

living-things

What do we need to grow well?

Lesson at a glance

Open by asking what bodies already needed this morning — water, food, sleep, a warm coat or a hug. Introduce need versus want, then groups sort nine picture cards into two hoops. Drive four school-day cards on the sorting-tree interactive and pin the class chart of six needs: food, water, air, sleep, warmth and care. Pupils draw or write two needs and two wants in the Investigation Journal, then partner-talk how food gives energy to play and learn.

Learning objectives

- Sort everyday examples into things people need and things people want
- Name food, water, air, sleep, warmth and care as things that help people grow well

Before the bell – prep

Print one set of the nine needs-and-wants picture cards per group the day before. Lay out two hoops or labelled sorting mats per group. Clear wall or IWB space so the six-word growing chart can be built blank during the lesson, before journals open.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
needs and wants picture cards (water, dinner, sleep, warm coat, care, air, sweets, toy, screen game)	1	group	provided printable	simple hand-drawn icons on sticky notes or scrap card
sorting hoops or labelled sorting mats (need / want)	2	group	classroom	two sheets of paper labelled need and want
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	a plain page folded into need and want halves
wall or noticeboard space for the class growing chart	1	class	classroom	IWB list titled things that help us grow

Safety watch-point

Keep home and lunch talk gentle and non-judging — never rank anyone's food, coat or family care. Wash hands if sticky labels were used when tidying.

**Teaching moves**

- **Getting Started:** Keep it light and oral only — no cards yet. Collect a handful of morning ideas from home and school so the class arrives at the sort with their own examples. Ask: What helps your body grow? What is nice but not needed every day?
- **Needs and wants:** Project only the short board key point. Model the thinking cycle aloud once before the sort: wonder whether a teddy is a need or a want, check it against food, water, air, sleep, warmth or care, then decide it is a want and a warm jumper is a need on a cold day.
- **Sort needs and wants:** Circulate and ask why each card went where. If a group puts dinner with wants, ask what the body uses food for — energy for legs to run and brains to think. Keep talk gentle; never rank anyone's lunch or home.
- **School-day cards and our growing chart:** Drive the sorting-tree interactive with the four new school-day cards only — about four minutes. Bring a second pair into each answer. Then build the growing chart from blank space: invite names from the hoop sort and pin food, water, air, sleep, warmth and care only as the class says them. Do not open journals until all six are visible.
- **Record needs and wants:** Point to the finished chart as the only source for needs. Tell the class wants come from home or school examples not on the chart. Offer quick oral starters if a child freezes: water and a toy; sleep and sweets. Talk about food as energy for play and growth only — no calorie language.
- **Food gives us energy:** Partner talk one to two minutes, then take two or three class voices only. Say aloud: breakfast helps legs run in the yard and brains think in class. Finish on home needs — a bed, a coat, dinner, tap water, family care.

What it should show

Hoop sort: water, dinner, sleep, warm coat, hug/care and fresh air land in needs; sweets, toy and extra screen game land in wants. Board sort: water after PE and school jumper as needs; library book and birthday balloon as wants. Journal pages show two chart needs and two off-chart wants as simple pictures or words. A group that calls the jumper only a rule needs the revoice that clothes give warmth.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Children say every favourite thing is a need — 'I need sweets because I love them.'** — Gently revoice: needs keep us growing and well; wants are extras we like. Hold the card against the six chart words and ask which one it matches.
- **Pupils say the school jumper is only a rule, not a need.** — Revoice: clothes keep us warm, and warmth is one of our six needs on the growing chart.
- **Pupils think food is only something tasty, not something the body uses.** — When the dinner card is placed, ask what food gives the body energy to do at school — run, play and think — then pin that idea for the later partner talk.



Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Start the group with four clear cards only — water, sleep, sweets and toy — and sit briefly at that table to model one placement aloud. • Offer the oral starters water/toy or sleep/sweets so the journal page still gets two needs and two wants.	• Take the full nine-card set and ask one why for each hoop placement during circulation. • Prompt while recording: which chart needs do you use at home every day?	• Explain one tricky card (coat, hug/care or library book) to the class after the hoop or board sort. • Stretch the partner talk: name one home need and say why it sits on the growing chart.

Cross-curricular hook

Links to SPHE caring for myself — naming daily needs that keep bodies well on cold Irish school mornings.