

First Level

Lesson 1

Wangari Maathai

Having selected a significant individual from the past, I can contribute to a discussion on the influence of their actions, then and since.

SOC 1-06a

When I engage with others, I know when and how to listen, when to talk, how much to say, when to ask questions and how to respond with respect.

LIT 1-02a

Learning Intentions:

I can **listen** to the story of Wangari Maathai.

I can **discuss** the impact Wangari Maathai had on her the environment in Kenya.

I can **discuss** the benefits the trees bring to people and the environment.

Introduction:

Introduce Wangari Maathai to pupils.

Wangari Maathai was a Kenyan scientist who had a very positive and long-lasting effect on the environment and people, especially women, of her home country. She grew up in a rural village where the people lived close to nature, growing their own food, collecting firewood from the forest and fresh water from the nearby river.

As she grew up, she left home to study science. When she returned home she found a huge change in her home. A lot of the forests in Kenya had been sold by the government to rich, foreign companies, who cut the wood down to sell or to grow coffee. Some trees were cut down as towns and cities got bigger. The poorer people in the countryside had to walk further for firewood and clean water and found it more difficult to grow their food. This is the story of how one woman inspired many others to make a huge difference.

Story:

Read:

Seeds of Change by Jen Cullerton Johnson or watch a reading of the book here.

<https://youtu.be/NWFdmOaDTxE>

Discussion:

Discuss the story as a group. If you wish, the teacher could take notes of the points pupils make to facilitate follow-on activities.

Some of the following points could be used as discussion points:

- The important relationship between people and nature. Providing food, fuel, fresh air, fresh water etc.
- The impact of clearing forests on the environment. Not just fewer trees for firewood and food but soil erosion, lack of clean water, flooding, drought, difficulties growing crops.
- The impact of clearing forests on local people. Poorer air quality, lack of fuel, food, clean drinking water, irrigation water, soil.
- The impact Wangari's love of nature as a child had on her adult life, her neighbours and her country.
- The impact growing new forests had on the landscape and the people.
- The power of all the women working together.

Conclusion:

Summarise the main points of the discussion. This will vary from group to group but should include:

- The importance of trees for a healthy environment.
- The importance of a healthy environment for people.
- How powerful people can be when they work together.

Optional follow on activities:

- Create a piece of artwork inspired by Wangari, the trees, the green belt movement and the women planting trees.
- Learn about African Wax Art (African Batik) which is imitated in the book's artwork and create a piece of wax art.
- Act out Wangari speaking to the local women about trees.
- Write a song or poem about the life of Wangari Maathai or trees.
- Go on a nature walk and find trees around the school. Do bark rubbings or leaf rubbings, hug a tree, sit under a tree, take photographs of the trees, play around the trees and thank the trees for the fresh air they give us while we play and learn.
- Research Equal Rights for Women and how this benefits all people, men, women and children.

First Level

Lesson 2

Planting Tree Seeds to Create the Lost Woods

I can help to design experiments to find out what plants need in order to grow and develop. I can observe and record my findings and from what I have learned I can grow healthy plants in school.

SCN 1-03a

Learning Intentions:

I **understand** the importance of trees to a healthy environment.

I can **plant** a tree from seed.

I can **care for** my sapling ensuring it has all it need to grow healthily.

“Trees are our lifeline to cleaner air and a healthier environment.”

Introduction:

Read the book ***The Promise*** by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Laura Carlin.

A copy of the book has been provided to your school with all the tree planting resources.

Or watch the author, Nicola Davies, read the book.

<https://vimeo.com/73026206>

Discuss the ideas in the book:

- The bleak images of a city without greenery
- Our surroundings influence the way we behave and feel
- Growing trees and plants benefits human health

Could we make a promise like the girl in the book?

The Lost Woods

Link *The Promise* with the story of Wangari Maathai and how she, and the women of Kenya, transformed the landscape for the better.

Just like Wangari we are going to plant oak trees to transform our environment. We are all going to plant a tree each and together with other primary schools in Glasgow we will create new green spaces for everyone to enjoy.

These vibrant green spaces will be called The Lost Woods and will:

- Help to clean the air.
- Slow down the effects of Climate Change by capturing carbon and locking it away.
- Provide food and habitat for insects, animals and birds.
- Keep the soil clean and help prevent flooding.
- Provide a space where people can meet and enjoy the benefits of nature.
- Show the world that the children of Glasgow care about the environment and understand the importance of trees.

Oak is a native Scottish tree and grows from an acorn.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/a-z-of-british-trees/sessile-oak/>

The Lost Woods Project will plant many other native species alongside your oaks. A wide variety makes a healthier wood and increases biodiversity.

Planting the trees:

Watch our video on how to plant acorns.

