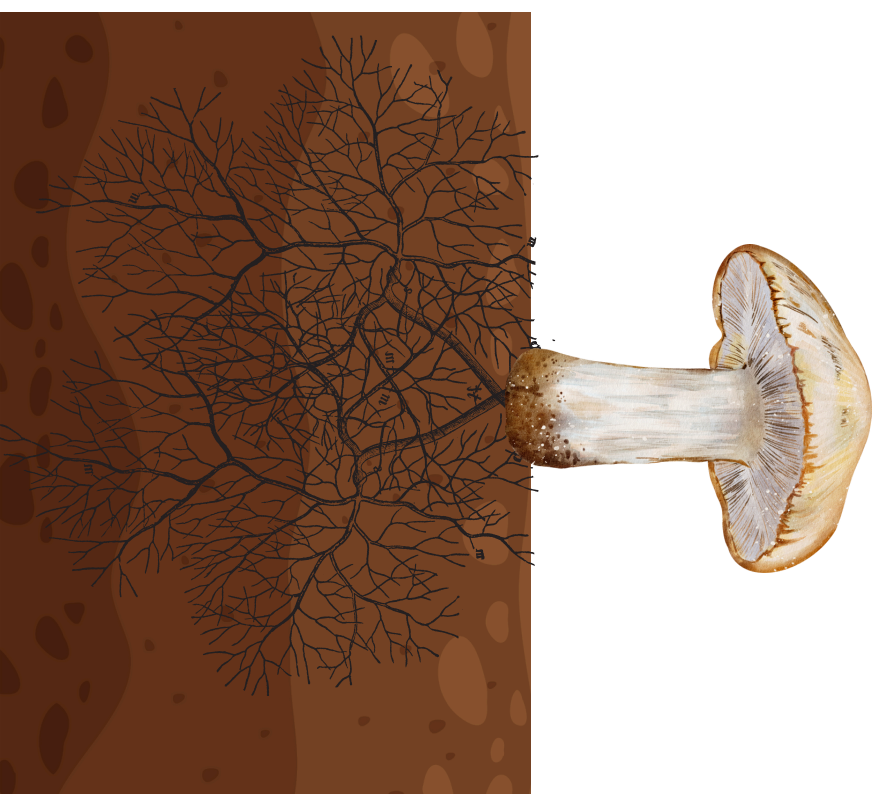
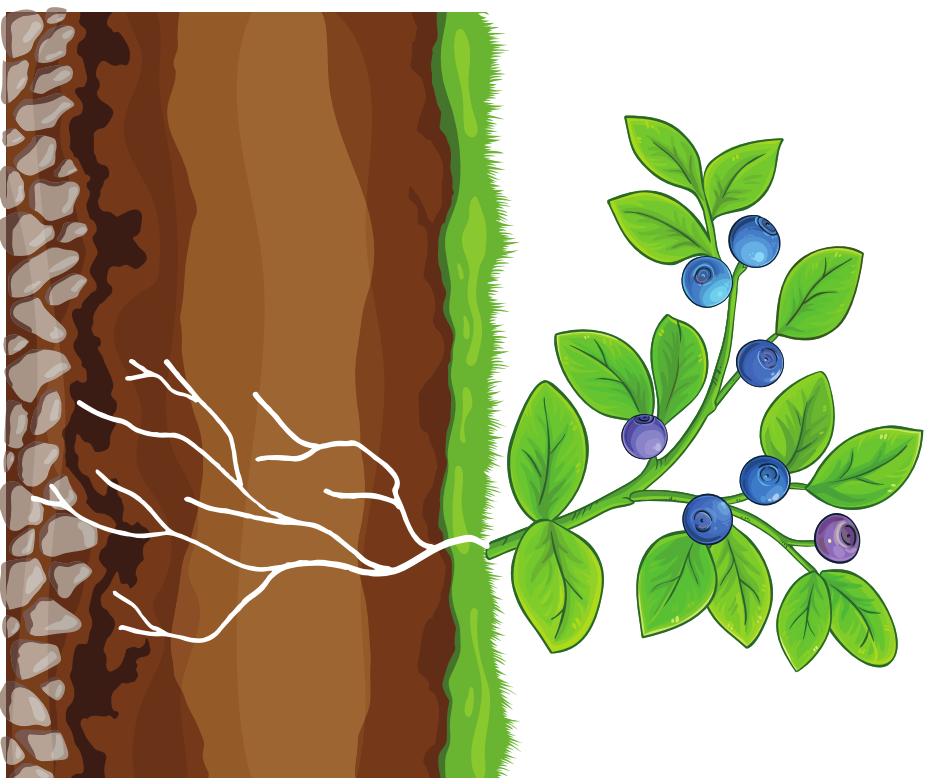
**A LINGONBERRY**

