



Making the Case for Place

A toolkit for using place-based learning



áitbheo

connecting with your place - building active stewards



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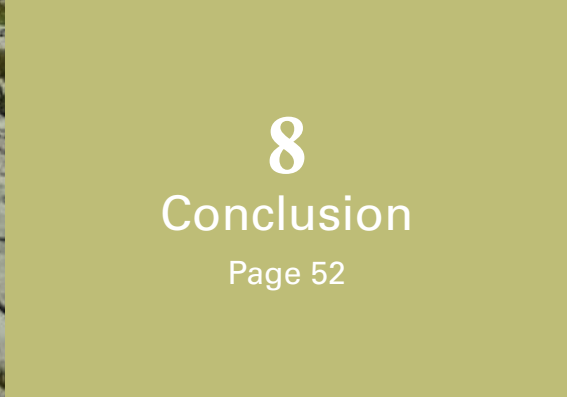
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1

Introduction

The Mission

“the wild world is becoming so remote to children that they miss out, and an interest in the natural world doesn’t grow as it should. Nobody is going to protect the natural world unless they understand it”

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH¹

This handbook provides the tools for anyone looking to build ‘pride of place’ in their area, whether through a school or the wider community. Why is this important? The more actively engaged people are with their surroundings, the more likely they are to feel responsibility for these places into the future. The aim of the activities outlined in this handbook is to encourage people to be active stewards of their landscapes whether they are five years old or one hundred and five years old – everyone has a role to play and we can all make a difference.

Many of the activities included in this toolkit have been adapted from ones that were shared with or experienced by us over the years, while others we developed ourselves. We are grateful to and acknowledge those that have shared their activities with us.

How this Handbook Works

This handbook is designed to provide simple activities, strategies and resources for effectively integrating local place into your work and inspiring your audience to connect with place. Following an initial overview of what place-based learning is, the handbook is then split into five main themes of exploration around place;

- Landscape and place
- Built heritage
- People and culture
- Biodiversity
- Activating stewardship

Each of the above areas is divided into core activities followed by additional suggested activities, reflective questions and resources. No prior knowledge is needed to complete the activities – they are inquiry based and participants learn together, sharing and building upon their knowledge of their place.





Activities

For ease of use, there are three core activities for each subject area. All core activities are suitable for all age groups unless otherwise indicated. Each activity is also categorised in terms of:

- Indoor or outdoor use, or both
- Materials needed
- Suitable age groups

Additional activities and resources are also provided at the end of each chapter for further exploration.

Primary school teachers that are using this book should look at Appendix 1 to view all the relevant curriculum strands associated with an activity.

Documenting the Journey

Reflection and recording of activities carried out during local place exploration is an important element of the process. This can also be considered an assessment method if necessary.

Certain activities will generate outputs as a product of the activity which can be compiled to document the process. These outputs can be a memento of the work completed, and also provide a record of the investigations of place at that particular time. Depending on your requirements, it may also be suitable to have participants complete a reflective journal, video, posters or other art project to document their work and exploration.

2

Place-based Learning

“A place is a piece of the whole environment which has been claimed by feelings”

ALAN GUSSOW²

(Teacher, author & conservationist, USA)



What is it?

Place based learning is learning about place, through place, for place.

The approach proposed by this handbook is a place-based learning approach. Place-based learning promotes holistic approaches to place and learning, incorporating all elements of place - it explores the built, natural and cultural heritage of a place. It also allows potential for incorporating the social and economic elements of place. Looking at place in this holistic way means that individuals can consider their relationship with a place – to see it as more than just rocks, plants and water but rather that it is part of our story – where we grow up, go to school, work, socialise and spend our leisure time. It reinforces the concept that not only do we impact upon the place around us but that the place also impacts upon us. Ultimately we can and should strive to have positive impacts upon our places, and work towards a sustainable future of a place as a whole community.

There are numerous approaches to learning around place with many similarities. However, the strength of place-based learning is that it incorporates all these disparate approaches, taking it from being another egg in the basket to being the basket³.

Activating Stewardship

“One’s social identity and ecological identity are born out of one’s environment... and without a strong sense of belonging and place we lose the ability to connect and contribute to the larger world”

WURDINGER AND CARLSON, 2010⁴

We each interact and engage with place on many different levels however taking an active participatory role encourages a stronger level of connection, ultimately leading to an understanding of how to care for one’s place and a greater sense of responsibility. The place-based learning approach builds knowledge, pride and engagement with local places and leads to communities being empowered to take an active role in the future of their places. Ultimately, place-based learning aims to encourage community-led conservation of a place, resulting in improved community vitality and environmental quality through the active engagement of local citizens, community organizations, and the youth of the area.



Place-based Learning in Educational Settings

“Schools, in Ireland and in the United States, have progressively become isolated from their surrounding landscapes and communities. Children learn that the nearby is mundane and insignificant; what’s faraway is glamorous and important”

DAVID SOBEL⁵

Antioch University, USA

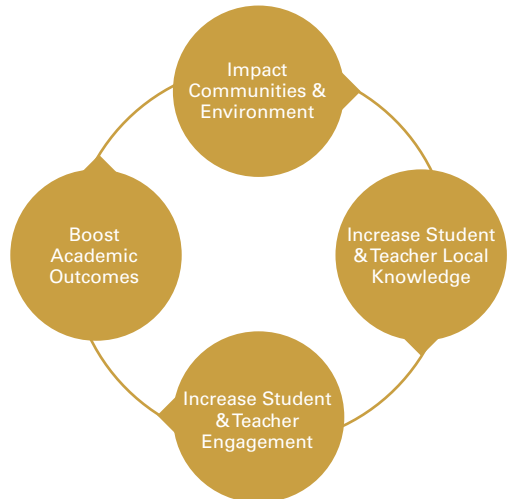
Place-based learning in formal educational settings is referred to as place-based education. Place-based education means using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach key concepts in geography, history, science, english, maths and various other subjects across the curriculum. It can take many forms ranging from informal to formal learning, from out-of-school individual/family experiences to teacher-led or school-sponsored activities and from one lesson/project/unit/course to a school fully-designed around a place-based education mission. It is a learning strategy that educators can implement in urban and rural settings. The opportunities for this type of learning are truly endless.

Research shows that this approach to education:

- Increases academic achievement
- Helps students develop stronger ties to their community
- Enhances students’ appreciation for the natural world
- Creates a heightened sense of commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens.

While the main body of research conducted to date relates to place-based education in schools it is equally transferable to adult learning settings.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF PLACE-BASED EDUCATION?



Primary School

The Irish primary school curriculum is broadly place-based, mandating for local studies on many occasions, particularly in terms of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE). The SESE strands promote humanistic approaches to the environment and clearly allow for, and make specific reference to local learning inside and outside of the classroom. This means that adopting a place-based pedagogy does not add

to the current work load of teachers, rather it is a method of delivering the existing curriculum which has more relevance and meaning for students. Appendix 1 outlines the strands and strand units which can be addressed by the activities included in this resource book.

Additionally, place-based pedagogy provides potential for interdisciplinary cross-curricular work.

