



Birds

# The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark

Age: 7-14

Topic: English

Time: 1 hour



Learning through Landscapes

If you would like to develop your outdoor learning knowledge and skills, take a look at our range of training courses: [ltl.org.uk/outdoor-learning-training](http://ltl.org.uk/outdoor-learning-training)

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## What should learners already know?

- Nocturnal animals are animals which are awake during the night.

## What equipment will I need?

- 'The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark' by Jill Tomlinson
- Literacy workbooks and pens

## How will learners explore this?

1. Read the book 'The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark' as a class, and discuss some key reading comprehension points. These can be:
2. What are Plop's parents doing when they are flying at night-time? *Hunting.*
3. Why does Plop stop being afraid of the dark? *He talks to different people and animals who like the dark.*
4. Who joins Plop on his first night-time flight? *A black cat.*
5. Now, encourage children to think about what might happen the next night when Plop goes on his second solo flight.
6. Ask children to write a short story (2 pages) telling the story of Plop's second night-time flight. Encourage children to build in the knowledge about birds they have gained throughout the project. Prompts could include:
7. What does Plop see while he is flying? What does he see in the air and on the ground?
8. What does Plop eat on his flight?
9. Who does Plop interact with on his flight: other birds or animals? Where does Plop go: into the forest, through fields, or into the town? What do these environments look like at night-time?

## How can we show the learning?

- This activity is a useful springboard for discussions about nocturnal animals, in particular nocturnal birds.
- What do barn owls hunt for? Barn owls like Plop mostly eat small mammals, like voles, mice, and rabbits.
- Why do owls hunt at night-time? Small mammals tend to be more active at dawn and dusk. There is less competition from other predatory birds at night. Also, owls are less likely to be predated themselves at night-time.
- What language did children use to describe the different environments Plop flew through during the night?
- This can be a useful time to reflect on fears with the class. Can children name a time when they were scared of something, but stopped being scared of it? What made them stop feeling scared?



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