

materials

Left out in the weather

Lesson at a glance

Open with a dry leaf and scrap of paper and ask what Irish rain, sun and wind might do to them. Name five samples (paper, cloth, shiny silver wrap, leaf, chalk), assign two per pupil, and capture short I-think predictions in the Investigation Journal before leaving the room. Place one class tray outdoors in a safe shared spot, notice day-one looks and feels orally, then back in class record Today it looks/feels for the two assigned samples. Close with talk on which sample weather may change most.

Learning objectives

- Predict how Irish weather might change materials left outside
- Set up samples safely outdoors and record first observations for later checking

Before the bell – prep

Before the day, pick a safe outdoor spot the class can revisit (tray or net bag fixed by a classroom door or porch edge). Cut one class set: paper square, fabric scrap, foil piece, dry leaf, chalk stick. Optional identical indoor compare set. Have the Investigation Journal page ready.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
paper squares	2	class	classroom	scrap from an old workbook page
fabric scraps	2	class	classroom	old sock or tea-towel offcut from home
aluminium foil pieces	2	class	supermarket	clean foil from a sandwich wrap
dry leaves	2	class	outdoors	fallen leaf from the school garden
chalk sticks	2	class	classroom	a small stick of playground chalk
shallow tray or net bag for outdoor samples	1	class	classroom	old plastic lunchbox lid weighted with a stone
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	plain paper with predict and observe headings said aloud by the teacher



Safety watch-point

Stay together with clear outdoor boundaries; helpers only handle the tray. No tasting or picking plants. Wash hands on return and wipe damp trays.



Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold up only a dry leaf and scrap of paper (or a photo of peeling paint/rusty gate). Ask one light question: what might rain, wind or sun do? Take two or three quick answers; do not lay out the full kit yet.
- **What can weather do to materials?:** Hold up each of the five samples as you name them so every word matches an object. Board only weather and prediction; say weathering lightly with one yard example (faded chalk marks). Head off the storm-only idea: everyday rain and sun change things too, slowly.
- **What do we think will happen?:** Lay all five on the tray and name them; pupils do not handle yet. Model one I-wonder / I-predict / I-will-check cycle on paper. Assign two samples per pupil or pair so the class covers all five, then partner-talk one sample with a why. Capture I-think marks for both samples in the Investigation Journal before you go outside.
- **Set up our weather watch:** Lead the class out together. Two or three helpers place the single tray so all samples share the same weather; everyone else stays with the group and says one day-one notice (dry, shiny, soft, crumbly). No journals outdoors. If weather is wild, use a sheltered door edge and note it on the board. Wash hands on return.
- **Record our day-one look:** Back in class, keep I think separate from I see today. Leave stems on the board: Today it looks... / Today it feels.... Each pupil records day-one looks for their two assigned samples only; pool the rest aloud. Scribe a word where needed; one Investigation Journal page only.
- **Before we check again:** Which sample will weather change most, and why? Revoice soft/thin materials changing faster and everyday clues (rust, peeling paint, washed chalk marks). Ask why all samples share one spot and what you will compare on the later look.



What it should show

Day one, pupils should notice samples still dry, shiny, green, hard or smooth and keep that separate from predictions. Typical I-think ideas: paper soft/torn in rain; chalk crumbly; leaf dry or brittle; cloth damp or faded; foil crumpled but still shiny. Affirm all predictions; redirect only if a child mixes guess with today's look.



Misconceptions & interventions

- **Only big storms change materials — ordinary Irish rain and sun do nothing.** — Point to a familiar yard clue (faded chalk marks, peeling shed paint) and say gentle weather changes things too, just more slowly — that is why we leave the tray for a few days.
- **I think and I see today are the same thing, so they write the guess again as the day-one look.** — Point to the two stems on the board: I think is the guess already written; Today it looks/ feels is only what eyes and fingers find right now before weather works.
- **Weathering only means rocks breaking — not everyday materials.** — Keep the pupil words as weather and prediction; say weathering once with a yard material example (paint peeling, chalk going soft) and leave rock talk for later geography.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Scribe the I-think and Today it looks/feels stems while the pupil draws the two assigned samples. • Limit talk and recording to one sample if two feels heavy; pair with a peer who shares the second.	• Prompt one why for each prediction (rain, wind or sun) before they write. • Add a simple feels word (hard, soft, smooth) beside the day-one look.	• Optional stretch: add a day-one notice for a third sample from the class board, still on the same journal page. • Ask why putting all samples in one spot makes the later compare fairer.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to Geography weather talk and English oral stems — Today it looks... / I think... — when describing Irish rain, wind and sun.