



Garden Detectives

Do you know where you can find nature in your outdoor space? Are all your plants in one spot, or across the site?

This activity will encourage learners to look closely at what they can find in their grounds and begin to introduce how different habitats support a range of different living things. This activity can be done on a large scale, across the whole of your learning site, or within a small area, encouraging learners to 'really look' at what they can find, even in the smallest of places!

Learners will be encouraged to explore what is natural and what is human-made within their outdoor space.

Teaching time

20–30 minutes

Learning outcomes

- Gain an understanding of natural and non-natural materials
- Have regular opportunities for spending playful time outdoors interacting with nature
- Make close observations of nature in an outdoor space

Step by step

Before starting the activity, take learners around your outdoor space, asking them to look around them closely. You can prompt them to think deeply about the space by using 'I wonder...' phrases such as:

'I wonder where I could find something living'

'I wonder where the bees would be'

'I wonder where a hedgehog might live'

'I wonder if that is non-natural'

Ensure to introduce the words 'natural' and 'non-natural'. For younger learners, 'living' and 'non-living' can be used.

After learners have explored, ask them to form a circle. Explain that when you shout 'natural' they need to run to touch something natural. When you shout 'non-natural' they will need to run and touch somewhere or something non-natural/human-made.

Reflection

Did you find more natural things than non-natural? Is there anywhere where you think there should be more natural things?

Green Skills



Suitable for

Key Stage 1

Location

Outdoors

Season

Spring

Summer

Autum

Winter

What you'll need

Optional, if using a map:

Maps of your grounds

Green and red dot stickers

Clipboards

Key vocabulary

Habitat

Natural

Non-natural

Living thing

Non-living

Support and extension opportunities

For older learners, this activity can be facilitated using a map of your learning site and using red and green stickers – adding a green sticker to the map when they find something natural, and a red sticker when they find something non-natural – or marking with a pencil or pen.

Learners could then label their stickers with what they saw – a bee, flower, etc.

The scale can be reduced, and you can ask learners to look closely at a small space, such as on concrete or a wall.



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