

living-things

Plants in our local and wider world

Lesson at a glance

Open by spotting plants from the classroom, then lock in two words: plant and habitat. Pupils place roots, stem, leaf, flower and petal on the flowering-plant interactive, then take a short magnifier hunt around the school grounds. Back inside they sort heather, hawthorn and thrift cards against wet bog, field edge and windy shore, and finish with one labelled plant drawing on the Investigation Journal page.

Learning objectives

- Observe and identify a range of plants in the local environment
- Compare plants from different Irish habitats by leaves, flowers and where they grow

Before the bell – prep

Day before: check a safe outdoor loop (yard, pitch edge, planter or hedge) and print one set of three illustrated Irish habitat cards per group plus the Investigation Journal page. Gather one magnifier per group. Wet-day backup: tray of potted plants or loose yard weeds already indoors.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
magnifiers	1	group	school kit	a clear plastic jar lid to look through, or careful looking with eyes only
Illustrated Irish habitat plant cards (heather, hawthorn, thrift)	1	group	provided printable	teacher shows the three illustrated card images and captions on the IWB while groups discuss
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	a blank page with space for a drawing and labels
collection tray for optional loose samples	1	class	classroom	a clean lunchbox lid or paper plate

Safety watch-point

Walking feet; gentle looking only; no tasting; do not pick spiky (bramble, holly) or unknown plants. Wash hands on return before drawing.

**Teaching moves**

- **Words we need for plants:** Board only plant and habitat, each with a simple place picture. Ask 'Is the grass on the pitch a plant? How do you know?' Head off 'weeds aren't real plants' before you leave the room.
- **Name the parts of a flowering plant:** Drive the flowering-plant interactive. Before dragging, point: flower is the whole head, petal is one piece. Class choruses each label; keep the pace brisk so the hunt still has time.
- **Plant hunt in the school grounds:** Journals stay indoors. Say safety rules yourself as you leave. Groups of 3–4, one magnifier each, about seven minutes of looking. Prompt leaf feel, soft or woody stem, flower, and where it grows. One brisk oral share on return, then handwash.
- **Plants from Irish habitats:** Show wet bog, field edge and windy shore on the board. Groups lay heather, hawthorn and thrift left-to-right to match. Ask one same-or-different link with a school-ground find; keep your own talk short.
- **Draw a plant we found:** Full drawing time even if the hunt ran long. One labelled part they actually saw; roots need not be invented. Sentence stem if needed: I found a _____. It was growing _____. I can see the _____. Circulate with 'more like bog, field edge or shore?'
- **What did we notice?:** Revoice two or three contributions into habitat, leaf, stem, flower language. Aim for one local find, one habitat match, and the idea 'same main parts, different places'.

What it should show

Typical finds: grass, daisy, dandelion, clover, plantain, moss, dock, a site tree or shrub. Habitat sort: heather→wet bog, hawthorn→field edge, thrift→windy shore. Drawings show at least one real part (leaf/stem/flower); roots often absent—that is fine. Wrong card order usually means they sorted by colour, not place—re-point the board headers.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **'Weeds and grass aren't real plants—only trees and garden flowers count.'** — Hold up grass or a daisy from the yard: roots, stem, leaves. 'A weed is still a plant. Moss and grass count even without a big colourful flower.'
- **Pupils drop the flower label on a single petal.** — On the interactive, point to the whole colourful head then one petal: 'Flower is the whole head; petal is one piece.' Have them say both words back before the next drag.
- **'Every plant should show roots on my drawing.'** — Remind them roots stay hidden unless a plant was loosened. Praise one clear label on a part they actually saw outside or on a card.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Pair at the teacher table with the sentence stem I found a _____. It was growing _____. I can see the _____.; accept a habitat-card plant if the hunt yielded nothing clear. • Offer a partly labelled plant outline so they add only one part name they can point to.	• After one labelled drawing, ask whether their plant is more like the bog, field-edge or shore card and why. • Prompt a second noticed detail: leaf feel, stem soft or woody, or exact growing spot.	• Fast finishers add a tiny second sketch of a habitat-card plant and one same/different part link. • Invite a fair compare aloud: same main parts, different leaf or stem shape for wind, wet ground or open yard.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to Geography — Irish habitats (bog, hedgerow/field edge, seashore) and where each plant grows best.