

Lesson 1 · living-things

Wonder and Question

Lesson at a glance

Open by modelling 'I notice...' then 'I wonder...?' about a robin on the windowsill, asking Junior/Senior Infants to copy your wondering voice. Pupils pair up as wonder partners and look closely at one classroom object before a short wonder walk with shared magnifiers to two stops. They scribble a favourite wonder on a clipboard, then back inside each child's wonder goes on a sticky note onto the class wonder wall — showing scientists start with questions.

Learning objectives

- Turn something I notice into an 'I wonder...?' question
- Add my wondering to a class wonder wall

Before the bell – prep

Gather one clipboard and a sheet of paper per child, plus a class set of magnifiers (children share one between two — most schools have a small set, not thirty). Have sticky notes and a pen ready for scribing. Clear a bit of noticeboard or wall as the wonder wall — no prepared sheet needed. Decide and walk your two-stop route beforehand (e.g. plant corner and the yard wall or a puddle).

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
clipboards	1	pupil	classroom	a piece of stiff card to lean on
plain drawing paper	1	pupil	classroom	the back of used paper
magnifiers	1	pair	school kit	look closely with eyes only and cup hands around an object
sticky notes	1	pupil	classroom	small squares of paper and a little tack

Safety watch-point

Set the 'stay with the class' rule and walking boundaries before the wonder walk, especially at the yard wall or puddle stop. Supervise children leaning in close to anything outdoors.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Keep it short and light. Model one 'I notice...' (the robin's red front, shiny eyes) then one 'I wonder why...?' aloud, and have the whole class copy your wondering voice. Don't hand out clipboards yet — that breaks the flow.
- **Look and Wonder:** Name the wonder partners first — everyone turns to the child beside them so nobody is left out. Stand by one object (plant, clock, fish tank) and run think-pair-share: each pupil says one 'I notice...', then turns it into 'I wonder why...?'. Take 3 or 4 wonders aloud and praise every one equally.
- **Our Wonder Walk:** Hand out clipboards, paper and magnifiers during the transition from the last step so walk time is spent noticing, not on logistics. Agree the route and the 'stay with the class' rule first. Plan only two stops — transitions eat the slot with this age. At each stop model one 'I notice...', invite wonders, and keep a quick scribbled list so none are lost.
- **Build Our Wonder Wall:** Go round the circle: each child says one wonder. Scribe it onto a sticky note (emergent writers may add a mark or drawing) and let them pin it up themselves. Revoice a few aloud so everyone hears the variety, and say 'scientists turn their wonders into questions they go and explore' as the wall fills.

What it should show

Most infants will offer 'why' wonders about colour, shape or movement — why a leaf is a certain shape, why a puddle is shiny, where the ants go. Affirm every one. The common slip is a child giving an answer ('it's red because...') instead of a question; gently steer them back to 'I wonder why...?' — we don't need to know yet, we just need a good question.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Pupils think a wonder must come with the answer — 'I wonder why the leaf is green... because of the sun!'** — Praise the noticing, then re-voice it as a pure question: 'You wondered WHY — that's the brilliant bit, we find out the answer another day.' Pin the question, not the answer, to the wonder wall.
- **Pupils think there is a right thing to wonder about and a wrong one, and stay silent.** — Repeat 'there are no wrong wonders — a wonder is just the start of finding out.' Let shy pupils whisper their wonder to you and you say it for the group.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a sentence stem aloud: 'I wonder why...', 'I wonder how...', 'I wonder where...' • Let shy pupils whisper their wonder to you to say for the group; emergent writers add a mark or drawing on their sticky note. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite a second wonder at the same stop — 'what else could you wonder about this?' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to pick which class wonder they'd most like to find out about and say why.

Cross-curricular hook

Links to Oral Language — pupils practise the question form 'I wonder why...?' and take turns sharing in the circle.