Ecological Jenga – Teachers Notes

How to Build:
1. Create 24 rectangle wooden blocks. (20x5x3cm)
2. Paint blocks:
   a. 6 Red
   b. 6 Yellow
   c. 6 Green
   d. 6 Brown
3. Draw animals onto the blocks:
   a. Red = Carnivores (e.g. Tiger, Bird of Prey, Tarantula)
   b. Yellow = Herbivores (e.g. Grasshopper, Deer, Sparrow)
   c. Green = Plants (e.g. Flower, Tree, Grass)
   d. Brown = Detritivores (e.g. Woodlouse/Millipede, Worm, Dung Beetle)

How to Play:
1. Create a tower using the blocks:
   - Use three blocks for each layer, leaving a gap between the blocks.
   - Alternate the direction of the blocks with each layer.
   - Coloured blocks must go in the order of brown at the bottom, green, yellow and then red.
   - Your tower should look like this.
2. Each player takes it in turn to remove a block from the tower.
   a. Blocks cannot be removed from the top layer.
3. The aim of the game is to not let the tower fall!
Notes for Teachers:

Ecological Jenga can be used to teach pupils about the importance of all living things and of how they are connected.

- As pupils remove blocks from the tower, stack them by colour.
- When the tower falls ask the class the following questions:
  - What colours or groups have we removed the most?
    - N.B. More brown and green blocks should have been removed in order to make the tower fall.
    - Brown and green blocks represent the bottom layers of the food chain and habitat ecology. This can demonstrate how the big carnivores cannot survive without the little millipedes.
  - Which group of living things is the most important in a habitat?
    - All of them!
    - There must be balance in an ecosystem for it to function well.
  - How do we give animals and living things the best chance of survival?
    - By looking after their habitats.
    - Giving them a place to live inside our own habitats i.e. fragmented forest in plantations.

Extension: At the start of the game, remove all of the 'trees' from the tower to represent a logged forest.