



# TREES AND GRASSLANDS



## Programme One

### TEACHER INSTRUCTION ACTIVITY 9

## Be a Grassland Detective

There are different types of grasslands, some are like garden lawns and mown many times throughout the year but others may be only mown once or twice allowing for a great number of different plants and animals to live in them. To find out what plants live in a grassland of your park you will need to spend some time examining a small area of the park very closely with a quadrat. A quadrat is a square wooden frame that you place on the ground to look at the plants living within the square. It is usually a half metre square. Use a Plant Identification Field Guide to help you.

#### You will need:

- Pencil and notebook
- A half metre square frame or quadrat
- Magnifying glass (if available)
- Camera (if available)
- Plant Identification Field Guide

#### What to do:

1. Depending on how many quadrats or frames you may have, divide the students into groups. Choose a nice grassy area of your park where lots of different types of plants such as wildflowers and grasses are growing.
2. One student must randomly throw the quadrat behind their shoulder so that the site they will study is randomly chosen.
3. Use the plant id field guide to identify the plants you find in the quadrat. They can record their findings in the Activity Worksheet 9. Make drawings or take pictures of the plants you cannot identify.
4. The students will be asked questions about the amount of different species of plants found so they can establish what is the most dominant species of plant in their grassland habitat.
5. When the students are back in class, make a check list of grassland plants. Organise a class discussion on the plants you have discovered, considering the time of year, and the type of area you studied. Background information on the different grasslands are described in your park's introduction.
6. Throw the quadrat three times, so you get to look at three different areas in the grassland.
7. This activity can be repeated in different types of grassland and a comparison can be made regarding grassland management by Dublin City Parks Staff and their mowing regimes. When a grassland is able to grow tall, the greater the amount of wildlife.



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Be a Grassland Detective

### Student Instructions:

Following your teacher's instruction, please record your findings in the table below for three throws of the quadrat.

Site 1	Site 2	Site 3

1. What season is it and how can you tell? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What type of plant have you seen the most in each site? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would you say it is abundant (lots of them) or scarce (very few of them).  
(circle the word the describes what you see)
4. Observing your surroundings in the grassland, do you see any wildlife such as flying insects e.g. butterflies, hoverflies or grasshoppers. Describe what you see.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Observing your surroundings in the grassland, has there been any other activity e.g. has the grass been mown. Describe what you see.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_