

Go On a Nature Walk

Background

- We are no longer living in a world where going outside comes naturally to us. Bringing children outside the classroom on a nature walk to observe the outdoors actively connects them to it.
- Have a ten minute nature walk at the start of each science lesson but it can also be a lesson in itself as seen below.
- These simple hints and tips should result in a great experience for children while also keeping you sane!



Curriculum Links

Subject	Strand	Strand Unit
Science	Living things, environmental awareness and care	Plant and animal life, caring for the environment
SPHE	Myself and the wider world	Environmental care
Geography	Natural environments, environmental awareness and care	The local natural environment, weather, climate and atmosphere
English	Oral language, writing	Communicating, understanding

Before

1. Remind the pupils that even though they are outside, the same rules apply as in the classroom
2. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear as necessary
3. Get permission from the Board of Management if going outside school grounds and wear high visibility vests
4. Bring any of the following that you might intend to use – notepad and pencil, bug viewers, camera for pictures, collection bags
5. I usually split the class into groups of three or four to work together on tasks
6. Stay out for between five and forty minutes by trying one or more of these tasks at a time.

During

Always start by getting the pupils to name the month and season and look at the sky and describe the clouds, wind speed and direction, temperature and rainfall. Then take your pick from below!

Make leaf rubbings	Make a skeleton with sticks	Find five mini-beasts	Leave bread crumbs for birds	Play tag or tip the can	Sketch a tree and its roots
Have a silent sound walk	Build tall stone stacks	Sketch wildflowers	Make a fairy fort	Have a woollies & wellies walk	Make bark rubbings
Take photos	Dig holes	Sketch clouds	Make mud pies	Walk barefoot	Hug a tree
Make pictures with leaves, twigs and stones	Collect items listed in a scavenger hunt	Collect sets of items or go on a maths trail	Find five different types of birds	Put a sheet under a tree and shake the tree	Collect and press wildflowers
Adopt a tree outside for the year and watch it grow and change. Observe leaves, flowers, fruit, seeds and bark. Record observations in a notebook and sketch the tree over the course of the year.					

After

Afterwards get the pupils to wash hands and write five things they learned in their diaries or scrapbooks and stick in samples of items found if time allows. Unnamed items can also be researched and photos displayed

Web Links

- www.adoptatreeproject.com and www.scholearthed.ie/pdf/intouch/ZoomInOnTrees_JanFeb2012.pdf (which was first published in the INTO Intouch magazine) for ideas when focussing on a tree for a year
- Have a BYOD nature walk. Get the pupils to download the app Persil Wild Explorers to their own devices or school iPads for more great activities that they can conduct.