**A BILBERRY**

**A CLOUDBERRY**

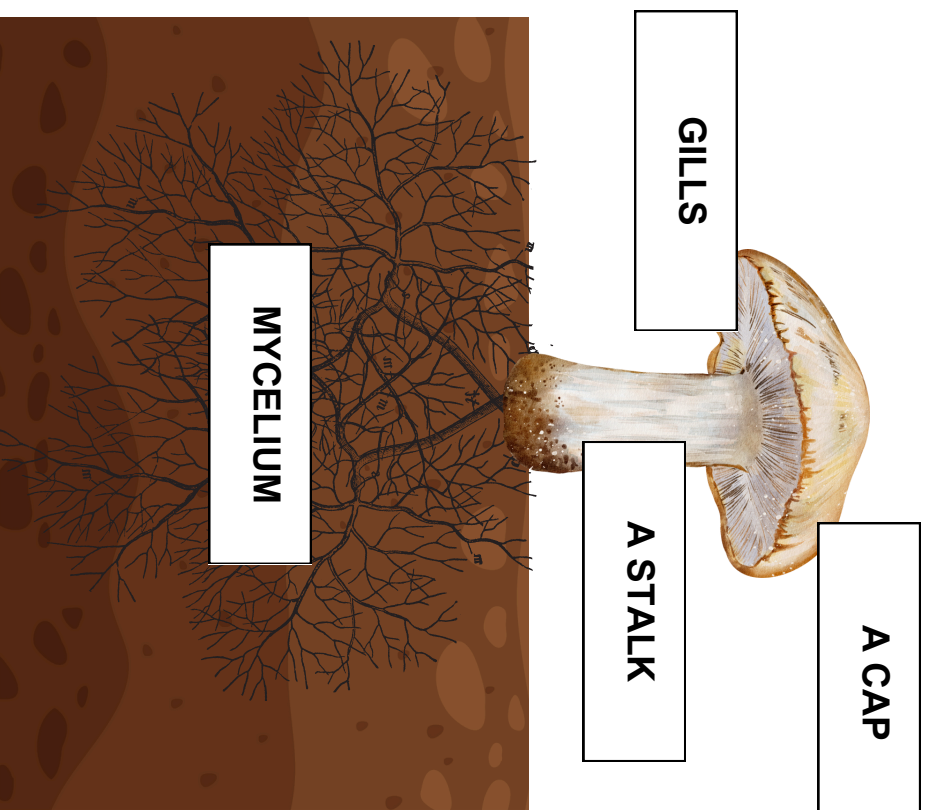
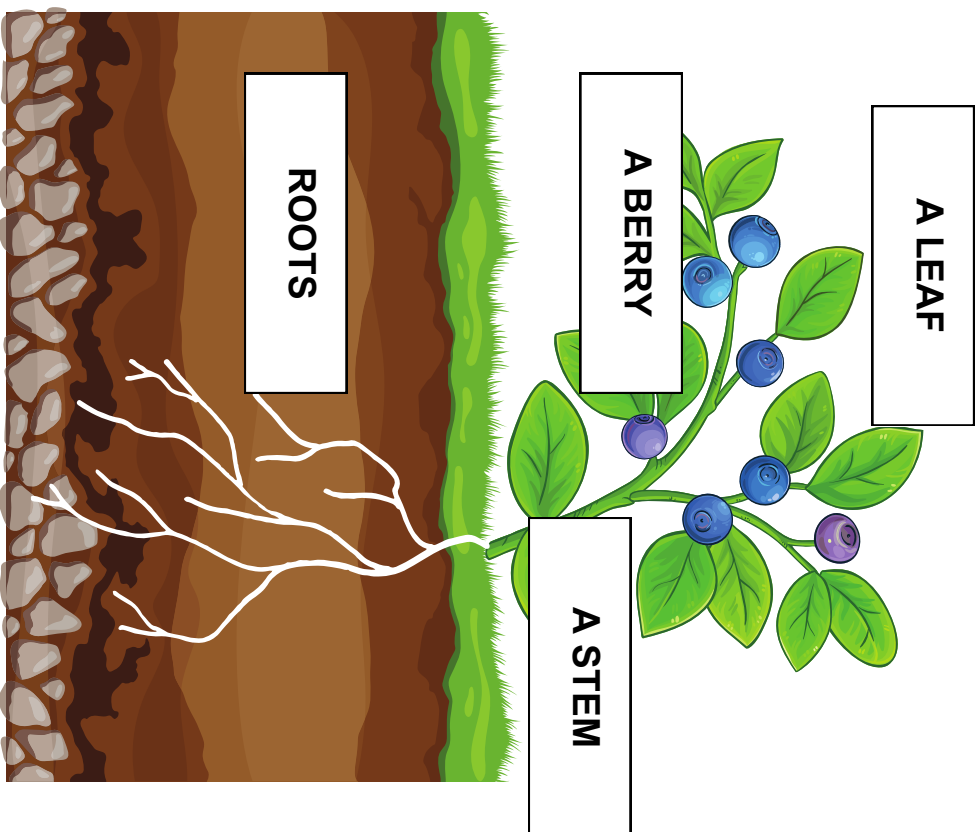
**A STRAWBERRY**