<https://www.thelostwoods.earth>

You will need:

- Paper cups, acorns and compost (provided by us)
- A bottle (for watering)
- A small trowel or spoon
- A tray (a clean recycled food container)

Plenary:

Conclude the lesson by drawing the children's attention to how small one little seed is and how one tree on its own can't make a huge difference. BUT lots of people together, planting lots of trees can make a huge difference.

Optional Follow on Activities:

- Share photos of your activities with us.
- Download The Lost Woods poster and colour in.
- Complete a project on what a plant needs to grow. E.g. sprouting beans in ziplock bags or on cotton wool.
- Plant some seeds at home.
- Watch this video on how trees clean the air
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVUAgcSCP_U
- Share the stories of The Promise, Wangari Maathai and The Lost Woods with family and friends.
- Create signs to put near your saplings to keep them safe and to let people know what they are.
- Design a sign that could be used at The Lost Woods
- Create a short video clip encouraging people to work together to achieve larger goals.
- Look up images of Oak trees and other native species. Examine the shape of the trees, the leaves and the seeds.
- Draw pictures of your seeds before you plant them.
- Take photographs of the planting process and create a short film of how to plant an oak tree.
- Create a piece of artwork inspired by The Lost Woods.

First Level

Lesson 3

COP26 and Climate Change

I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in a logical sequence and use words which will be interesting and/or useful for others.

LIT 1-06a

I have contributed to discussions of current scientific news items to help develop my awareness of science.

SCN 1-20a

Learning Intentions:

I can **listen and watch** for information on current scientific news.

I can **select** the most important facts.

I can **present** my information for others to read.

Introduction:

Brainstorm what pupils know about COP26 and record it on a mindmap.

Note: Climate Change has been omitted because the focus is social, not scientific. Perhaps they haven't heard of COP26, in which case an empty mind map at the start and a full mind map at the end will clearly demonstrate learning.

Research & Notetaking:

Let's discover what COP26 is and why it's important to us. Here's where we need to start. Create notes as you watch the videos and discuss as a class.

Climate Change

Watch this video, Climate Change according to a Kid.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sv7OHfpIRfU>

The UN

At the end of that video it mentions that a really important meeting was about to happen. That meeting was COP21 in Paris and it is one of the most important meetings our world has ever had. It was held by the UN. But what's the UN?

Watch this video on the UN
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaAmfiJtV4I>

COP26

Every year the UN holds a meeting called a COP, Conference of Parties, about Climate Change. Every 5 years the meeting is extra big and important. The last big important one was COP21 in Paris in 2015. At this meeting world leaders signed a really important agreement called The Paris Agreement.

The next big one is COP26 and it will be in Glasgow in November 2020! It is one of the most important meetings ever held in the world and it will be held in our City.

Organising and presenting learning:

Discuss what you now know about COP26 using your notes to help you.

Create an information leaflet for residents of Glasgow about COP26.

You might like to organise your information under the following headings:

- What is Climate Change?
- What is the UN?
- What is a COP?
- What is COP26?
- Why is COP26 important for Glasgow?

Illustrate each section with a picture or a logo.

When finished, take your leaflet home to share your learning with your family and friends.

Plenary:

At the end of the project / lesson create a new mind map. Ask the children what they now know about COP26. Compare with the first mind map to demonstrate learning.

Optional follow on activities:

- Create a wall display of your work.
- Create a news clip or podcast to share your knowledge with family and friends.

- Hold your own COP in class to discuss what the class or the school could do to help fight climate change.
- Create a poster advertising COP26
- Discuss what pupils would like to happen at COP26.
- Take a look at the website for COP26 <https://www.ukcop26.org/>
- Act out a conversation you would like to have with a politician attending COP26
- Research the UNs Sustainable Development Goals <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

Important Information:

- **The UN** is a group of countries working together for peace, equality, health and cooperation between all people on earth. Almost all countries in the world are members.
- **The Global Sustainability Goals** are a list of 17 goals the UN are working towards to ensure a safe environment for all people for all time. They include no poverty, zero hunger, gender equality and clean water for all.
- **Global Sustainability Goal number 13** is Climate Action. Every UN country needs to take immediate action to combat climate change and the impact it has on people and the environment.
- A **Conference of the Parties (COP)** is a meeting of politicians and representatives from every UN country. It is held every year and it is based on Climate Change. Every 5th year the COP is very big and important.
- **The Paris Agreement** is an agreement all UN countries signed at COP 21 in 2015 in Paris. It set out goals to fight climate change and to help the people already affected by it. COP21 was a big and important COP.
- **COP26** is the next big, important COP and it is being held in Glasgow in November 2020. It is the biggest meeting to discuss Climate Change in the last years and is possibly the most important ever.

First Level

Lesson 4

The Lost Words

As I listen or watch, I can identify and discuss the purpose, key words and main ideas of the text, and use this information for a specific purpose.

LIT 1-04a

I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience.

LIT 1-20a / LIT 2-20a

Learning Intentions:

I can **listen** to a poem and **imagine** what's being described.