Secondary School

A place-based approach is particularly suitable for Junior Cycle and Transition Year groups in the secondary settings. The activities included in this resource will increase the student's sense of place and knowledge around their place. This is achieved by leading students on an investigation of their own area, focusing on a 3km radius of their homes, enabling them to gain skills and knowledge which can be applied throughout their education, particularly in relation to critical thinking skills. The interactive activities take students on a journey of understanding of their local landscape, biodiversity, built heritage, stories, cultures and land use practises. This can form the basis of a Junior Certificate short course, be incorporated into your Junior Certificate Geography, History or CSPE classes or form a Transition Year course.

The activities included in this resource address a range of themes included in the Junior Cycle;

- **Managing Myself:** Through place-based education students consider their place and their feelings around it. They are facilitated in questioning what they would like for their place for the future. The ultimate goal of place-based education is to empower students to take action to create the place they want for their future.
- **Staying Well:** Place-based education involves real-life discovery of local built, natural and cultural heritage. Students become familiarised with the outdoor heritage that surrounds them. Students also consider the impact of places and heritage upon their wellbeing and identity.

- **Communicating:** Students debate, discuss, read and write about their local place - a topic which all can relate to. Students consider how their place impacts upon them and their community. Place-based education requires students to share their thoughts and feelings with their class, school and wider community.
- **Being Creative:** The uncertain future of our places and planet requires positive creative and imaginative plans and thinking. Place-based education is focused on fostering critical thinking skills leading to action – enabling students to take their ideas to a logical conclusion. Through place-based education students have the opportunity to implement ideas and take action for their local place in a positive way demonstrating that we can all make a difference.
- **Working with Others:** The future of our places and planet depends upon people working together. Place-based learning encourages empathy and persuades us to consider situations from alternative viewpoints. How would the landowner, conservationist, artist, tourist or farmer view a particular situation? Students must question whether or not there is a right and a wrong viewpoint?
- **Managing Information and Thinking:** Based on an active learning model where students use the myriad community and online resources available to research a 3km circle around their homes, the process of place-based education requires students to create their own place plans and ideas, evaluating the situation in their place, considering what impact and effects our behaviours have and may have on place and analysing why the situation is as it is today essentially engaging students in higher order thinking.

Place-based Learning in the Community

“The concept of stewardship implies individual action and requires people to move beyond adversarial responses and accept personal responsibility for the fate of their community and physical environment”

HLUBIK AND BETROS, 1994⁶

Place-based learning is not just about education in the formal sense. It can be undertaken by community groups, organisations or individuals. It can encompass a range of activities that can be held regularly or once off.

Aside from the activities listed in this booklet, groups in the community can also come together to do the following suggestions as a way to get to know one’s place better:

- **Heritage Walks:** A different walk leader could be organised once a month (for instance) to share their knowledge on a local subject, i.e. archaeology, geology, local myths and legends etc. Or is there is a local farmer who would be keen to share the story of their land from the farming practices to the hedgerows or the historical placenames? There are 'experts' in every community. These help to develop pride of place in landowners and locals alike.
- **Community Talks:** During winter months for example, organise a series of lectures on local heritage or stories of local people in the village hall or a similar setting. Create a social event by putting the kettle on and inviting people to come and mingle before or after the talk.
- **Active Conservation:** Every community can identify conservation problems in their local areas. Join up with the National Spring Clean movement and as a community organise a local litter pick or beach clean. Find

other local projects that people would be interested in researching e.g. mapping local placenames.

- **Events:** Celebrate a local tradition that is unique to your place/region by creating an event ranging from a few hours to a weekend to bring the community together.

Each place has a unique story and by sharing this knowledge it encourages others to get involved in the story of the place. No one is an expert on everything in one place but you will find that in every community resides a group of experts on a whole range of different subjects, whether or not they are academics, landowners, business owners or general members of the community. Place-based learning is all about sharing local knowledge and celebrating and caring for place.

The activities outlined in this book could kickstart a growing awareness around a place. It provides an ideal starting point for any community group trying to find ways to build 'pride of place' in their community and empower community stewards to care for their place into the future.



3

Discovering Landscape & Place

Landscape defines the self-image of a region – its sense of place that makes it different from other places.

Introduction

For our purposes, landscape refers to the visual features of an area. The following activities can be carried out in any setting and will provide an understanding of the local landscape, how it developed and how it impacts upon the community. These activities will begin the process of encouraging people to consider all the elements of their own place, whilst also allowing for its chronological development.



Core Activities

3.1

DISCOVERING LANDSCAPE & PLACE: CORE ACTIVITY 1

Place Interview

A good introductory icebreaker, this activity allows people to think more deeply about their place in a general sense – how they feel about it and what it means to them. It also allows people to realise that there can be different perspectives within a group and that places can have different meanings for different people.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Explain to the group that you're going to try figure out what people think about their place.

- Imagine you're a famous TV interviewer, what questions could you ask to find out what people like or don't like about their place? Get suggestions from the group.

- Put the group into pairs and give everyone five minutes to interview their partner using the agreed question list.

- Swap the interviewer and interviewee around.

- Answers are just quick bullet points which can then be reported back to the group. Depending on group size reporting back can be individual or a selected few.

REQUIREMENTS

- Either indoors or outdoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper

Suggested questions:

- *Where do you live?*
- *Have you always lived there?*
- *What do you like about your place? Why?*
- *What do you not like about your place? Why?*
- *Tell me something interesting/funny/special about your place that others might not know.*
- *What would you like to see change about your place? Why?*
- *What do you think you could do to help your place?*

Depending on time and the range of answers, whether or not there are similarities or differences can be discussed and considered.

3.2

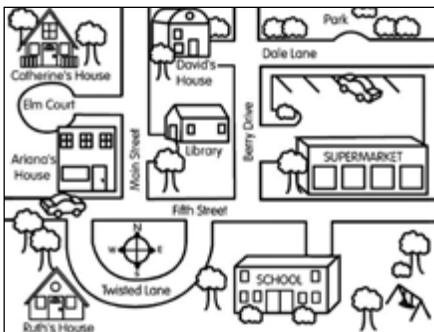
DISCOVERING LANDSCAPE & PLACE: CORE ACTIVITY 2

What's in My Place?

The purpose of this activity is to encourage people to consider their place and their landscape in more detail. The activity invariably involves individuals uncovering numerous features of their local landscape which they were totally unaware of.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Photocopy your local area from the Ordnance Survey map.
- Put a dot on the map to show where you live, work or are at school.
- Use this as the centre point.
- Now draw a circle with a 3km radius around where you live. The outline of a CD is a perfect size as it automatically takes in approximately the 3km around this point (equating to a 12cm diameter on the map). You could also use a compass or make a cardboard circle with a 12cm diameter with a hole in the middle if you don't have a CD.
- Using this map, identify as many different things within that 3km radius as you can – these can be buildings,



REQUIREMENTS

- Indoor activity
- All age groups
- Table (or clipboard to work on)
- Materials needed:
 - Local Ordnance Survey map
 - an old CD
 - green and red pen
 - paper
 - glue/scissors

castles, landforms, habitats, water bodies etc. Circle in green what you knew about before looking at the map and in red what you did not know about before.

- Have the map legend available to cross reference.
- Now make your own personal map list to show things that you already knew and didn't know were there, e.g. red for didn't know was there, green for did know.

FURTHER WORK

- Why not build the story further? This kind of map work can be further developed by creating a group 'Our Place' map which incorporates each individual's place and can be put on display.
- Add to the display as more topics and activities from this handbook are carried out.

3.3

DISCOVERING LANDSCAPE & PLACE: CORE ACTIVITY 3

What's My Rock?

