

OUR CHANGING WORLD: SENSING SEASONS

INTRODUCTION

In this module children will experience 'our changing world', as they observe the effects that changing seasons and weather have on them and on the world around them. They will use their senses as they consider what clothing they should wear in different weather conditions and during different seasons of the year. They will carry out seasonal 'scavenger hunts' to collect evidence of the changing seasons and use that evidence to answer science questions. They will share what they have discovered by creating a 'season window' wall display that they add to across the seasons of the year. Children will keep their own weather records and look for patterns in the data that they have collected. This module links to Module 1, Plant Detectives and to the two OCW modules, Plants and Animal Antics.

The emphasis within this module must be on first-hand experience; children exploring and using all of their senses to investigate what is familiar and happens every day around them, for example, changes to plants, trees and animals in the school grounds, changes to weather on different days and at different times of the year. Paper-based, secondary resources are provided as an option during certain lessons, but they are offered as something of a last resort – direct, hands-on interaction with the natural world is essential, particularly for very young children.

National Curriculum:

Observe changes across the four seasons, and observe and describe weather associated with the seasons and how day length varies

Working Scientifically:

Using observations and ideas to suggest answers to questions
Gathering and recording data to help in answering questions

Scientific Enquiry:

Observing changes over time

Key vocabulary:

seasons, autumn, winter, spring, summer, evidence, similar, different, group, compare, change, names of the months of the year, temperature, hot, warm, cold, cool, freezing, frosty, wet, dry, sunny, cloudy, showery, stormy, windy, breeze, gale, rainy, snow, shower, drizzle, puddle, breeze, gale, thunder, lightning, sleet, fog, mist, hat, gloves, mittens, scarf, muffler, ear muffs, boots, coat, umbrella, wellies, kite, windmill, sunglasses, thick, thin, woolly, furry, warm, waterproof

FACT FILE:

Children should be able to link the seasons of the year to the different months and describe the most likely weather and temperatures that are frequently experienced in the UK. Weather in this country can vary enormously in any one season (or within any day) and children need to be made aware that, for example, rain can happen in any season and in warm or cold weather, while snow is associated with very cold weather, but can happen (given the right conditions) across the seasons. Some children may realise that weather in other parts of the world is different from ours, for example, in our winter (November, December, January) it is hot and sunny in places in the southern hemisphere (such as Australia).

Some children may refer to 'changing the clocks' from winter time to summertime. This is also known as daylight saving time and is a convention adopted in most countries of the world in order to help us to get maximum use out of the daylight time available at different times of the year.

Weather forecasting is a prediction of what the weather will be like in the near future. Weather forecasting involves a combination of computer models, observations, and knowledge of trends and patterns. By using these methods, reasonably accurate forecasts can be made up to seven days in advance.

The weather we experience is related to short-term variations in atmospheric conditions, but the term climate is used to refer to the overall pattern of atmospheric conditions that have been identified over many years.