Hot Art
Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2
1 hour 45 mins

See the diversity of plants from the rainforest and desert, and get arty! Practice your creative skills with fun drawing exercises led by one of the Botanic Garden team. Go on a hunt for colourful leaves in the Lily House and see some of nature’s strangest examples. Explore the Palm House looking for plants in each layer of the rainforest and make a multi-layered drawing to take away. Finish the session by exploring the Arid House, to look for diverse plant shapes in the desert.

Learning outcomes

During this session pupils will:
- Explore the diversity of the plant world, particularly focussing on our Glasshouse collection.
- Use a range of art materials and try a variety of drawing techniques.
- Find out why rainforest habitats are so important.
- Compare and contrast different plant habitats.

National Curriculum subject areas

Key Stage 1:
Art: Exploring and developing ideas, investigating and making art
Science Year 1: structure of plants
Science Year 2: plants and their habitats

Key Stage 2:
Art: Exploring and developing ideas, investigating and making art
Geography: climate zones
Science Year 4: plants in the environment
Science Year 6: plants adapted to their environments

Pre-visit activities

Classroom discussion
- What is a Botanic Garden? What kind of plants and trees grow here? Where did they come from originally? What else might you see on a visit to the Botanic Garden?
- Take a look at our website to find out more:
  http://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
Growing in a Glasshouse

• Why do some of our plants need to grow in Glasshouses? What kind of climates do you think we like to re-create at the Botanic Garden? How do you think we look after our Glasshouse plants?
• Does anyone in the class have experience of growing plants in a Glasshouse? Or growing any plants inside?
• Have a think about what kinds of plants we might grow in our Glasshouses.

Post visit activities

Wish you were here...

• Present an assembly to the rest of your school and tell them about the surprising things you saw in the Glasshouses. What did the different houses feel like when you walked inside? What did the plants look like in the different houses? What was your favourite plant? Remember to tell the whole school why we need to look after the different plants in the world.

Turn your school into a jungle!

• Take the drawings from your visit, cut them out and turn a corridor in you school into a jungle! Make sure you cover the walls with climbers, creepers, huge leaves and tropical fruits. You might like to learn a little bit more about your jungle, by deciding which country it is in, and what animals might like to live there.

What can I do?

• We can all help to save precious rainforests, even if they are thousands of miles away from us. Get your class to research the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) http://www.fsc-uk.org, draw its logo, and find a website that sells FSC pencils and paper so your school can purchase responsibly. Also look for the Fairtrade Foundation logo http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en and find out about the foods we buy that grow in a rainforest habitat along with the people who grow them, http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/ producers/default.aspx.

Resources

• Find out more about different biomes of the World at Missouri Botanical Garden: http://www.mbgnet.net/index.html
• Find out more about the world’s rainforests on the Rainforest Foundation’s website: http://www.rainforestfoundationuk.org
• The WWF’s website has lots of information about forests and conservation: http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/about_forests/

If you have any comments or feedback on these activities, or need any further information, please contact Ruth Jordan or Victoria Yates, Education Officers, education@obg.ox.ac.uk.