LEAF Activity
WEB OF LIFE

Materials:

1 ball of string (at least 20m long)

Activity Cards: each being the name or image of an element in a forest ecosystem in Ireland.

Directions: Participants stand in a circle, facing inwards.

Each participant is given an Activity Card to hold with the facts facing them for reading.

One participant (e.g. the 'oak tree') holds the end of the string, then hands the ball to another participant (e.g. the 'spider') while making a statement about the relationship between the two things, e.g. "the oak tree provides shelter in its branches for the spider to weave its web".

Next, the 'spider' passes the ball to a third participant, e.g. 'the fly' whilst still holding onto a section of the string, again making a statement about their relationship in nature, e.g. "the spider gets its energy by eating the fly".

Now two participants are holding the string, whilst the third participant is holding the ball of string.

The activity continues like this, with the ball being passed back and forth, but each participant holds onto a piece of the string, after they have made a statement.

Some elements e.g. the soil, or the oak tree, may end up having multiple relationships and connections. In this case, the participant will be holding the string in 3 or 4 different places.

Soon a web of string will have been created; The Web of Life!

NB: everybody needs to hold the string taut!

Variations/Extensions:

Ask participants some questions to explore the topic further, e.g. "What does the string look like now?" "What does this tell us about connections in nature?" The facilitator can gently push the centre of 'the web' to demonstrate how strong the web is.

To demonstrate that 'the web' can be disrupted, you can remove one key element of the web, e.g. "the river gets polluted" or "the oak tree gets chopped down"; the participant with that Activity Card then drops all of the string that they are holding. The web is no longer strong; it is weak with loose thread; discuss this with the group; ask them to talk about the consequences this will have on all elements of the web.

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An Taisce