

Activity 1: Thinking Walk

Activity 1 should be spread over three lessons.

1) Make a Darwin Doodle Book

- Use the Darwin Doodle Book page from the binder.
- This will be the project notebook for Darwin's Lookouts.

2) Plant parts

- Review the parts of a plant with the children, using the 'Plant parts' page overleaf.

3) Plan the Thinking Walk

- Ask the children to think about how they should behave on a Thinking Walk. Talk about respecting the plants and other living things that they will observe on the walk.
- Ask the children to think about what equipment they will need – like macs or sunhats, pictures of plants to help with identification, Darwin Doodle Books, pencils, magnifiers, and bags to collect flowers and plants.



Darwin had a sand-covered path in his garden at Down House in Kent. It winds through shady woodland and along nearby fields. Darwin spent time walking his 'Thinking Path' every day.

4) Go on a Thinking Walk

- Spend about thirty minutes walking in the school grounds, local park, churchyard or anywhere in the neighbourhood.
- Try to avoid formal garden planted areas and look for wild native plants (weeds!)
- The children should be looking out for different types of plants at this point.

On the walk:

- **Discover:** How many different types of plants can the children find during their walk?
- **Observe:** Look closely at some of the plants. What differences can the children see and record?
- **Record:** Using a camera or by drawing in the Doodle Books record some of the different plants that have been found on the walk. Ask the children to think about how the plants are different.
- **Collect:** Ask the children to collect a few appropriate living plants to take back to the classroom (with the owners' permission). Try and find a range of types, especially different leaf types.



5) Back in class

- Ask the children for descriptive words about the plants they saw on their walk and have collected - for example: green, gorgeous, big, spiky, hairy, stem, flower.

6) Use the description words in a creative project

- Ask the children to write the words onto an outline of a leaf. They can make the outlines by drawing round leaves picked up on the walk or using the 'Leaf templates' page.

7) Show and tell

- Decorate the leaves and use them to make a descriptive display about plants or a poem, to show to others in the class or the rest of school in a Darwin assembly.

Helpful Hints

- Take care when picking wild flowers. Please pick only the species from The Great Plant Hunt Identikit. The species in the Identikit are common.
- Emphasise that in general, wild flowers should not be picked and the children are only doing this as part of a special project where it has been allowed.
- Permission should be sought to dig up plants if they are not on school land.
- Put any picked plants into water as soon as possible.
- If using plastic bags for collecting plants, make sure children are aware of the dangers. Follow appropriate procedures after handling plant material. Health and safety information can be found in the main handbook binder.
- Images from The Great Plant Hunt Identikit and in the image bank species folders at www.greatplanthunt.org can be used to help children spot different kinds of plants. These can be useful for a preparatory activity and to jog childrens' memories after the walk. If your walk is delayed by the weather they may also come in handy.

Resources

What else is in this booklet?

- ✿ Plant parts
- ✿ Leaf template

What else is in the binder?

- ✿ Darwin Doodle Book
- ✿ Health and safety information

What's in the Treasure Chest?

- ✿ The Great Plant Hunt Identikit
- ✿ Magnifiers

Things you need to collect

- ✿ Make sure the children have project notebooks

- ✿ Paper bags for collecting. You can use plastic bags and inflate the bag and close it once you have collected the plants. This helps keep them 'fresher' for examination back in class. Health and safety measures may need to be taken if using plastic bags with small children.

- ✿ A small trowel or spoon to dig up plants.

The fun stuff

- ✿ Check The Great Plant Hunt website at www.greatplanthunt.org for useful images, videos and interactive games around plant parts.