**A RASPBERRY**

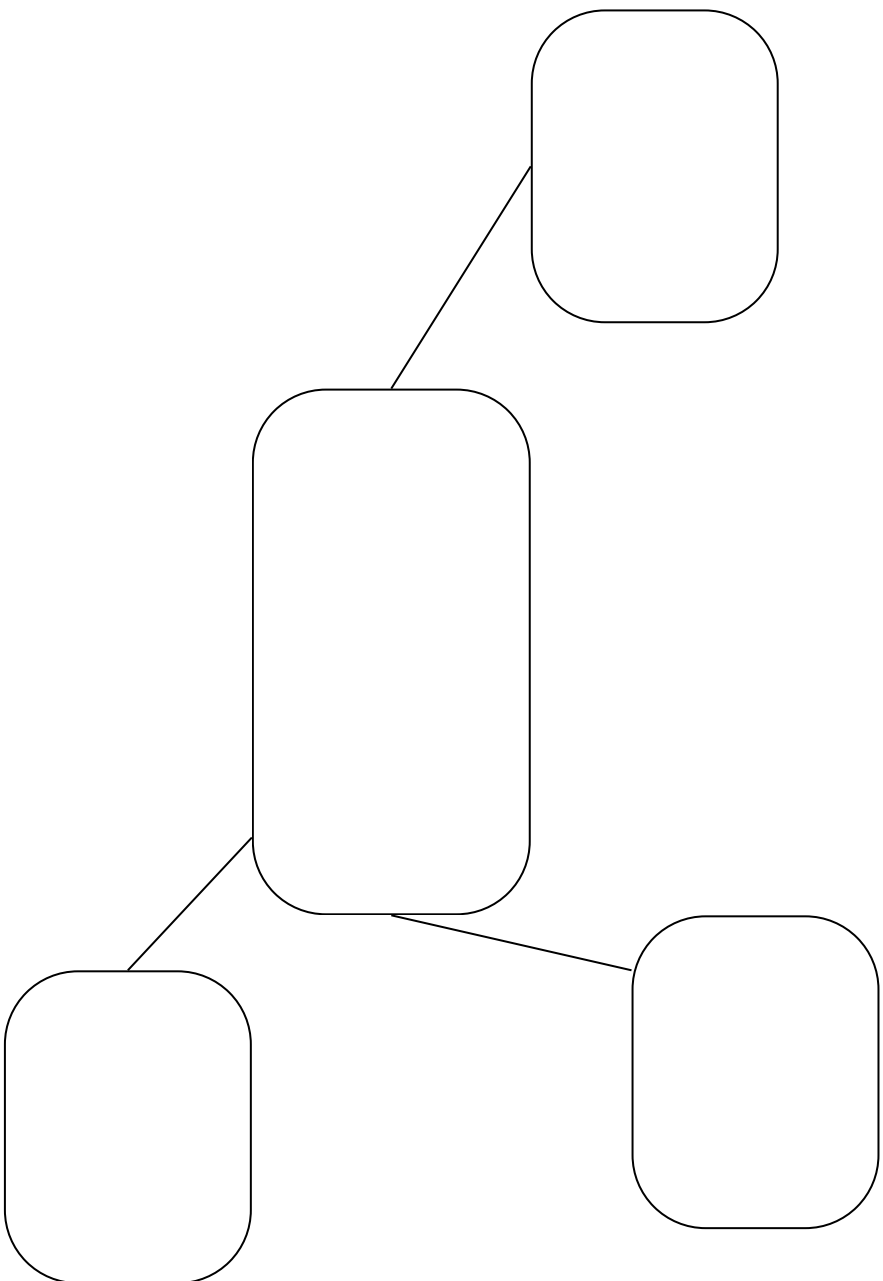


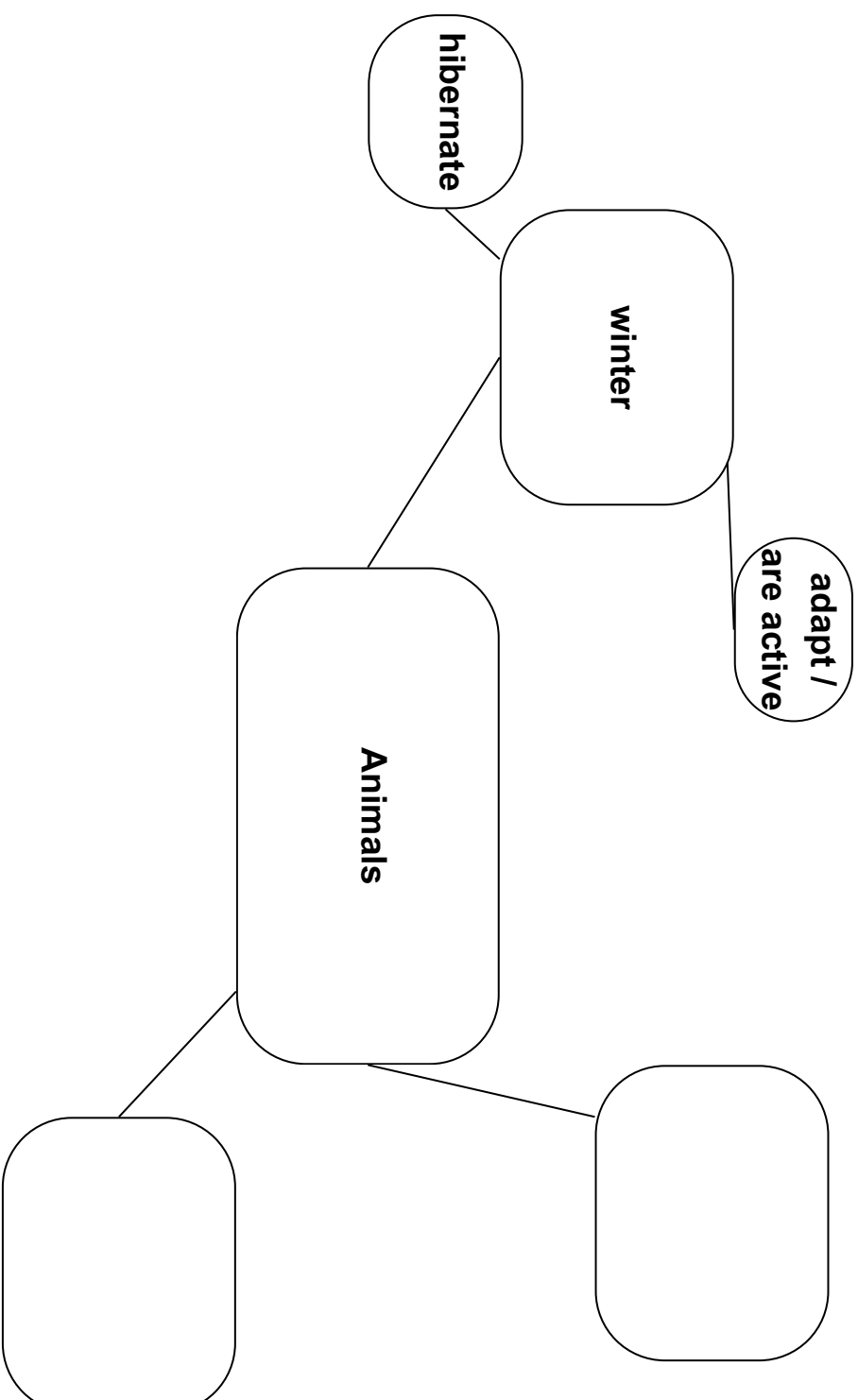
**Berries and mushrooms - names of the parts**