One of the key factors in determining how a place looks, what grows there, what buildings are present and where they are built is the geology. Local geology is not just the rocks beneath our feet; it impacts upon everything that's above it too. There are lots of resources available for non-geologists to find out a little bit about their local geology. While geology and rock may not be something we give a huge amount of thought to, it's an excellent starting point for any local studies and needn't be as daunting as it may seem.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Go onto the following website **www.geoschol.com** (even though the focus of this website is for schools it is clearly laid out for anyone to use). To start you can access the geology map of Ireland which will show the main rock types in Ireland and their geological age. There is also an option to access a county based breakdown of the main rock types that are in your area and its overall geological history.
- Once you have discovered what your local geology is you can then start to look a little more carefully at it and start questioning how it got to be like that. This can tie into activities on rock formation.
- Can you get some samples of different rock types so that individuals can do some basic comparisons – shape, colour, if there are fossils in the rock etc?

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Laptop and Wifi access
 - Pen and paper



FURTHER WORK

Why not build the story further? This map work can be developed by creating a visual landscape representation. What are the elements that make up our landscape? See below as a guide for this:

- Landforms – mountains and hills?
- Water bodies – rivers, lakes, sea?
- Land cover – vegetation?
- Human elements – land use, buildings, roads etc?

How many of these are dependent upon the type of rock that is underneath? ALL! The additional element of our landscape is the climate.

Other Activities

3.4

DISCOVERING LANDSCAPE & PLACE

A Timeline of My Place

This activity highlights the main events in the formation of a landscape and the timeline of these activities. It can also be used to demonstrate the relatively short time humans have existed on this planet and also how recent the last major event (the ice age) was in landscape formation.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Print out the **EVENTS SHEET** (one copy) and the **DATES** (needs a set of dates per group) that are overleaf.

- Stick the events on the wall around the room in random order.

- Split the group into pairs or threes and give each pair or three a set of the 8 dates.

- Firstly ask them to put the dates into chronological order (make sure you quickly recap millions and billions if you are working with younger people).

- Explain that around the room are 8 important events from the history of the earth that all occurred around one of the dates they have been given.

- Ask them to find all of the events and try to decide what order they happened in. They should then match the event to the date by

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Print out of the timeline and the dates
 - Blotack
 - Scrap paper
 - Pencils and colouring pencils/pens

sticking the oldest date (using blotack) beside the oldest event and so on.

- For younger people the events can be stuck around the room with the date of when they occurred already on them. The participants then find and make a note of each event and put them into chronological order when all have been found. Don't forget to note that the oldest event always goes at the bottom!

- Following completion, check how accurate the guesses were and discuss each event and why/how they happened in that order. This can also provide fruitful discussion on the relatively short length of time humans have been on the earth.

THE CORRECT ANSWERS ARE:

8. End of the last ice age = 14,000 years ago
7. First humans = 2.3 million years ago
6. Extinction of the dinosaurs = 65 million years ago
5. Rocks of your place form = _____ years ago*
4. First life on land = 450 million years ago
3. First oxygen in the atmosphere = 2.4 billion years ago
2. First life on earth (in the oceans) = 3.2 billion years ago
1. Earth's crust forms = 4.7 billion years ago

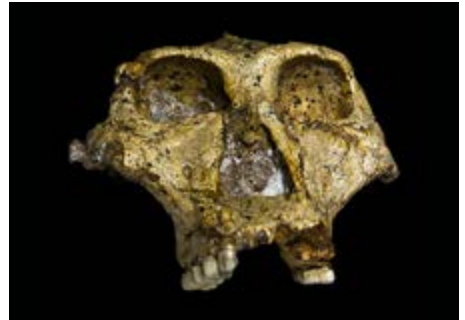
* For very general rocks of your place use the following by county
(for more detail look up <http://geoschol.com/ireland.html>)

Antrim, Derry	Basalt, 60 million years old (volcanic rock)
Armagh, Monaghan	Mudstone and greywacke (deep sea sediments) about 450 million years old
Carlow	Leinster granite, (molten rock cooled slowly underground), 415 million years old
Cavan	Mudstone (deep sea sediments), about 420 million years old
Clare	Limestone, about 345 million years old and sandstone/ mudstone (sedimentary rocks), 320 million years old
Cork, Kerry, Waterford	Sandstones and conglomerates (sedimentary rocks), about 420 million years old
Donegal	Gneiss, schist and quartzite (metamorphic rocks), about 1780 million years old
Down	Slate (metamorphic rock), about 450 million years old
Dublin, Fermanagh, Galway, Kildare, Longford, Mayo, Meath, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo, Westmeath	Limestone (sedimentary rock), about 350 million years old
Kilkenny, Laois, Leitrim, Limerick	Limestone (sedimentary rock), about 350 million years old, and coal and shales, about 310 million years old
Louth	Mudstone and sandstone (sedimentary rocks), about 440 million years old
Tipperary	Limestone (sedimentary rock), about 350 million years old, and shales, about 310 million years old
Wicklow	Quartzite and granite (metamorphic and igneous), 550 – 405 million years ago
Tyrone	Very complex geology ranging from 600 – 30 million years
Wexford	Complex mix of metamorphic and sedimentary rocks ranging from 620 – 200 million years ago

END OF THE LAST ICE AGE



FIRST HUMANS



EXTINCTION OF THE DINOSAURS



ROCKS OF YOUR PLACE FORM

Deep sea (for some rocks)
Volcano and lava (basalt)
Volcano not erupting (granite)
Coral reef (for the limestone)



FIRST LIFE ON LAND



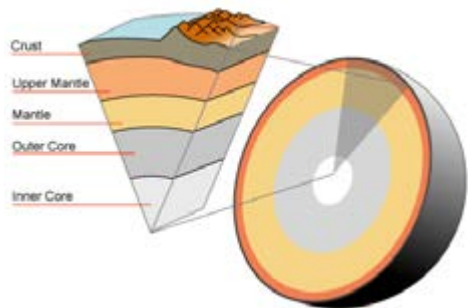
FIRST OXYGEN IN THE ATMOSPHERE



FIRST LIFE ON EARTH



EARTH'S CRUST FORMS



14,000 years ago

2.3 million years ago

65 million years ago

345 million years ago

450 million years ago

2.4 billion years ago

3.2 billion years ago

4.7 billion years ago

3.5 DISCOVERING LANDSCAPE & PLACE Let's Get Ready to Rock

People may have some interesting rocks or even fossils at home which they have collected in the past. Bringing these in to show and share the related story can help to highlight the many different rock types which exist. You could also challenge everyone to find something in their home which is made of rock and see the diversity of items which they find. Local buildings may be built out of local stone – a great research project!

Don't be too concerned about identifying the rock types, fossils etc. The real strength is recognising the diversity which can exist. However, if you want to explore the rocks you can group them in colours or maybe look at them under a microscope or look for any fossils, crystals or other interesting features. Invite a parent/local in who has some general geological knowledge?



Questions for Consideration and Reflection

Below are some questions for contemplation or consideration:

- How do you feel about your place?
- What visual landscape elements can your group identify in your place?
- Can you find out your local rock types and how they were formed?
- What landscape features are connected to this rock type?
- Does the rock type have any impact on the lives of the plants/animals/people in the area?
- How have plants/animals/people adapted to this?
- Are there any particularly unique landscape elements in your area?

