



Programme Cycle Three

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS ACTIVITY 2

Plant Count

To find out what plants live in your park you will need to spend some time examining a small area of the park very closely with an instrument called a quadrat. A quadrat is a square wooden/steel frame that you place on the ground to look at the plants living within the square. It is usually a half metre squared. It is a tool used to measure the amount of plants or vegetation in an area.

Use a plant identification book or 'key' to help you. (keys are available from www.ipcc.ie)

You will need:

- Pencil and your nature diary
- Collecting bag and labels
- A half meter square frame or quadrat
- Hand lens or magnifying glass
- Camera (if available)
- Plant identification book or 'key'

What to do:

1. Divide the students into groups of 5 or 6 depending on class size. Give each group the chance to throw the quadrat 3 times and record their findings in each area where the quadrat lands. This is called random sampling.
2. Use what they learned in previous worksheet about plant identification with the aid of a book or 'key' to identify the plants you find in the quadrat or square frame.
3. Make drawings or take pictures of plants you cannot identify.
4. On the worksheet, the students can record their findings.
5. They will be asked about counting plants and how abundant certain plants are by the amount of times they occur in each throw. They will answer the following questions.
6. Back in class, make a check list of plants found in the park you visited. Organise a class discussion on the plants you have discovered, considering the time of year, and the type of area you studied. E.g. was it shaded by trees or out in the open? Was the ground soggy or dry? Where they planted there by somebody or did they grow naturally?

Curriculum Links:

SESE Skills and concept development: questioning, observing, estimating and measuring, analysing, recording and communicating.

Strand: Natural environments, the local natural environment. Living things, plants and animals, plant and animal life.



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ACTIVITY WORKSHEET 2

Student Name: _____

Plant Count

Student Instructions:

Using your materials such as a plant identification book and following your teacher's instructions, please record your findings in the table below for the 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 adundant (lots of them) or scare (very few of them).
(circle the word the describes what you see)
4. Observing your surroundings in the Park, do you see any wildlife such as flying insects i.e. butterflies, hoverflies or grasshoppers. Describe what you see.

5. Observing your surroundings in the Park, has their been any other activity for example has the grass been mown or plants eaten. Describe what you see.

Observe your surroundings, and answer the following questions.

Would you say the area around your plants are bright (lots of sunlight) or shady (very little sunlight)

What type of habitat is your plant in

Woodland River Grassland