<b>ROOTS</b>	<b>A STEM</b>	<b>A BERRY</b>
<b>A LEAF</b>	<b>A CAP</b>	<b>A STALK</b>
<b>GILLS</b>	<b>MYCELIUM</b>	



# Animals - mind map 1







**A HEDGEHOG**

**A HARE**

**A BEAR**

**A SQUIRREL**

**A WOLF**

**A FOX**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## Nearby nature!



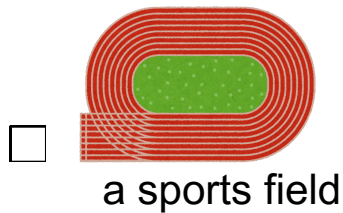
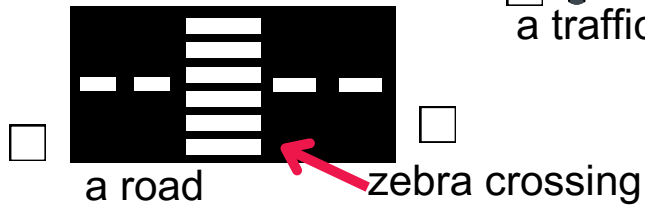
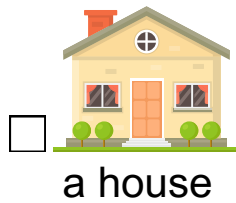
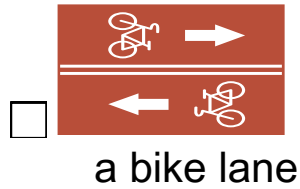
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# City environment

Mark with X things you can find in your neighbourhood.

Circle things you find also in forrest.

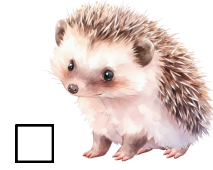




a spruce



a maple leaf



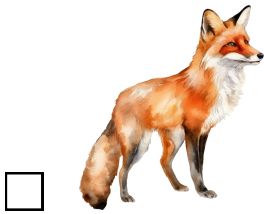
a hedgehog



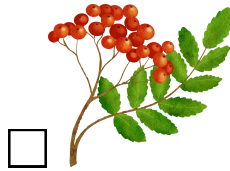
a magpie



a birch



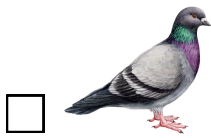
a fox



a rowan



a (big) rock



a pigeon



a hare



a bullfinch



a pine tree

## Finnish nature

Read the text.

Connect the bolded words to the pictures.

Finland has lots of **forests** and lakes. Forests cover about **three-fourths** of the land.

Finland also has more than 50 000 **lakes** and many **rivers**.

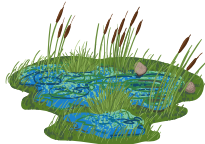
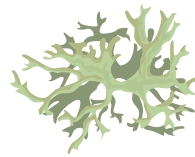
**Evergreen trees**, pines and spruces fill Finland's forests. However, there are also **deciduous trees** like birchs, aspens and rowans.

In the late summer and autumn forest are filled with food like blueberries, lingoberries and **mushrooms**.

Finland's forests are home to bears, elk, wolves, foxes, hares, wolverines and voles.

In the north, the trees are often small in size because of the poor growing conditions.

**Lichens**, **moss**, and cloudberrys grow in the northern **swamps**.







# Trees in Finnish forests

Read the text.



Finland is Europe's most forested country. About three-fourths of the land is covered with trees.

Most forests are **evergreen**, because of the climate. It is too cold to most deciduous trees.

Evergreen trees are green the whole year. **Pine tree** and **spruce** are evergreen trees. Pines and spruces do not have leaves, they have **needles**.

Trees that have leaves are called **deciduous trees**. Deciduous trees store **chlorophyll** to the tree trunk for winter. Therefore the **leaves** change colour and drop.