Additional Resources

- www.osi.ie gives many more map related details including habitats, townland details etc.
- www.gsi.ie gives detailed geological reports on a county by county basis and other geology related activities.

4

Exploring Built Heritage

Introduction

This chapter looks at how a group can get a better picture of the story of the past in their place. One of the key ways of doing this is to look at the work of archaeologists. Archaeology involves studying how people lived in the past by looking at the things they left behind. This includes a mixture of monuments and artefacts. To the right is a reminder of the time periods we're visiting when we are talking about built heritage...

Each time period has characteristic monuments associated with them for different functions, be it for shelter, burials and worship or maybe even agriculture and industry. This is true even as far back as the Mesolithic period when, while they didn't have permanent structures, they did have sites where they gathered to eat and left behind the waste from their meals and activities i.e. shell middens (rubbish heaps) that would contain artefacts.

Monuments and artefacts are great for giving us some pieces of the jigsaw puzzle of the past 12,500 years in Ireland. There are plenty of new tools to help us all uncover some of this local evidence for our places. Want to find some examples of local monuments? What about some examples of artefacts?



EARLY MODERN 170 YEARS AGO



PLANTATIONS 400 YEARS AGO



MEDIEVAL 1,000 YEARS AGO



EARLY CHRISTIAN 1,600 YEARS AGO



IRON AGE 2,500 YEARS AGO



BRONZE AGE 4,000 YEARS AGO



NEOLITHIC 6,000 YEARS AGO



MESOLITHIC 12,500 YEARS AGO

Core Activities

4.1

EXPLORING BUILT HERITAGE: CORE ACTIVITY 1

Figuring Out the Story of the Past

While monuments are often the most obvious elements when exploring the past, it can be the small artefacts that give the interesting background in any story, and what constitutes an artefact is not always that obvious either.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Put the group into pairs or threes. Ask them to picture an archaeologist in the year 3,000. They're excavating this area and finding various artefacts from our lives today. Ask the pairs to decide on 5-10 artefacts from their life that would give the archaeologists a good idea of what our lives are like at present.
- Get each group to call out their items – make a list. Can they be grouped by function (e.g. clothing and jewellery, recreation, food, hygiene, occupation)? Try and decide as a group on the best 10/15 items to represent our lives today. Will they still function as intended? Is anything missing?
- There are generally questions in terms of decomposition etc. Discuss as a group whether or not things are likely to have decomposed. You can take the 'decomposed' items off the list if required.

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper
 - Whiteboard/sheet (to record the final list) and whiteboard/flipchart markers
- While the artefacts of our lives may be very different to Neolithic or Bronze age artefacts, there are often shared functions. Can you compare the equivalent artefacts from the past and our lives? Common artefacts might include jewellery, kitchenware, shells, bones, arrow and axe heads, beads, clothing and personal items.
- Artefacts are essentially pieces of evidence that we put together to try and figure out what it was used for. What would the artefacts of our lives say about life today?
- Why not develop an artefact table using old items people have at home? You could maybe try to timeline the items.

4.2

EXPLORING BUILT HERITAGE: CORE ACTIVITY 2

Cookie Excavation

Next we move onto how archaeologists find these artefacts - by excavating sites of interest and uncovering and preserving them. This activity explains the excavation process by allowing people to try a small scale, homemade version!

INSTRUCTIONS

- Explain that excavations have to be careful, methodical and everything is recorded throughout the process. Each student is an archaeologist responsible for a very important 'dig'.

- The object is to 'excavate' the 'artefacts' from the site without damaging the either. Essentially, the chocolate chips are the artefacts and the cookie is the site.

- Place cookie on the grid and draw around it to mark the site. Take the cookie off the grid and put it on the paper plate (to contain crumbs!)

- Students carefully pick away from round the chips to remove them intact. Once a chip has been removed it is marked on the grid – indicating where it has been removed from.

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups – particularly suited to school settings.
- Materials needed:
 - Chocolate chip cookies (enough for one each)
 - Tooth picks
 - Paper plates
 - Clean paint brushes (not essential)
 - Printed 8x8cm square grid.

- Discuss why each artefact is recorded (allows archaeologists to put together the story of what happened, ie. if there are concentrations of certain artefacts they can figure out what the area was used for).

- Students get an idea of how slow and methodical the excavation process can be. For further development, this exercise is great for building in graphics, measurements and recording procedures. Depth of burial in the site (cookie) can be recorded with different colours, etc.

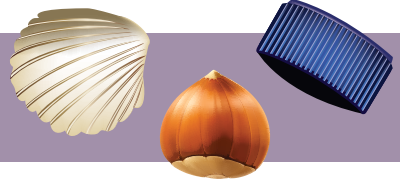
COOKIE GRID

	A	B	C	D
1				
2				
3				
4				

4.3

EXPLORING BUILT HERITAGE: CORE ACTIVITY 3

Sandbox Archaeology



If you can't get out and experience a real life dig in action, you can recreate a dig setup indoors!

INSTRUCTIONS

- Prepare some trays for the dig – half fill with sand and place some items into the sand which could be considered historic (eg. sea shell; animal bone; pointed stone; hazel nut). Cover the sand and items with a sheet of newspaper. Add more sand and then put more modern items in the sand and cover with remaining sand (eg. birthday candles; lollipop sticks; top of plastic water bottle; snack packet; small toy).
- Assign groups depending on the number of trays you have. Get them to allocate team roles – director, mapper, recorder, excavators etc. They must decide on a grid for the tray e.g. numbers 1-4 on one side and letters A-C on the other.
- You could have the director fill out a license application (Name, Team Names, Dig Site, Date etc.), assign roles to the group, ensure the dig site remains tidy and rotate the excavators.
- Excavators use the spoons and brushes to carefully remove small amounts of sand at a time. When they come across an artefact they use brushes to remove excess sand. The artefact is then removed and recorded on an artefact recording sheet (see page X – make

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Large trays or boxes with sand in them (to approximately 10cm depth)
 - Brushes (toothbrushes, paintbrushes)
 - Spoons
 - Bucket for removed material
 - Artefacts (actual items or laminated pictures – can cut them up to make it harder)
 - License application & artefact recording sheet

sure they include the grid reference for where the artefact was discovered. Once the modern layer has been fully excavated and recorded have a discussion on what has been found and what it means. What event are these artefacts evidence of? What have we learned about the people that produced these artefacts?

- Teams can then proceed to the lower layer and repeat the process.
- Alternatively, find images of artefacts from different time periods, cut them up and put them in the sandbox. Students will then find pieces of artefacts and have to put them together to discover what they are.

ARCHAEOLOGY LICENSE APPLICATION FORM

Lead Archaeologist or Team			
Reason for excavation	Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Rescue <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/>	Research <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Testing <input type="checkbox"/>		
Location of excavation	Rural <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Underwater <input type="checkbox"/>		
Address of excavation			
Has permission been granted by landowner for the excavation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you inspected the site?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Duration of license sought	From date _____	To date _____	
Have you secured funding for this excavation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you understand that any archaeological objects recovered in the course of the proposed excavation will be State property?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Signed _____ Date _____			

ARTEFACT RECORDING SHEET

Artefact Number	Grid Reference	Artefact size	What is it?

Other Activities

4.4

EXPLORING BUILT HERITAGE

Picture and Map Treasure Hunt

This activity is useful for to studying the stories of a local monument in greater depth. It does require some preparation but can be reused multiple times.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Visit a local monument with easy public access and take a selection of up close photographs of identifiable features. It is a good idea to choose features that have a story or an interesting fact associated (books on local archaeological sites can be useful when researching monuments).

