

Plants

Learning aims:

- Understand basic plant structure
- Identify the differences between a flowering plant and a tree
- Observe the lifecycle of a plant
- Explore water movement in plants.
- Use plants in art

Activity 1: Plant Structure (KS1&2)

Print out or draw a large blank illustration of a plant with spots for labels. Either, write out the labels and ask students to place labels in the correct place, or just write the words as you go.

Be sure to include the following parts:

- Stem
- Leaf
- Flower
- Root
- Fruits
- Bud

Now get the class to identify these structures on a variety of plants around your school. Compare the structure of a flowering plant to that of a tree - repeat the above activity. Tree labels should include: bark, crown, trunk, twig, branch, leaves, roots (you can include fruits, blossoms and seeds for older students).

Hint: add to your student's experience by taking them out into the school grounds to search for different plants and trees.

Activity 2: Life Cycles (KS1&2)

Plant a classroom jungle! You can either plant some flowering plants such as wildflowers, or try something easier like beans or cress.

We recommend putting a broad bean wrapped in some kitchen towel, inside a zip-lock bag and then taping it to a window. You should spray your bean with a little water before sealing, and keep an eye on the moisture in the bag. This process will allow your class to see the roots and shoots growing!

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Activity 3: Water Rainbow (KS1&2)

Ask your class how they think water moves in a plant and whether we can see it. This experiment will enable your students to see that water is taken up by the roots of a plant, through the xylem and up into the leaves to enable photosynthesis.

Start by mixing up some water and a little bit of dye or food colouring in a jar/glass. Stand either a stick of celery, or a flower into the water (making sure to keep the leaves intact). After a little while, you will notice the colour of the leaves have changed depending on your dye.

You can even try multiple colours and create a water rainbow!

Activity 4: Plant Art (KS1&2)

Encourage your students to explore the beauty of plants through art. You can do this in whatever style suits you and your learning needs best, but here are some suggestions:

- Sketch/paint something from your school grounds - this could be a focus on one particular plant, or a landscape of your school garden/playground.
- Plants as painting tools - Use different textures in plants to create your art. I.e. twigs make fantastic paint brushes, or you could print using flowers and paint.
- Hapazome - Lie plants and flowers on top of a piece of paper in a pattern. Cover the plants with a piece of material (like a tea towel), and hammer down on the back of the cloth, being sure to aim for every spot where the plants are. When you lift off your cloth, you will see that a print of the plants will be left behind,
- Natural art - Use various pieces of plant that are found outside (i.e. leaves, sticks, pinecones) and create a 3-D piece of art on the floor of your school. This art piece can be added to throughout the day by other students, and eventually the wind will take it away! *Hint: try to only use plant parts that have already fallen to the ground, rather than picking directly from the tree.*
- Natural potpourri - Using items such as oranges, herbs and petals, dry some plants to make your own natural potpourri.