Forests are still natural in the sense that non-native trees have not been planted. The dominant trees are pine, spruce and **birches**. Forests also have some **aspens, rowans** and **alders**.

<b>term</b>	<b>definition</b>
evergreen	Trees, that have needles.
deciduous trees	Trees, that has leaves.
needles	
a leaf / leaves	one leaf, many leaves 
chlorophyll	The green colour, tree's nutrition (food).

# Trees

Trace and write.



a spruce



a pine tree



a birch



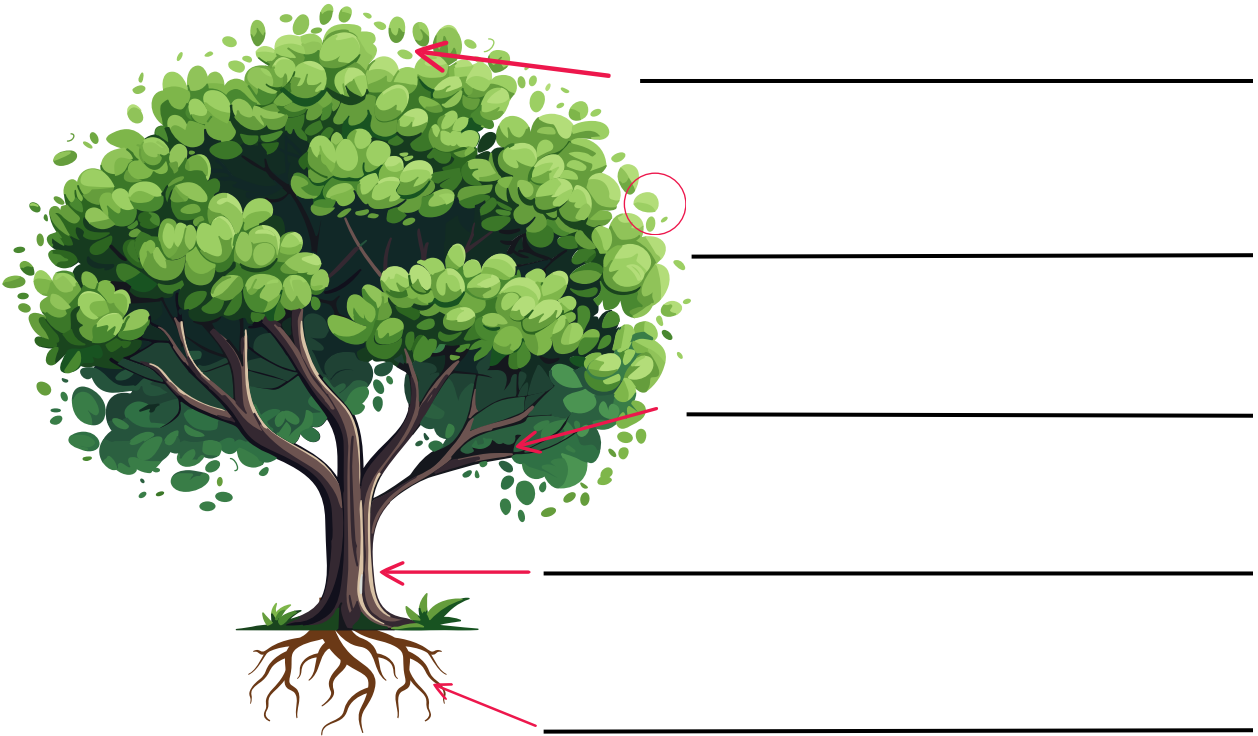
an aspen



a rowan

Name the parts of the tree.