- Create a sheet with about 10 of these photos and number each photo.

- Create a simple map of the site, marking any significant features. Have a master copy marking where all the photographs were taken from.

- Bring the group to the monument, orientate with the map and in teams have each group find each photo and mark its location on the map using the number from the photo. If participants are younger it is suggested that you leave out the map part of the exercise.

- You can do this as a race if you wish.

- Once finished, have the group take you to each number to check if they have found them accurately.

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors & outdoors (mainly outdoor)
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Camera
 - Laptop
 - Printer
 - Laminator (if you wish to make the resource reusable)

- For each photo share an interesting story/information about the monument to teach the group about some of the history of the monument.

- It could also be a good project to have older groups put together the activity – taking photos, drawing the map and finding out the stories – and then having younger groups try to find them with the older groups passing on the information they have learned. They could also do this with parents/family groups –spreading the learning in the community.

- Another twist on this activity is to give participants a number of clues related to the monument. They then have to locate and take pictures of what they think the answers to the clues are.

4.5

EXPLORING BUILT HERITAGE

Interview a Monument

This is an excellent contemplative activity for groups to carry out at a local monument or building. The interview questions could also be the basis for the information on a local monument map which you could create as an add-on activity.

REQUIREMENTS

- Outdoors
- All age groups – particularly suited to school settings.
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper

INSTRUCTIONS

- Have participants think of questions they'd like to ask the building/monument. Have them think of the monument as a person – what questions would you ask a person? What's your name? What age are you? Why are you here? What do you like about where you are? What don't you like? Do you ever get lonely? Do you have any 'friends' in the area? What is the most interesting/exciting/scary thing that ever happened to you?
-
- Have participants write out the interview and include pictures where possible. Doing this activity in the field while the participants are at the monument would produce the richest output, however if this isn't possible it could be done indoors using pictures and other information about the monument.
-

Questions for Consideration and Reflection

- Is there an old monument or building in your area?
- What methods could you use to find out more about it?
- What was it like for people living in this or using this site when it was most active?
- How can you interest your group in this building?
- How can you present the story of the building in an interesting way?

Additional Resources

- **www.itsabouttime.ie** is an extensive online resource for investigation on archaeology and built heritage with details lesson plans and activities for teachers.
- **www.heritagemaps.ie** lists all archaeological finds on recent road digs etc. as well as local monuments, with information from the National Monument Service it will pinpoint all of your local monuments and may have some information on them as well.

5

Linking in People and Culture

Introduction

Linking in the stories of people and local culture is the next step on your place-based learning journey; you've established the stories of the buildings and monuments in the area but what of the people that lived in them? Amongst the topics that are investigated are local folklore and legends, the movement of people into and out of areas, and what does local culture mean?

Putting it simply, culture is 'way of life', meaning the way groups live their lives and what's important to them. Different groups of people/areas/countries may have different cultures, which have been passed on through generations. Considering local culture and how it has changed can be an interesting lens through which to consider local places.

While there have been people in Ireland for the past 12,500 years, it's really only since the arrival of Christianity and written records that we get a more in-depth picture of how people lived. Although – similar to the importance of questioning when you look at built heritage - there should also be questioning of who has written whatever you're reading and perhaps, why they've written it!

Ireland has a strong culture which can be traced back through many

generations. Poetry, stories, music or art relating to a place can inspire children and adults alike and also make them see that someone thought their place was special – even if they don't appreciate it now themselves, they one day might. There are many great videos and recordings online which may feature musicians, singers or dancers local to your area – again there may be opportunities to organise a performance in a school or the community. There are also often songs and tunes which are inspired by places – perhaps you could learn some of your local ones?

While our focus is mainly on the visible or more tangible elements of culture, it might also be interesting to consider some of the other elements – consider/compare/contrast these cultural elements in your place with somewhere else

Following is a range of activities which you can do in your setting, all related to getting people to think about all the elements of their own place; how to remember the stories of our past, what's the role of folklore and legend? Where does culture fit in? Are things changing?



Core Activities

5.1

LINKING IN PEOPLE AND CULTURE: CORE ACTIVITY 1

Pictures of the Past

Old photos can be a really rich source of information and connection with the past – providing a very tangible method of comparing our lives today with those of the past.

INSTRUCTIONS

- An online search can often turn up some old images of your place, or get your audience to ask at home to see if they have any old photos from people from the area or places in the locality.
-
- **www.irishphotoarchive.ie** has multiple collections and images available to search and view online.
-
- **www.nli.ie** houses the National Library of Ireland photo archive – selections of which are available to view digitally.
-
- **www.duchas.ie** also has a bank of local images and you can search by place.
-
- Another source is the local library – they may have an archive of photos from the area worth looking at.
-

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors & outdoors
 - All age groups
 - Materials needed:
 - Laptop
 - Printer
-
- Once you have some photos of people or the area, get the group to compare them to the present.
-
- Ideally, you would visit the place and work out where the photo is taken, discuss what has changed and what is still the same?
-
- Are there any locals in the vicinity that you can interview about the photos? People are often happy to share their memories and stories – all it takes is asking!
-
- How much has your place changed in the last 100 years? Are we surprised that there has been so much/so little change?
-

5.2

LINKING IN PEOPLE AND CULTURE: CORE ACTIVITY 2

Place-name Exploration

Place-names can help tell stories of the past- how our places were used, who owned them or what happened there. Place-names can also start discussion of our changing relationships with places.

INSTRUCTIONS

- You can begin with any local field or place-names which are known and add them to the maps you have previously created of the area. Or use this as a starting point to create a map of your area.
- Many townland names are included on Ordnance Survey maps.
- You could try to write them in their original Irish language format and attempt to write down their meanings in English. These can often be connected to the owners, uses or topography of the land.

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Laptop
- **www.logainm.ie** is a good resource as a starting point. You can search for names that you know to find out their meaning or also do a general area search to find out street/place names for your locality. There are also additional educational resources on this site.



5.3

LINKING IN PEOPLE AND CULTURE: CORE ACTIVITY 3

Families of the Past (and Present)

Using online resources you can trace the lives of people that lived in the region in the past. Individuals can try to trace their own family in the area or a well-known local family could be traced.

INSTRUCTIONS

- The records from the 1901 and 1911 Irish census are available online. These are an amazing resource providing great insight into the families of the past.

- Searches can be conducted on place, surname, county, etc. so you can decide what thread you want to follow.

- The records will give information on the age, sex, religion and relation to the head of the household and also pictures of the actual census record can be seen.

- You could select one well-known local family and trace as a group using the census records from 1901 and 1911, which are both available to view on **www.census.nationalarchives.ie**. This family could be one that is still represented in your group. Alternatively look at a number of different families. Comparisons between today in terms of age, religion, profession etc. can start interesting discussion.

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Laptop
 - Printer
 - Laminator if you want to make the resource reusable

- If developing a big locality map, you could add details to your map of where people lived at certain times in the past.

- The **www.irishgeneology.ie** website might also fill in some of the details for the people who lived in your area in the past. This website provides search options for civil, church, census, property, migration, graveyard, military



Other Activities

5.4

LINKING IN PEOPLE AND CULTUR

Making Music Without Instruments

INSTRUCTIONS

- Ireland has a long tradition of music and dancing. Instruments weren't always available so people used whatever they had available to them to produce music for dancing.
- Lilting (diddling or portaireacht bhéil) is a way of making music using just your voice.
- Show students an example of lilting using a youtube video. One example can be found by searching for 'Lilting: Queen of the Rushes'.