I can **discuss** the language and imagery used in a poem.

I can **share** my ideas for a poem about trees and **listen** to others share theirs.

I can **use** my ideas to **create** my own poem related to trees.

Note for teachers:

Every school in Scotland was gifted a copy of The Lost Words book in session 2018/2019. The Lost Words book by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris is a 'spell book' with a wild, magical aim to enchant nearby nature again into the imaginations of children. It seeks to restore words which describe our natural world, such as acorn, beech, conker and otter that have been removed from the Oxford Junior Dictionary to make way for more common usage words like 'broadband'.

Many of these poems may be too advanced for early level children but they can still get enjoyment from the pictures, the ideas and learning new words. Explain the overall meaning of poems and pick out sections you feel they could relate to.

Introduction:

Gather the class around you. Introduce the book The Lost Words written by Robert MacFarlane and illustrated by Jackie Morris.

- Show the book cover to the class and explain that this is a magic book, of spells and charms. It will teach us to perform magic and conjure back words that have been lost.
- Draw their attention to the beautiful cover illustrations by Jackie Morris.
- Draw their attention to the name Robert Macfarlane, the poet. Do they know another famous poet called Robert? (Robert Burns)
- Slowly turn the pages of the book. Draw their attention to what the wren, said to be the King of the Birds, is standing on. An Acorn!

- Read the introduction to the class. Explain that the magic of speaking aloud is a very strong magic. If we speak words aloud and use them in our stories, we can back words that have been lost.
- Point out the goldfinches flying around the pages of the book. The collective noun for goldfinches is a charm. Their magic will help us to speak words that had been lost.

Sharing Poetry:

- Slowly turn to the next page and invite the pupils to examine the letters hidden among the grasses – acorn.
- Turn to the poem. Draw their attention to the painting of the acorns and the oak branch. Draw their attention to the word acorn being spelled out by the lines of the poem. All the spells in the book are acrostic poems.
- Discuss the fact that because you have all seen acorns and even planted some. You have already *found* this lost word and have used many times before.
- Read the poem through once or twice.

Discussion:

- Invite the children to share their ideas of the poem. Elicit the idea that the poem lists individual things that collectively make something bigger, more important or more effective.
 - ~ A flake of snow is beautiful but insignificant. A blizzard of snowflakes can give us a day off school!
 - ~ One bird on its own can be nice to look at or listen to but a flock of birds playing over our heads can be exciting. Or perhaps a little scary if they fly too close to us!
 - ~ One feather is good for tickling, but a bird is covered in feathers can take to the air and fly.
 - ~ One acorn can grow a beautiful tree but a thousand can grow a wood and save the world.

Creating Poetry:

Invite the pupils to create their own sentences. As ___ is to ___.

- as pupil is to class,
- as class is to school,
- as politician is to government
- as blade is to lawn
- as string is to guitar
- as player is to team
- as day is to year

Compile their list to create a poem “Inspired by Robert Mcfarlane.” Alternatively invite pupils to create their own poem. Perhaps they would like to write an acrostic poem about an acorn, a hazelnut, trees or The Lost Woods. Perhaps they would like to write a different kind of poem about another tree. The list is endless. Children should be encouraged to be creative and follow the ideas they come up with. Poetry is a very broad ranging form.

Plenary:

Invite pupils to share their poems with the class. Invite peers to say what they liked about individual poems.

Optional follow on activities:

- Listen to & learn the song Acorn from the album The Lost Words: Spell Songs. <https://www.thelostwords.org/spell-songs/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSJ7J15nmw4>
- Watch the Spell Songs video of musicians and Jackie Morris gathering to write their songs. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hg1xFYpXuWA>
- Edit and rewrite your poems and present them with illustrations in a book format or in a wall display.
- Recite some of your poems to the school at assembly or share them with other classes.
- Explore more poems from The Lost Words and use your new “unlost” words in new poems and stories.
- Listen to the album The Lost Words: Spell Songs, link the songs to the poems, perhaps even learn a song and perform it at assembly.
- Write your own songs about what you love in nature.
- Explore Jackie Morris’ artwork in the book and create your own nature artwork inspired by her paintings.
- Go on a nature walk around your school and see what lost words you can find. Can you see a dandelion, a fern, a magpie, ivy or a starling?
- A flock of goldfinches is called a charm and a flock of crows is called a murder. How do you imagine the birds would feel about these collective nouns if they knew?
- Outdoor learning resources available from the John Muir Trust.
<https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/initiatives/the-lost-words>
[https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/assets/000/002/830/LOST_WORDS Explorers-Guide pages original.pdf](https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/assets/000/002/830/LOST_WORDS_Explorers-Guide_pages_original.pdf)
- Literacy resources available from the Reading Agency:
<https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/3026/>
https://tra-resources.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/entries/document/3026/Merged_TLW_packs.pdf