



Signs of Spring

Book this module if:

You are coming in February, March or April and would like a focus on the seasons. This day is particularly good for younger groups and lends itself well to a number of subjects as we think about the arrival and movement of spring across Europe. This day can be counted towards your DPSM Certificate, as part of the Greenwave initiative. The use of maths is introduced in this day too with simple tasks and activities that can be linked to this curriculum in this area.

(These are recommendations only - modules are open to all groups)

Learning Outcomes: what we hope the children in your class will gain from the module:

1. An understanding of what Spring is and how looking for signs of its arrival can be recorded around the world.
2. A chance to explore areas of the park observing what signs of spring there are and to record these in ways according to their age and ability.
3. Knowledge about three particular species: Frog, Primrose and the Ash Tree and looking closely at areas where each occurs.
4. Encouragement to look around find other things that are beginning to appear in the natural world.
5. An opportunity to do experiments in taking the temperature and wind speed which are both factors in the Greenwave Project and record them.
6. Time and space to think creatively about Spring and make a poster in groups advertising what they think are the most interesting signs to look for.
7. For older groups (8rs yr upwards) a more in-depth explanation of why the arrival of spring is used to measure environmental factors such as climate change.

Methods of teaching and activities: what children will experience:

1. A guided walk exploring the park and investigating the signs of Spring.
2. Facts and information on the walk about what causes spring to happen and its movement in a northwards direction, species to look for and why scientists do this all around the world.
3. Hands on activities such as using thermometers to take the temperature and making an anemometer and measuring wind speed.
3. Mathematical tasks such as drawing graphs based on their finding (older groups)
4. Art and craft - using a range of materials to make posters about Spring with freedom for children to interpret this task as they wish.

Suggested preparation activities to do in school:

- Discuss spring and gauge what things the children know already. Let us know how we can build on this and stretch them a little in their knowledge.
- Cover things like the map of Europe and maps of Ireland before you come - this will help to get the group thinking about where and how spring happens.
- Cover temperatures - discuss what is normal in this part of the world and what our seasons are usually like
- Look back at winter - cover what happens to plants and animals before spring

Suggested follow up activities to do after your visit:

- The class could take their wind recorder back to school and record the wind speed and also temperature there too and get involved in the Greenwave Project.
- You could also ask the group to write some Spring Poems about Glenveagh and send them into us.
- The class could think about doing a project on one of the species looked at today and learn more about them in detail.
- The class could choose to explore all four seasons as the year progresses in more depth, bringing in issues of weather, climate and gather facts such as previous years temperatures and trends.

Useful references for further information:

www.greenwave.ie

www.phenology.biodiversityireland.ie

www.ispynature.com

www.noticenature.ie/educators2.html



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