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Sample video
- In groups, students should think of a song, tune or nursery rhyme they know. Each group should practice lilting that tune without telling other groups what their tune is.
- Groups then take turns lilting while the other groups try and identify the tune.





5.5 LINKING IN PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Inspired by My Place

Irish culture has long been inspired by place.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Using local examples as a starting point, have the group write poems (even a limerick, a haiku, or an acrostic), stories (or even songs and tunes) using their places as an inspiration.
-
- Get them to focus on the small details that are relevant to them – it doesn't have to be the most obvious feature of your place; it's about what's important to them.
-

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
 - All age groups
 - Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper
-
- This could also be developed into a performance activity. Look for examples of performance poetry on youtube and show this to the group. They can then perform their local poems for each other.
-

*Durigeoir na mbíod na beirí b'fice anois 7 airise
7 mara a racán sí fein ag iarraid na a b'fice ní
bíod seirag aca. Ní ní iongáid Rinnedara
iongáir de sin.*

B'fice níod sin aic, 7 tá amáin cuaid

5.6

LINKING IN PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Fables, Folklore and Legends

Many areas have local legends or folklore associated with the place or perhaps some of its people – this can provide another great connection between people of the past and your group. The stories tell them of the changed lifestyles, and also often have a moral of some sort associated.

INSTRUCTIONS

- In 1937 the Irish Folklore Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, initiated a revolutionary scheme in which schoolchildren were encouraged to collect and document folklore and local history. Over a period of eighteen months some 100,000 children in 5,000 primary schools in the twenty-six counties of the Republic of Ireland were

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper

encouraged to collect folklore material in their home districts. The written records, many of which have also been transcribed, are now available online on www.duchas.ie. These records provide amazing insight into the stories, beliefs and people of that time.

- Search for your local area on the Folklore Collection. If the writing is very hard to read these may need to be transcribed (do this in advance).



- Give groups a story to do 'Telephone' and see how much a story can get changed as it's passed on. One student reads the story and then whispers it to the student beside them, the story is passed on around the group in this way and then relayed by the last student.

- Work on the folklore collection could also be combined with the census study by trying to find the census records of the children whose stories were recorded.

- This is a great opportunity to have a local story teller, or grandparent who is happy to talk, visit your group and share their stories of the past.

- There is also the potential to do an add-on project where participants can interview older members of the community about changes they have seen in the area. Plan the questionnaire to find out about your area by asking older people. What's your focus? Legends, myths or perhaps something more recent like their school life, work, culture, old buildings?

- The value of oral records should never be underestimated – the experience in itself can be memorable and most people are more than willing to share their old stories and recollections of the past.

Questions for Consideration and Reflection

- What can you find out about the people who lived locally in the recent past?
- What methods can you use to find out more about the people and stories in your area?
- How can you present the stories of your area?
- Are there local historians/musicians/storytellers that could visit the group to add to the experience?

Additional Resources

- www.digital.ucd.ie Folklore Games
- www.askaboutireland.ie (Lewis Topographical Dictionary 1837, Griffiths Valuation of Tenements 1850s)
- www.census.ie for historic census records (1901 & 1911) available to view.
- www.duchas.ie for the Irish Folklore Commission work
- www.nli.ie images and Catholic parishes register
- www.dri.ie the National digital repository for Ireland's humanities, social sciences, and cultural heritage data
- www.logainm.ie the Irish place-name database that will translate what your town or village means.

6

Looking closer at Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of all life on earth from the largest whale to the smallest micro-organism. It includes plants, wildlife and domestic animals, and even ourselves!

Nothing exists in isolation – particularly in relation to humans

Introduction

Why is biodiversity important?

Through investigation of local habitats, the complex connections of nature and the benefits and uses of biodiversity, groups will hopefully start thinking more about the natural world around them, and ultimately will take a more responsible attitude towards the environment now and into the future. While there can be a lot of emphasis on the negative aspect of humans relationship with biodiversity, it is important to also consider the many positive elements – to look and see what exists in the area, what it is used for and the beauty of it.

“...biodiversity underpins the functioning of the ecosystems on which we depend for food and fresh water, health and recreation, and protection from natural disasters. Its loss also affects us culturally and spiritually. This may be more difficult to quantify, but is nonetheless integral to our wellbeing.”

BAN KI-MOON,
FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS, 2010⁷

There are countless other activities which could have been included in this section – nature tables, bug hunts, listening to bird songs, web of life – an online search will throw up many other activities which you could add in if you're feeling enthusiastic!

“In valuing local knowledge and embodied experiences, place-based education highlights positive connections to the environment, rather than attempting to motivate pro-environmental change through learning about global catastrophe”

HARRISON, 2012⁸

Core Activities

6.1

LOOKING CLOSER AT BIODIVERSITY: CORE ACTIVITY 1

Biodiversity Numbers

When considering biodiversity a good place to start is to get an appreciation for the number of species that exist in Ireland – and to compare it to the worldwide situation.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Give groups a copy of the blank species table overleaf.

- Explain what each species group are if necessary.

- Groups should try and rank groups from 1 – 11 with 1 being the group which they believe to have the highest number of different species and 11 being the group which they believe to have the least.

- Give the actual number of species for each group and discuss. The highest number is insects, of which

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper
 - Printed tables

there are 11,422+ different species. If we are to look at all the animal species in Ireland minus the insects - that leaves us with very little. This is why it is important to look after what we do have and to realise that even the smallest things that we don't often notice are important.






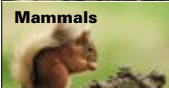






- A follow on activity is to start thinking further about biodiversity more locally:
 - Can you name a species local to you from each of these headings?

60% of Ireland's species are invertebrates. Only 10% are 'familiar'- plants, birds and mammals. Estimated at least 7,000 species of algae and fungi that have yet to be discovered in Ireland.

ÁITBHEO IRISH SPECIES Work Sheet

Group	Number
Plants	
Mosses & Liverworts	
Algae	
Lichens	
Fungi	
Mammals	
Birds	
Amphibians & Reptiles	
Fish	
Insects	
Non-insect invertebrates	
Bats	