a trunk a branch a leaf roots a tree top



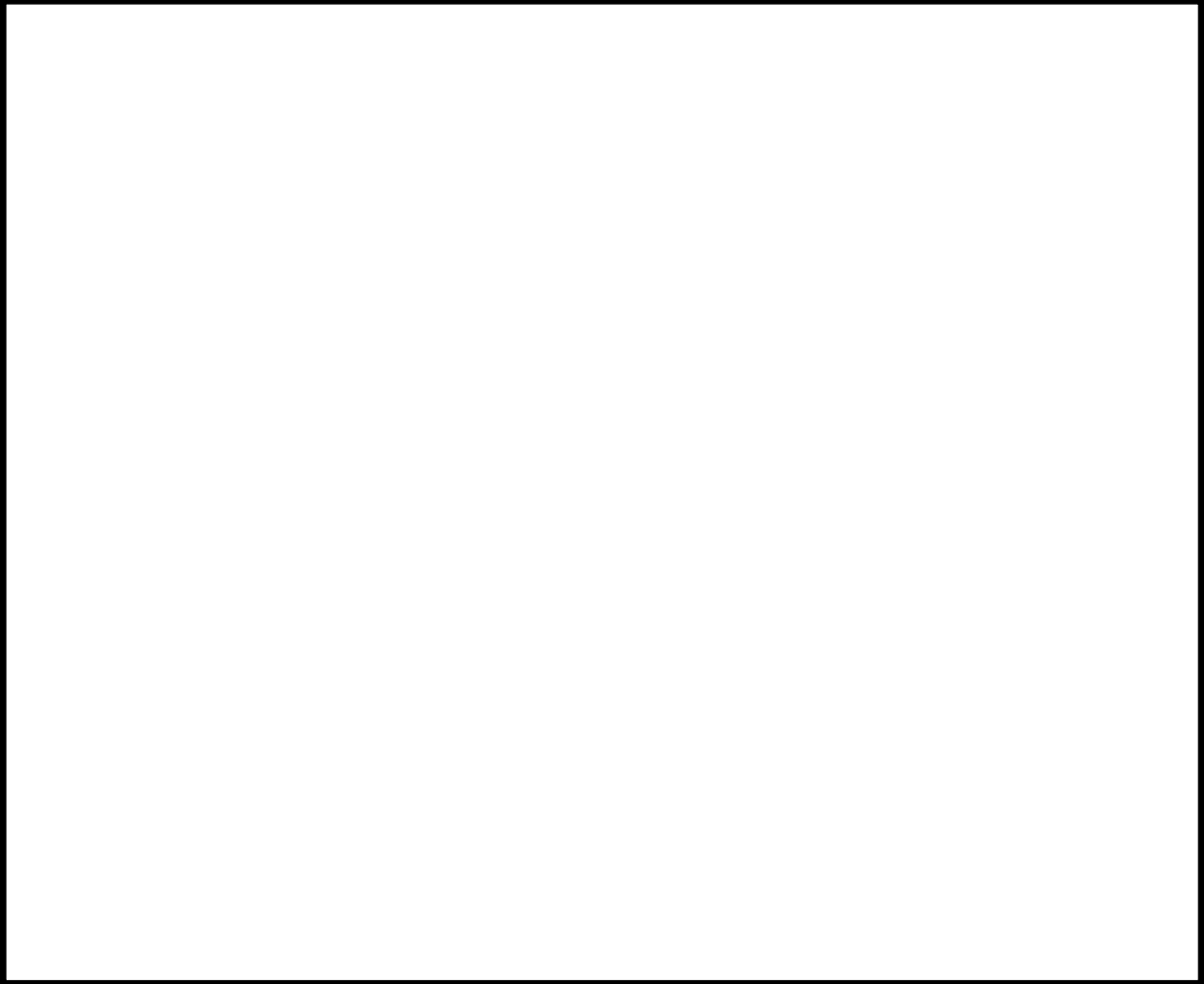
Sort the trees to evergreens and deciuous trees.

evergreens	deciduous trees

Connect.



Do you know other trees?  
Draw and name.



## **Berries and mushrooms**

The berries and mushrooms grow in Finnish forests. Berries and mushrooms grow from July until the first snow falls. First to appear are bilberries, then raspberries and finally lingonberries.

### **Berries**

**Bilberry (wild blueberry)** grows in different types of forests all over Finland. Bilberries have green stem and leaves and dark blue berries. Bilberries look like little trees since the stem can divide into many smaller ones.

**Lingonberries** grow in dry forests that contains mainly pine trees. Lingonberries have brown hard stem that leaves grow straight from. Lingonberries leaves are dark green and have thick waxlike surface.

**Cloudberry** grows in swamps and really wet places. Cloudberry is more common in northern Finland, but can be found in other parts of Finland too. Cloudberry grows near ground and has bright orange berries.

**Raspberry** grows differently than other berries. Where bilberries, lingonberries and cloudberrys are smaller plants that grow near ground, raspberries are bushes. Raspberries grow in open areas for example where trees have been cut few years earlier.

## Mushrooms

Mushrooms grow in forests where it's moist. Some mushrooms are safe to eat, but others are poisonous and can make you very sick or even cause death.

It's important not to pick and eat wild mushrooms unless you are with an expert who knows which ones are safe.

Most of a mushroom is underground in tiny threads called **mycelium**.

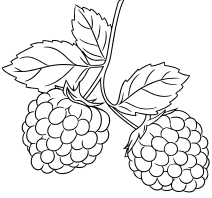
The part we see above ground is the **fruiting part**, which helps the mushroom **reproduce**.

Fruiting part, above the ground, produces millions of tiny **spores**. When the spores are released, they can grow into new mycelium.

In the mushrooms, the spores come from brownish ribs called **gills**. **The gills are** under the **cap**.

# Berries

Trace and write.



a raspberry



a bilberry



a lingonberry



a cloudberry

Where berries grow?  
Colour and connect.



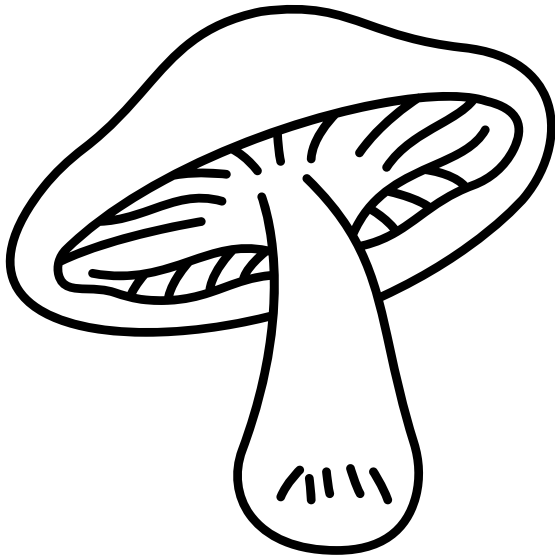
Do you know other berries? Draw or write.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing or writing about other berries.

