

Autumn's Golden Transformation

Learning objective: To understand the seasonal changes in plants and animals during autumn.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below using full sentences.

As the air turns crisp and the days grow shorter, Nova the owl watches the forest transform into a vibrant canvas of red, orange, and gold. Autumn is a busy time for nature. Deciduous trees, like oaks and beeches, begin to prepare for the cold winter ahead. During the summer, leaves are green because they are packed with chlorophyll, which helps the tree make food from sunlight. As daylight fades, the trees stop producing chlorophyll, allowing other colours hidden in the leaves to finally shine through. Eventually, the trees shed their leaves to save energy and protect themselves from freezing temperatures. Meanwhile, creatures are busy too. Some animals, like hedgehogs, prepare to hibernate, while many birds begin their long migration to warmer countries where food is easier to find. On the forest floor, fungi thrive in the damp, cool conditions. Autumn is not just the end of the growing season; it is a vital part of the natural cycle that allows plants and animals to rest before the new life of spring begins.

Word bank: deciduous · chlorophyll · dormancy · hibernate · migration · photosynthesis

1. Why do leaves change colour from green to orange and red in autumn? (2 marks)

2. According to the text, what two things do animals do to survive the approaching winter? (2 marks)

3. Why is it important for deciduous trees to shed their leaves before winter arrives? (2 marks)

4. Why do you think the author describes autumn as a 'vital part of the natural cycle'? (2 marks)

5. Do you think autumn is a helpful season for the environment? Explain your answer using evidence from the text. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a forest scene in autumn. Include a deciduous tree losing its leaves, a fungus on the ground, and one animal preparing for winter.



Extension challenge: Research one bird species that migrates from the UK during autumn and find out which country it travels to.