

living-things

Plants in our local and wider world

Lesson at a glance

Open by spotting plants from seats, then pin the two words plant and habitat with bog, field-edge and shore pictures. Pupils place roots, stem, leaf, flower and petal on the flowering-plant interactive before a short school-grounds hunt with one magnifier per group. Back inside they sort heather, hawthorn and thrift cards to wet bog, field edge and windy shore, then draw and label one find on the Investigation Journal page and close with a same-parts, different-places talk.

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

Walk the outdoor loop the day before and clear hazards. Print one set of three illustrated habitat cards per group (heather, hawthorn, thrift) and the Investigation Journal page. Gather one magnifier per group. Wet-day backup: tray of yard weeds or classroom pots ready 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; look only—no tasting; do not pick spiky or unknown plants (bramble, holly). Wash hands on return before the journal drawing.

**Teaching moves**

- **Words we need for plants:** Board only plant and habitat plus one short example and a place picture each. Ask 'Is the grass on the pitch a plant?' and revoice that weeds, moss and grass count. Bridge aloud: outside is our school habitat; later we meet other Irish ones.
- **Name the parts of a flowering plant:** Drive the IWB interactive briskly. Before drags, point whole flower head then one petal so flower and petal stay distinct. Fold the class in: 'Are they right? Which label is left? What does that part do?' Model: leaves and stems easy outside; roots only if loosened.
- **Plant hunt in the school grounds:** Two minutes inside on the job list, then you voice safety as you leave. Lead a short loop (yard, pitch edge, planter or hedge). Prompt leaf feel, soft or woody stem, flower or not, and where it grows. Protect about seven minutes looking; on return, one brisk plant-and-part share per group if time.
- **Plants from Irish habitats:** Show wet bog, field edge and windy shore headers on the IWB. Groups lay the three cards left-to-right to match, then name one same-or-different link with a yard find. If the hunt overran, do one whole-class sort and one compare only.
- **Draw a plant we found:** Hands washed, then full drawing time while finds are fresh. One labelled part they actually saw is enough; roots stay off unless seen. Offer the stem sentences and ask whether their plant is more bog-, field-edge- or shore-like. Card draw is fine if the hunt yielded little.
- **What did we notice?:** Revoice two or three ideas into habitat, leaf, stem, flower language. Aim for one local find, one card-to-place match, and one 'same main parts, different places' line so the class owns the synthesis.

What it should show

Expect yard finds such as grass, daisy, dandelion, clover, plantain, moss, dock or a site tree/shrub, with leaves and stems spotted more than roots. Card sort: heather→wet bog, hawthorn→field edge, thrift→windy shore. Journal shows one recognisable plant, at least one correct part label, and where it grew. Odd card matches usually mean reading the caption place-line, not the picture—send them back to leaf and habit clues.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Only trees or garden flowers are real plants; weeds, grass and moss don't count.** — Hold up a daisy or blade of grass from the hunt and ask which main parts it has. Revoice: if it has roots, stem and leaves, it is a plant—even in a crack or on the pitch.
- **Pupils drop the flower label on a single petal, or invent roots they never saw.** — On the interactive, point whole head then one petal again. For drawings, praise only parts they observed; say roots stay hidden unless a plant was already loose.
- **Every plant should look like the school-yard daisy, so thrift or heather 'must be wrong'.** — Lay thrift beside a daisy card talk: both have leaves and flowers, but thrift stays low for wind and heather suits wet bog—same parts, different habitats.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Pair at the teacher's group with shared magnifier talk; offer the sentence frame I found a _____. It was growing _____. I can see the _____. • Accept a card-plant drawing with one part labelled if the outdoor find was unclear.	• Prompt a second noticed detail (leaf feel, soft vs woody stem, sun or shade) during the hunt or on the journal page. • Ask one same-or-different link between their yard plant and a habitat card.	• Fast finishers add a tiny second sketch of a habitat-card plant and say how its shape suits bog, field edge or shore. • In the close, invite a fair critique: which plant part was hardest to spot outside, and why.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to Geography's Irish places—bog, field edge and seashore—as real habitats pupils can name on a simple map of Ireland.