# Mushrooms

Name the parts of the mushrooms.

a cap gills a stalk



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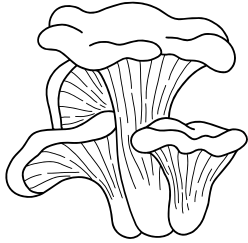
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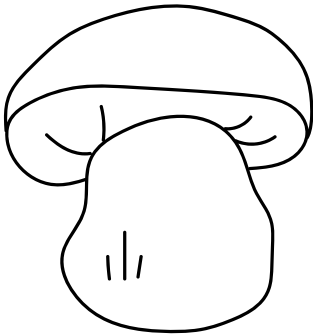
Draw how mushrooms reproduce.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing the reproduction process of mushrooms.

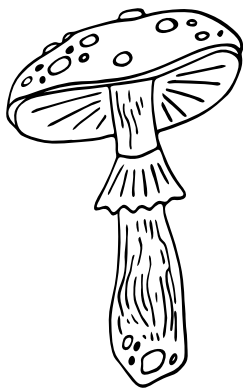
Trace and write. Colour.



a chanterelle



a cep



a fly agaric

# Animals

## Bear

The bear is a large **mammal** that lives in forests. A male bear can grow over 2 meters tall when standing in two legs and weight 800 kg.

They have **thick brown fur**. Bears are known for their strong bodies, large paws, and sharp claws.

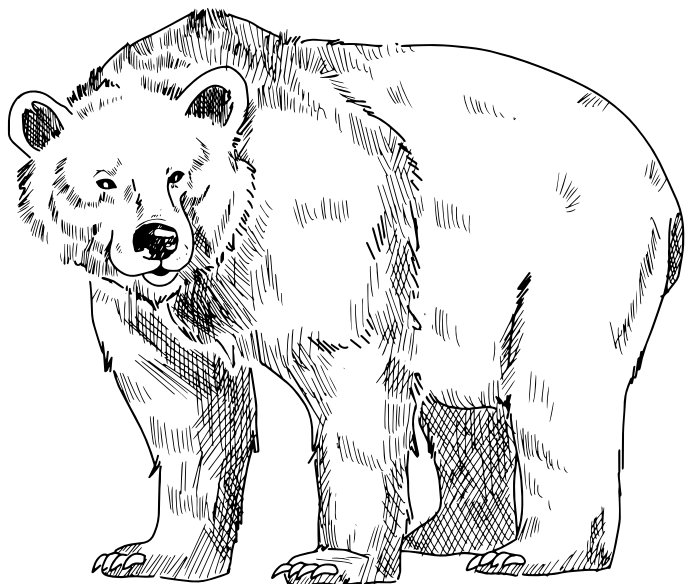
They eat a variety of foods, including **plants, berries, fish, and small animals**.

Bears **hibernate** during the winter, sleeping in dens to stay warm. The **cubs** born during the hibernation and live the first months in the den.

Bears live alone but can be seen together sometimes.



term in English	term in Finnish
	nisäkäs
	paksu ruskea turkki
	nukkua talviunta
	pentu



## **Fox**

Foxes adapt easily and can live in a variety of environments, including forests and cities. They make their **dens** in **burrows**, **hollow trees**, or **abandoned buildings**.

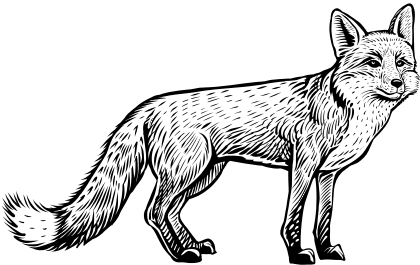
Foxes eat both plants and animals. Their diet includes small **mammals** like rabbits, birds, insects, fruits, and vegetables.

Foxes are active at night.

Foxes use their voice to communicate. Foxes bark, scream, and howl.

Foxes usually live in small family groups, **leashes**. The mother, takes care of the **kits**, while the father helps by bringing food.

The kits stay with their parents until they are old enough to survive on their own.



## My mini glossary

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## **Wolf**

Wolves are wild animals that live in forests and tundras. They have thick **fur** that can have gray, white, and black.

Wolves are known for their strong bodies, sharp teeth, and **keen senses**.

They live and **hunt** in **packs**, which are family groups led by an alpha male and female.

Wolves communicate with each other through howls, barks, and body language.

They mainly eat large animals like **deer** and **elk**, but they also eat smaller animals and sometimes plants.

Wolves remain active throughout the year, including the winter. Wolves are **well-adapted** to cold weather with their thick fur, which keeps them warm.

# My mini glossary

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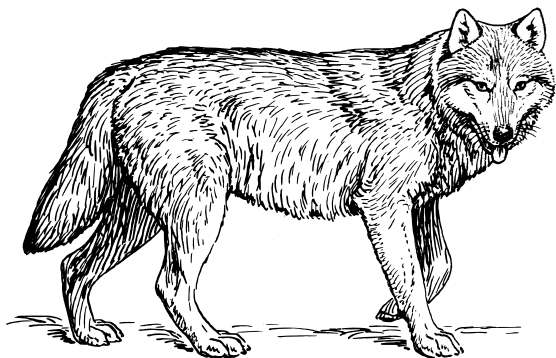
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**Draw a pack.**



## Hare

Hares are **well-adapted** to the life in forests. They live in dense forests, where there are a lot of bushes and trees.

Hares are known for their seasonal coat changes, turning white in winter to **blend in** with the snow and brown in summer for **camouflage** in the forest.

