

living-things

What does it do, and how could we find out?

Lesson at a glance

Open by inviting three quick shares of ordinary classroom or grounds finds pupils barely notice, then model STEM eyes aloud on a living find (plant, mossy wall or feeder): I notice... It does... How could we find out...? Lead one short fixed wonder walk with one or two planned pauses so each pupil bags a real find. Back inside they complete one InvestigationLog page, then pairs pin a single how-could-we-find-out sticky to the class question wall.

Learning objectives

- Notice something in the immediate school environment and say what it does
- Turn a wonder into a simple how-could-we-find-out question

Before the bell – prep

Walk a short fixed loop yourself the day before and pre-spot 2–3 living finds (moss, root, feeder, weeds in a crack). Print one InvestigationLog page per pupil; gather clipboards, pencils and sticky notes. Clear a noticeboard strip for the question wall. Have an indoor corridor route ready if wet.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
clipboard	1	pupil	classroom	a piece of stiff cardboard with a bulldog clip
sticky notes	2	pupil	classroom	small paper rectangles and Blu Tack or masking tape
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	a blank page ruled into three parts for notice, what it does, and find-out question
pencil	1	pupil	classroom	crayon or pen

Safety watch-point

Stay on the fixed path inside set boundaries; walk, do not run. No picking unknown plants, poking drains, climbing or handling litter. Wash hands on return if anything outdoor was touched.

**Teaching moves**

- **What are STEM eyes?:** Project only the three starters. Think aloud a full living example without taking answers mid-model — e.g. soft green moss on a damp wall, it covers the stone, how could we find out whether moss likes wet or dry places. Only then invite one pupil to try the three lines on another ordinary find.
- **Wonder walk:** Lead the whole class as one line on your pre-walked loop. Pause at only one or two spotting points you already chose. Prompt: What exactly do you notice? What job does it do? One strong find each is enough — light jot or sketch outdoors if dry; careful writing waits until class.
- **Record what we noticed:** Finish handwash and coats, then settle journals. Keep sentence starters on the board. Aim for one complete set: I noticed... It does... How could we find out...? If settle overruns, accept a strong drawing plus a spoken question to a partner, then write the question only.
- **Our class question wall:** Sticky first at desks — one best find-out question per pair. Invite two full three-line shares and revoice watch / try gently / ask someone. Send one row at a time to pin while the rest stay seated. Skip the second share if time slips; leave the wall up for the year.

What it should show

Expect real school-grounds finds named in plain words — moss, a root lifting the path, weeds in a crack, a feeder, a drain or gate latch — plus a job (covers the wall, lifts the path, lets water away) and a question that could be watched, tried gently or asked later. Redirect generic guesses not from the walk, and wonders that stop at “because it’s cool” with no find-out path.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Pupils think STEM eyes only count for labs, robots or big machines, not ordinary school things.** — Point back at your moss or plant model: careful noticing of living finds on the wall or sill is STEM eyes today. Celebrate ordinary finds on the walk.
- **Pupils treat “how could we find out?” as something we must fully investigate before the bell.** — Revoice: today we collect good questions for the wall; watching, trying or asking can come later when a question fits.
- **Pupils think a wonder is wrong if nobody can answer it today.** — As stickies go up, name watch / try / ask paths and say STEM eyes collect questions as well as answers — the wall keeps them for later.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Talk the three lines with a partner first using the board starters, then draw the find and write or copy the find-out question only.	• Add where the find was (path, yard, corridor) or a second find-out idea — watch it, try something gentle, or ask the caretaker.	• Critique a shared question against watch / try / ask and suggest a clearer wording the class could use later from the wall.

Cross-curricular hook

Links to English oral language and writing — turning a spoken wonder into a clear how-could-we-find-out question on the wall.