



# PLANTS AND VEGETATION



## Programme Cycle Three

### TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

#### Make a Tree Nursery

- Growing a tree from seed is a very satisfying experience for students and teachers alike. It leads to an appreciation and love for trees, those both newly planted and those that have been growing for hundreds of years.

- Throughout the school year, each child can mark the progress of their own labelled tree, thereby fostering caring qualities. At the end of the school year, each child is given their own tree to take home and care for. They can decide to plant it at home with the permission of their parents or bring it back to school the next year for planting in the school or arrange for it to be planted in their local park.



You will need:

- Acorns from the Oak
- Conkers from the Chestnut
- Nuts from the Hazel
- Nuts from the Beech

The above can be collected in October in the park in paper bags from well-formed trees that are not growing in isolation. The seeds and nuts should not be allowed to dry out.

and...

- Potting or garden compost
- Horticultural sand
- Cardboard milk cartons (1 litre capacity - 1 per child plus some spares)
- Clear polythene for covering pots





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### **TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS ACTIVITY 8**

#### **Establishing your Tree Nursery**

1. Well washed cardboard milk-cartons which have drainage holes pierced in the bottom are used for sowing. Place 3 centimetres of coarse sand or grit in the bottom for drainage.
2. Fill them to the top with potting or garden compost (preferably peat-free). One nut/seed is inserted in the compost of each container to its own depth. The cartons are labelled with species of tree and name of child.
3. They should be placed on a North facing windowsill or outside in a sheltered frost-free place. The compost is kept moist all winter and up to the following March. Clear poly thene or glass placed over the containers will ensure this.
4. From March to June, the cartons of Oak, Chestnut, Hazel and Beech are kept on a sunny windowsill and their growth rates can be studied. The compost should never be allowed to dry out.
5. During the Summer holidays the children can take their plant home, and treat them as if they were indoor plants or keep them outside in a shady spot.
6. In October they can be transplanted into bigger pots. Hazels should be left alone until the following Spring.
7. In the following Autumn, they are transplanted into the ground into a weed free bed, 20 centimetres apart, to encourage healthy roots.
8. In the following year they should be 60-100 centimetres high and are now ready for planting in their permanent positions. Student can get permission to plant them at home or an area can be found in the school grounds. Alternatively, schools can liaise with park officials to organise a park planting.

Curriculum Links:

SESE Living things, plants and animals, environmental awareness and care