

nature-of-stem

Hello! Let's wonder together

Lesson at a glance

Hold up one ordinary object (leaf, spoon, pine cone or pebble) and model noticing aloud without naming it. Practise the stem I notice..., then lead a short indoor or outdoor wonder walk with two or three rich stops. Back on the carpet, each child draws one thing they noticed on plain paper. Pin four to six drawings to a cleared wall space named the wonder wall and close with the line that scientists stop and wonder too.

Learning objectives

- Stop, look closely and say something they notice about the classroom or yard
- Draw one thing they noticed on a wonder-wall picture

Before the bell – prep

Choose one ordinary object and a short safe route the day before — indoor stops (window sill, nature table, coat pegs, door mat) are the equal plan if weather or staffing block the yard. Clear a small wall or noticeboard space. Have one sheet of plain paper and crayons per child ready after the walk, not before. A second adult is needed only for the outdoor stretch.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
drawing paper (A4 or similar)	1	pupil	classroom	any scrap paper large enough for a simple drawing
chunky crayons	1	pupil	classroom	washable markers or colouring pencils
blu-tack for the noticeboard	1	class	classroom	masking tape or pins (teacher handles pins)
one ordinary wonder object to show at the start (pine cone, pebble, leaf or spoon)	1	class	outdoors	any safe classroom object the children walk past every day

Safety watch-point

Stay with the class outdoors; clear boundaries; no picking plants or tasting; watch slippery ground after Irish rain. Wash hands on return if soil, walls or plants were touched.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold the object up and look at it yourself first so the class sees you noticing. Model once in a warm voice: I notice it is smooth. I notice a little brown spot. I wonder how it got there. Do not name the object, the walk, the paper or the wonder wall yet — keep eyes on the thing in your hand.
- **What does wondering mean?:** Read the two board ideas once, then have the class chorally practise I notice... Run the full worked cycle aloud once (I wonder → I think → I look → I notice → I wonder) pointing at a real classroom detail. Add one short sentence about a careful looker (doctor or gardener) and move on — protect walk time.
- **Our wonder walk:** Line up calmly: stay together, walk slowly, pointing fingers not grabbing hands, no picking or tasting. Run two or three short bursts — at each stop invite two or three children to point and say I notice..., then revoice so the whole class hears a clear notice. Prefer two rich stops over a rushed loop. Key prompts: colour, shape, rough or smooth, moving or still.
- **Draw what you noticed:** Hand out paper and crayons only now. Each child draws one noticed thing, big and bold, about five minutes. Circulate asking What did you notice? Scribe a short label only if the child wants one. If a child says they noticed nothing, offer two real choices from the shared walk (puddle or tree bark; window sill or coat pegs).
- **Our wonder wall:** Name the cleared space out loud: This is our wonder wall. Invite four to six children only to hold up their picture and say one I notice... sentence while you blu-tack; fold watchers in with Did anyone else notice something like that? Pin the rest quietly. Close by echoing two notices and saying: Today we stopped and wondered. Scientists are people who stop and wonder, just like us.

What it should show

Most Junior and Senior Infants will stop briefly, point to or name one ordinary detail (wet leaf, shiny handle, robin, coat colour, door mat) and make a simple bold drawing of it. Some offer only a point — affirm and supply the stem. Gently revoice bare object names into I notice... sentences. Guesses and notices are never wrong at this age.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Children think wondering means already knowing the right answer.** — Praise any honest notice on the spot — You noticed the shiny leaf — and say guesses and notices are the start of the fun, not a test.
- **A child says I noticed nothing after the walk.** — Offer two concrete choices from stops you shared: Was it the puddle or the tree bark? Indoors: Was it the window sill or the coat pegs?

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Accept pointing alone and supply the stem yourself: You are pointing at the wet leaf. You notice the shiny leaf. • Offer two real choices from the shared walk if a child cannot pick what to draw.	• Prompt one extra detail on the same drawing (colour, rough or smooth) using the key questions from the walk.	• Invite a confident talker to add one more detail to their I notice... sentence when sharing at the wonder wall.

Cross-curricular hook

Ties to Aistear/oral language — practising the stem I notice... and listening to a friend’s notice at the wonder wall.