



Nature's Supermarket

In the days before there were shops, many household products were made from the plants that grow on Cannock Chase.

One of the most useful plants was bracken. It could be dried and used as bedding for animals and people. Burning it into an ash made it into a cleaning product for clothes. It could be used as compost, and it made a useful packing material for pottery!



Even once soap had been invented, it used to be taxed, which made it too expensive for poor people. Ash from burned bracken was mixed into a paste with animal fats. This made 'ash balls' which were dissolved in water to loosen dirt from clothes.

Wood from trees was used for kindling and fuel. It was also the main building material for houses and fences. Tools had wooden handles. Birch sap could even be used to make a kind of wine!



Heather was another very useful plant. Bunches of heather were used to make brushes and brooms. It could be used to thatch roofs. Thin slices of the stems were used to make jewellery. Heather can also be made into ale!



Bilberries made tasty jams and pie fillings. They could also be used in medicines, such as antiseptics. The juice was used to dye cloth or yarn.



Nowadays, the heathland habitats of Cannock Chase are protected as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It's important not to pick any of the plants that grow there. We need to protect this important habitat for future generations to enjoy.

Imagine you were making a household product from plants found on Cannock Chase. What would you call it?

Design an advertising poster, or record a video where you explain what your product is and why it's the best for people to buy! You might want to try using language such as alliteration. For example: Bert's Bouncy Bracken Bedding is the Best for Bad Backs!