ÁITBHEO IRISH SPECIES Number Table

Group		Species Number	Rank
 Plants	Trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses and ferns, typically producing energy through photosynthesis.	2,328	4
 Mosses & Liverworts	Produce spores rather than seeds and lack the vascular tissue found in ferns and "higher" plants.	797	6
 Algae	A simple, non-flowering, and typically aquatic plant including the seaweeds and many single-celled forms. Algae contain chlorophyll but lack true stems, roots, leaves, and vascular tissue.	1,079 known species (estimated at between 3,000 and 5,000)	5
 Lichens	An organism that is formed by the symbiotic association of a fungus and an alga and occurs as crusty patches or bushy growths on tree trunks, bare ground, etc	1,134	4
 Fungi	Spore-producing organisms feeding on organic matter, including moulds, yeast, mushrooms, and toadstools.	Approximately 5,500 known species (estimated at 9,000)	3
 Mammals	A warm-blooded vertebrate animal with hair or fur and females that secrete milk for the nourishment of the young, and (typically) the birth of live young.	25 land, 24 cetaceans and 2 seals	9
 Birds	A warm-blooded egg-laying vertebrate animal distinguished by the possession of feathers, wings, a beak, and typically by being able to fly	457	8
 Amphibians & Reptiles	Amphibian: a cold-blooded vertebrate animal of a class that comprises the frogs, toads, newts and others. They are distinguished by having an aquatic gill-breathing larval stage followed (typically) by a terrestrial lung-breathing adult stage Reptile: a cold-blooded animal (as a snake, lizard, turtle, or alligator) that breathes air and usually has the skin covered with scales or bony plates	6 (Five native: Common frog, Natterjack toad, Smooth newt, Viviparous lizard, Leatherback turtle & one non-native species: Slow-worm)	11
 Fish	A limbless cold-blooded vertebrate animal with gills and fins living wholly in water.	29 Freshwater 563+ Marine	7
 Insects	Arthropods (such as bugs or bees) with well-defined head, thorax, and abdomen, only three pairs of legs, and typically one or two pairs of wings.	11,422+	1
 Non-insect invertebrates	An animal lacking a backbone.	8,000+	2
 Bats	A nocturnal mouselike mammal flying with a pair of membranous wings.	9	10

6.2

LOOKING CLOSER AT BIODIVERSITY: CORE ACTIVITY 2

Local Habitat Mapping

Biodiversity is often best studied outside!

INSTRUCTIONS

- Using the Ordnance Survey map of the area, as well as any local knowledge you can utilise, map out the different habitats that are easily identifiable – don't forget even maintained gardens, walls and buildings are habitats for all different types of life.
- For each habitat put together a web or habitat chain – starting with the food producers and building up to the highest predator.

REQUIREMENTS

- Outdoors (or indoors if need be)
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper
- You could also carry out a biodiversity survey in each of the habitats. Assign a habitat or area within your grounds to each group. Explain how to keep a tally count. Explain how and why they should fill in the additional heading details.
- Explain what constitutes a different species and have students carry out the survey on their area – are we surprised with the results of our surveys?

Glebe Road Habitats Map



- ✳ Marine
- Trees
- ✳ Lawn
- ★ Buildings
- Walls
- ⊕ Flower beds
- ☀ Ponds

6.3

LOOKING CLOSER AT BIODIVERSITY: CORE ACTIVITY 3

Moving Debate

This is a great way to get people to think critically about their local environment. It is not about what is right or wrong, it is about recognising that people may have different values and perspectives. What will be indicated is that everyone thinks differently. The moving debate format can be used for any topic.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask everyone to stand in the middle of the room.
-
- Stick the laminated thumbs up on one side of the room and the laminated thumbs down on the opposite side.
-
- Read out a prepared statement then ask participants to position themselves on a scale to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statement. They can stay in the middle of the room if they are undecided. Ask people on either extreme to explain why they feel that way and continue along the line. People can move if they are swayed by the views expressed by others. Facilitators should be conscious of not giving their own opinion.
-

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Print off a thumbs up and thumbs down sign
 - Blotack



- Potential statements are:
 - Some species and habitats deserve protection more than others.
 - Humans are more important than plants and animals.
 - It is always wrong to kill any living thing: plant or animal.
 - Only penalties or taxes will motivate the change in lifestyle that we need to stop dangerous climate change.
-

*We are part of Biodiversity – we have the same needs as other creatures – the difference between people and nature is not really **what** we're trying to achieve, but **how** we do it.*

And this is our choice, how we choose to do it and the best way to do it.



Other Activities

6.4

LOOKING CLOSER AT BIODIVERSITY

Bat and Moth (or Midge!)

This is a fun game which gets participants thinking about how different animals hunt – animals have evolved their own ways to ensure they survive!

INSTRUCTIONS

- Explain to students that animals use different methods to get their food.
- Ask the students to stand in a circle. Select one student to be blindfolded, they will be the bat, and select another pupil to be a moth. The bat and moth cannot leave the circle.
- The bat is trying to capture the moth to eat it but cannot see it. To find the moth the bat must use the sense of hearing and so every time the bat calls 'bat' the

REQUIREMENTS

- Outdoors (or indoors if needed)
- All age groups - particularly suited to school groups.
- Materials needed:
 - A blindfold

moth must say 'moth'. This is a simple representation of how the bat hunts using echolocation.

- If the moth is good at evading capture, get all students to take a step in to make the circle smaller (habitat reducing). You can also add a number of moths to the circle at the same time.

6.5 LOOKING CLOSER AT BIODIVERSITY

Predator Prey Tag

This activity is an adaptation on the standard tag game which allows participants consider the relationship between predators and their prey and the need for balance in the natural world.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Discuss what predators and prey are.

- Decide with your group on a local predator (Fox, Owl etc.) and a local prey (Rabbit, Mouse etc.).

- Divide the group into predators and prey. Start with an even split.

- Predators have to try and catch prey. After all the prey have been caught. Ask if any predator didn't catch any – they won't survive so are taken out of the game.

REQUIREMENTS

- Outdoors
 - All age groups - particularly suited to school groups
-
- Run the tag again with fewer predators and repeat.
-
- Discuss what happens when there are too many of either group.
-
- You can also make the habitat bigger or smaller to show the group the implications for the animals in the habitat. Discuss what factors might increase or decrease a habitat.
-

6.6 LOOKING CLOSER AT BIODIVERSITY

Find that Feature

We often rely on one or two of our senses to discover the world around us. This activity involves team work and use of other senses to engage with the world and biodiversity surrounding us.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Split participants into pairs and give each pair one blindfold. Explain to the participants that they are to blindfold one member of their pair and to carefully lead them to a natural feature in the landscape – rock, tree, plant, water feature etc.
- The blindfolded participant then has to spend some time really feeling and smelling the feature and its surrounds.
- The blindfolded participant is led back to the starting point, has the blindfold removed and then must try to locate

REQUIREMENTS

- Outdoors
- All age groups - particularly suited to school groups.
- Blindfolds (one per pair)

the feature that they were taken to. If feeling generous the guide can help them by telling them if they're getting hot or cold.

- A variation or additional game can be that the members of the group have to take the blindfolded participant on a short walk and get them to touch different items along the way and guess what they are, or they collect different items and ask the blindfolded person to identify what they are.



Questions for Consideration and Reflection

- What is/are the main habitat/s in your area?
- What chain (or web) exists in this habitat? (ie. flower – insect – bird – carnivore)
- Is there anything strange or exciting you have discovered about the Biodiversity in your area?
- What can be done to help preserve your local Biodiversity?
- **www.giy.ie** provides information, tutorials and recipes for growing your own food.
- **www.theorganiccentre.ie** has a free community garden guide.
- **www.habitas.org.uk** Natural History Museum of Ulster website has information on a wide range of Natural Heritage topics
- **www.mothsireland.com** website mapping the moths of Ireland.
- **www.birdwatchireland.ie** numerous educational resources and information on Ireland's bird life.

