

Energy makes things work



Lesson at a glance

Open with a clap and a jump and invite quick guesses about what makes them happen. Name energy with a lit torch, then run a whole-class freeze hunt with the printed energy-in-action cards (fan, lamp, clap, running, turbines, sun, food). On the carpet, sort the same cards into food, wind, sun or energy-at-work spots, then talk through how food, wind and the sun help us. Close by revoicing child phrases — no Investigation Journal today.

Learning objectives

- Act out or point to something that uses energy to move, light up or make sound
- Name food, wind or the sun as a source of energy in simple words
- Join a class talk about energy making things work

Before the bell – prep

Print one class set of the seven energy-in-action cards and four pile labels (food, wind, sun, energy at work). Clear safe open floor space. Optional: battery torch and a small hand or paper fan. No mains appliances. Keep hunt props out of sight until the hunt begins.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
energy-in-action picture cards (fan, lamp, clap, running child, wind turbines, sun, food)	1	class	provided printable	simple sketches on plain paper or magazine cut-outs of the same seven ideas
pile labels for carpet sort (food, wind, sun, energy at work)	1	class	provided printable	four scrap-paper labels, or four empty trays with the words said aloud
battery torch	1	class	classroom	mime a lamp with hands, or use the lamp picture card only
small hand fan or paper fan	1	class	classroom	fold a paper fan from scrap paper, or mime spinning blades

Safety watch-point

Spacious freeze spots; no bumping; gentle claps and jogs only. Battery torch only — no mains appliances.



Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Clap once, then jump on the spot. Invite two or three quick guesses only — hold back the word energy so curiosity does the work. Have the picture cards face down and ready; leave other props out of sight so nobody reaches while you talk.
- **What is energy?:** Project only the short board line: energy makes things move, light up or make a sound. Model the torch or lamp card first, then open a classroom look-around. Keep energy source and work in your own talk, not on the board.
- **Where's the energy hunt:** Work the lamp card live first (wonder-guess-act-notice). Reveal Cards A-D one at a time; whole class acts then freezes. Call different children: move, light up, or sound? Use E-G more gently as spin-like-a-turbine, stretch-like-sunshine and mime-lunch prompts. Keep turns short and playful.
- **Food, wind or sun?:** Sit on the carpet. Name the four spots before the first card. Hold one card at a time; children say the home, then one child places it. If the fan is put with wind, steer it to energy at work so food, wind and sun stay clean source examples. On job cards only, ask them to point to the moving, glowing or sounding part.
- **Energy helps us talk:** One board question at a time with the matching card: food and bodies; wind and turbines; sun and light/plants. Tell the engineer line yourself — engineers at wind farms turn wind into power for homes and school — and invite a chorus or thumbs-up if they have seen turbines in Ireland. Avoid make energy; prefer turn wind into power.
- **What we noticed:** Revoice two or three child phrases so they hear their own ideas celebrated. Quick tidy into the tray, calm bodies, and close on what they can already do: spot energy, act it out, name food, wind or the sun.

What it should show

Most children will freeze and act fan, lamp, clap and running, and point to move, light or sound on those cards. In the sort, expect running and lunch on food, turbines on wind, sun on sun, and fan/lamp/clap on energy at work. A child who puts the fan with wind is mixing the machine with the source — steer it back to energy at work.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Only batteries or plugs count as energy — bodies, wind and the sun do not.** — Hold the running, turbine and sun cards beside the lamp. Say energy also helps our bodies move, spins turbines and helps plants — then have them act or point to each one.
- **The classroom fan belongs with wind because it blows air.** — Point to the four spots: the fan is a thing energy makes move, so it lives on energy at work. Turbines are the set's wind example — mime spinning blades if they need another wind picture.
- **Heavy things have more energy.** — Smile and steer back to the three child labels with everyday cards: what is moving, lighting up or making a sound right now?

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Let the child point to the card and copy your freeze or action rather than name the source alone. • Offer a choice of two spots only (e.g. food or wind) when placing a card.	• After a job card is sorted, ask them to point to the glowing, spinning or sounding part and say move, light or sound.	• Invite them to name food, wind or sun as well as move/ light/sound, and to give a simple reason for the card's home. • Optional oral home notice: one thing at home that moves, lights up or makes a sound, and what energy helps it do.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to SPHE healthy-eating talk — food gives our bodies energy to play and learn — and to Irish turbines seen on hills or by the coast.