Hares live alone. They are mostly active during **dawn** and **dusk**.

They eat a variety of plants, including grasses, herbs, and bark.

Baby hares is called **leverets**. Leverets are born fully furred and with their eyes open, ready to hop around shortly after birth.

A mother hare typically gives birth to three to four leverets.

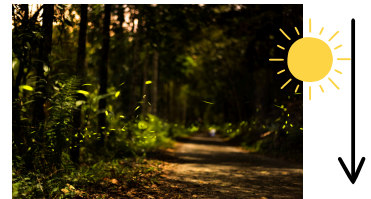
She leaves them alone most of the time, returning only briefly to nurse them. This makes the leverets grow up quickly and become **independent** at an early age.

## Connect the term and picture.

**blend in** = something is hard to see, it does not stand out.



**camouflage** = a way animals' colour make them hard to see in their habitat.

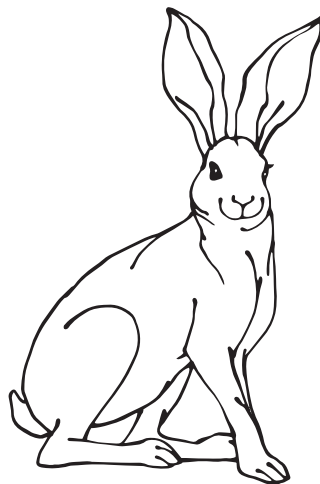


**dawn** = when sun rises

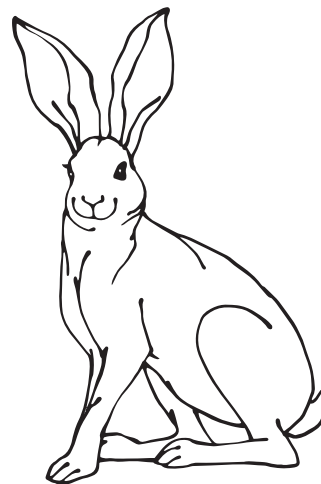


**dusk** = when sun goes down

**Colour.**



summer



winter

## Hedgehog

Hedgehogs are small **mammals** known for their **spines**. These spines provide protection from predators. When threatened, hedgehogs **can roll into a tight ball**, making it difficult for predators to hurt them.

Hedgehogs are most active at night.

They eat insects, snails, frogs, and even small snakes.

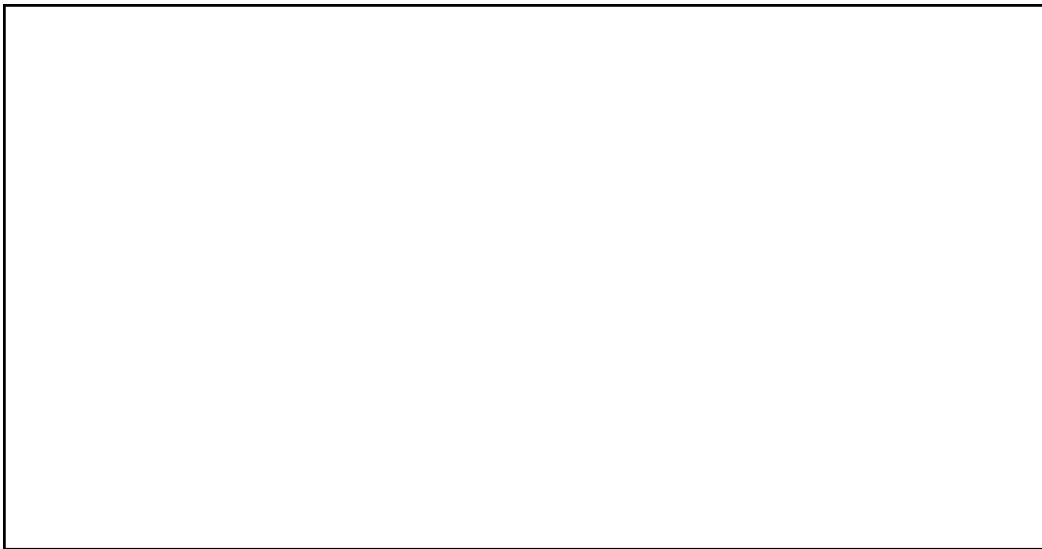
Hedgehogs often live in gardens, forests, and meadows.

In winter, hedgehogs **hibernate** to stay alive during the cold months. **They slow down their body functions to save energy.**

Hedgehogs make **nests** from leaves and twigs to keep warm. Sometimes, they wake up on warmer days to move around a bit or get a drink.



**Draw a hibernating hedgehog.**



## Squirrel

Squirrels are small animals with **long, bushy tails**. They live in parks and forests. Squirrels are great at jumping and climbing trees.

Squirrels eat nuts, seeds, fruits, and sometimes insects. They **store food** for the winter by burying it in the ground or hiding in trees.

Squirrels are active during the day. They have **good eyesight** to spot food and predators.

They communicate with each other using sounds and tail movements.

Baby squirrels are called **kittens or kits**. They are born blind and without fur. A mother squirrel stays close to the nest, nursing and protecting her kits.

## My mini glossary

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**Draw or write what squirrel have in their winter storage.**

Helsinki

Helsingin kaupunki  
Kasvatuksen ja koulutuksen toimiala

Kehittämispalvelut  
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