Additional Resources

- **www.biodiversityireland.ie** has records of all species recorded in your area. Access the online maps and download a 2km or 10km report which will list all the species recorded in your area. See how many are protected or under threat. Are you surprised by what biodiversity has been recorded in your area?
- **www.irishwildflowers.ie** is a great site for information on flowers. It is especially good for a month-by-month picture diary of what may be flowering now.
- **www.seaweed.ie** is a good source of general information on all aspects of seaweed.
- **www.pfaf.org** Plants for a Future is a site about edible and medicinal plants.
- **www.butterflyconservation.ie** information on gardening for butterflies, lifecycles and maps for species in Ireland.
- **www.butterflyireland.com** The Dublin Naturalists Field Clubs Butterfly website.
- **www.iwdg.ie** Irish Whale and Dolphin Group.
- **www.mcsuk.org** The Marine Conservation Society has information on depleting stocks etc.
- **www.npws.ie** The National Parks and Wildlife have details on Special Areas of Conservation, Nature Reserves, National Parks etc. You may be able to find sites locally.
- **www.bordbia.ie** information on food and conservation.

7

Activating Stewards of the Landscape



Introduction

We feel every place has a story to tell and a good story at that, no matter where you are, all that needs to be done is finding out about it through exploring your place. This is why our focus has been on place-based learning. Learning about our place, through the place, for the place. Why? Well the more we know about our environment and place, the more engaged we are with it, the more we value it and the more likely we are to look after it into the future.

Many groups and schools are doing this already but when the various elements are explicitly connected it results in a stronger potential for action and impact. The goal

when implementing a place-based learning programme is to build sense of place, pride in community, develop critical thinking skills and to finally carry out an action that will benefit your local place.

Ultimately we're hoping that people are empowered to take positive action locally through engaging with place-based learning. What follows next is the process we take our students on to develop agreed upon, achievable plans for action that can be undertaken locally.

The following three activities build upon each other and so are best if carried out in the following order.

Core Activities

7.1

ACTIVATING COMMUNITY STEWARDS: CORE ACTIVITY 1

Place Issue: Think, Pair, Share

INSTRUCTIONS

- Have individuals decide upon an 'issue' in the local area to do with the environment, heritage or place. Is there something that really bothers them even though they don't know a lot about it?
-
- Think about:
 - What is the issue?
 - Why is it important?
 - Who does it affect?
 - What causes the issue?
-

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
 - All age groups
 - Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper
-
- Get into pairs and share the issue/ issues they have identified.
-
- Share these with the group.
-



Place Issue: Resourceful

INSTRUCTIONS

- Taking the issues identified in the previous activity, narrow them down as much as possible, combining issues or discarding those that aren't relevant to local heritage and environment.

- Assign a table or area per issue, get a sheet of paper and put a line down the middle. On one side have 'Help' and on the other 'Hinder'.

- Participants can decide which of the issues they want to work on. Then have participants come up with about 5 points for 'Help' = What are the factors/resources that will help you address this problem? and 5 points for 'Hinder' = What are the factors/resources that might hold you back? (Stakeholders, time, local resources).

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper
 - One sheet per issue

- Then have participants move around to the other tables and input into each issue, adding to the 5 points if necessary or building upon what is already there.

- After each issue has been fully investigated, each group can present it to the overall group. These lists will inform the following activity.



PLACE ISSUE RESOURCEFUL

TOPIC _____



Who & what will help?



Who & what will hinder?

SMART Planning

INSTRUCTIONS

- Taking the issues which were considered in the previous activity, participants work in groups on the issue that interests them most. Together participants must develop a SMART plan to address the issue.
- A SMART plan requires consideration of each of the following elements;
 - **Specific:** What exactly will you do? Who else will be involved? Where? Why?
 - **Measurable:** How will you know if you complete your plan? How much change needs to happen?
 - **Achievable:** What steps will you take to complete your plan? Do we have, or can we get what we need to make this plan happen?
 - **Relevant:** What about your plan makes it important? Is it meaningful, do we really care? What difference will it make?

REQUIREMENTS

- Indoors
- All age groups
- Materials needed:
 - Pen and paper
 - One sheet per issue
- **Timely:** When do you want to complete your plan? What is the deadline? Do individual steps need to be carried out in order to make the plan work? What is the timeline for this plan?
- Once each SMART plan has been developed each group can give an outline of their proposal. Depending on circumstances a decision could be made to carry out each plan or vote on the one plan which will be completed.

Questions for Consideration and Reflection

- Do you think you can take action on local issues? Do you think that you can make a difference?
- What support would you need to carry out local action?
- How do you get the community to get involved?

Additional Resources

- **www.sustainabletoolkit.ie** has detailed activities for communities looking to take action on sustainability.
- **www.ecounesco.ie** coordinate a Youth Environmental Awards scheme which completed SMART plans could be entered into.

SMART PLAN SHEET

TOPIC _____

<p>SPECIFIC</p> <p>What exactly will you do?</p> <p>Who else will be involved?</p> <p>Where? Why?</p>	
<p>MEASURABLE</p> <p>How will you know if you complete your plan?</p> <p>How much change needs to happen?</p>	
<p>ACHIEVABLE</p> <p>What steps will you take to complete your plan?</p> <p>Do we have, or can we get what we need to make this plan happen?</p>	
<p>RELEVANT</p> <p>What about your plan makes it important?</p> <p>Is it meaningful, do we really care?</p>	
<p>TIMELY</p> <p>When do want to complete your plan?</p> <p>What is the deadline?</p>	

8

Conclusion

Burrenbeo Trust

This resource handbook has been put together by the team at the Burrenbeo Trust, a landscape charity based in Kinvara, Co. Galway. The focus of the organisation is to connect people to their landscape no matter where it is, and to help identify the role each person can play in conserving its future.

Burrenbeo's vision is that all places are valued for their natural, built and cultural heritage; that the local people have the opportunity to know, experience and share their heritage; and that people can thrive through working sustainably with the landscape. Whilst the organisation works in the Burren, much of what is done is transferable beyond its stone walls.

This booklet is based on over 10-years of experience of developing and delivering place-based programmes to the community. All the work in this book is the copyright of Burrenbeo Trust, please do not sell without our permission.

burrenbeotrust
connecting people and place

Supports

The Áitbheo Training Course

This resource book is a good companion to the five-day training course which the Burrenbeo Trust holds annually. This course helps facilitate individuals to deliver their own place-based learning programme no matter where they are. It is designed to provide simple strategies and resources such as those included in this resource through which individuals can effectively integrate their local place into their interactions with their audiences.

Learning Landscape Symposium

The Burrenbeo Trust carries out a conference on place-based learning annually. The Learning Landscape Symposium features lectures, workshops and fieldtrips with the aim to investigate ways to use local resources to make learning a richer, more exciting and rewarding educational experience, as well as an opportunity to network with individuals that work in similar sectors. It is held in Kinvara and around the Burren, the ultimate learning landscape and is open for anyone to attend.

Website

The Burrenbeo Trust website offers insight into the courses that we carry out in schools and the events that we coordinate in the community to strengthen the life-long learning of the Burren landscape to all age groups.

Why not see if one of our many community programmes could be carried out local to you. For more information on the Burrenbeo Trust and our programmes go to **www.burrenbeo.com**

Contact Us

Burrenbeo Trust love hearing from people that are also working to inspire others on their place. Why not drop us an email and share with us what you are up to - can we learn from each other or help each other. Just contact us directly on any of the following:

info@burrenbeo.com

091 638096

**Burrenbeo Trust, Glebe Road,
Kinvara, Co. Galway, H91 C3X2.**

Appendices

Appendix 1 Curriculum Links

See www.burrenbeo.com/curriculumlinks to download.

Appendix 2 Additional Resources

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Footnotes

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connecting with your place - building active stewards

Burrenbeo Trust

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