

Welcome to The Great Plant Hunt



Learning outcomes

- Know that flowers produce seeds.
- Can predict how unknown seeds disperse according to their structure and shape.
- Can devise and carry out a fair investigation.
- Understand that not all seeds and seedlings survive – some would die from lack of light/water/space.
- Know seeds need warmth and water for germination.
- Know that a collection of seeds represents a population of individuals that vary just as much as we do.
- Recognise that germination and seed dispersal are part of a life cycle.
- Can identify and name some common UK plants.

Concepts

Plants have a number of mechanisms that allow them to spread their seed over a wide area. This gives seeds a better chance of finding enough space and other resources to grow well. Seed dispersal means that similar plants may be quite far from each other.

The life cycle of a plant is the process from seed through germination, growth, flower production, pollination, fruit production and back to seed. This set of activities covers the germination and dispersal aspects of the life cycle. You could weave in subject areas of reproduction, pollination and so on to complete the full plant life cycle.

In these activities the 'Investigators' will explore seed dispersal and germination and set up a fair test to explore the germination of collected seeds. The investigation will also show children that variation exists in plants, a concept integral to Darwin's work. They will also be able to collect, prepare and send seed to the Kew's Millennium Seed Bank.

Meet the Plant Hunters

- Read aloud Chapter 6 called 'Darwin the Investigator' from the *Following in Darwin's footsteps* storybook to introduce ideas around how Darwin worked and set the context for the childrens' work.
- Introduce Masego the Plant Hunter by reading out her postcard and download the video from Masego from The Great Plant Hunt website at www.greatplanthunt.org
- Watch Masego, a real life Plant Hunter, working in the field doing just the kind of observing and recording the children will be doing.
- These resources can be used for an assembly about the project, or to present in class to introduce the project.

