

**DISCOVERY TRAIL**

**OBSERVATION AND SENSES TRAIL**

**TEACHER'S NOTES.**



## **DISCOVERY TRAIL**

### **OBSERVATION AND SENSES**

#### **TEACHER'S NOTES.**

A wonderful introduction to the outside classroom! Beautiful surroundings with so much to see, hear, smell and touch, to allow children to experience the wonderment and enjoyment of nature.

A leisurely walk through the gardens, stopping to explore interesting areas of your choice. Adapt the walk to match your curriculum requirements.

The Discovery Trail Activities and Worksheets provide a varied range of ideas that may be useful to you, along with a choice of worksheets suitable for different age ranges and abilities.

Suggestion - Look at Art-Naturally for creative ideas.

Request - Please, share your worksheets, we appreciate all contributions.

#### **THE DISCOVERY TRAIL**

KS1/KS2/KS3

Observational walk using the senses

Curricular links:

Science and Literacy

Time:

1 hour +/-

Equipment:

Notebook, pencil, worksheets, camera

and collecting

Bags

Place:

Throughout Gardens

School Term:

Any

Instructions:

Search for lizards throughout the walk and make lizard count.

1. Begin in the **Herb and Medicinal garden** (map ref. 16)

Feel and smell the leaves of different plants. Easily identifiable by smell ~lavender and mint. What other plants and smells can they find?

*Aloysia citrodora* (lemon verbena) cultivated for its oil which smells of lemon.

Enjoy a' follow the leader 'around the thyme spiral.

Look at the colour of the soil.



2. Move onto the **South African Terrace** (map ref.15)

How does the soil differ from herb and Medicinal garden?

*The plants here like hot and sunny weather with rocky well drained soil.*

***Not many flowers available in Winter to view.***

Look at the different flowers, note their colours and shapes.

What can the flowers be compared to?

Kniphofia (red hot poker- red and yellow)

Osteospermum (like a huge daisy).

Eucomis (looks like a pineapple).



Near the pond and where there are seats is a large fig tree. Ask the children to guess how old it is  
(It's over a 100 years old!)

3. **The Australian garden.** Find a Eucalyptus tree.

Feel the trunk. Is it rough or smooth?(rough, the bark is often peeling off and if you crush the leaves they have a scent). Look for Dicksonia (tree ferns).

Look out for the kangaroo((located on yellow sign).

What is the bridge made out of?( wood.) Where does it come from? Trees. What else can they think is made from trees?(so much to discuss furniture ,houses, paper etc.)



4. **The Palm Garden** (map ref.11) Find the Chusan Palms,  
Very tall palms. Feel the trunk and describe what it looks  
and feels like? (*They are the oldest in the UK*)  
Find the lovely urns either side of the path. Describe their shape,  
colour and texture. Describe the archway (materials, shape  
texture). Find the totem pole. Why has it fallen down?  
What pictures are carved on it? What does it feel like ,  
What colours are used?

5. **Walled Garden and Long Border (map ref 8).**

The salvias are late flowering but their leaves are  
very aromatic, (rub between fingers and smell.)

Look at the shape of the stem they are different  
from other plants because the stem is square.  
Find the Melianthus it smells of peanuts  
(*warning for nut allergy*).



To make them smile find this plant.

It is named Sillibum!  
They spread! Look for little ones.



Can you find the plant with the largest leaves in  
the garden? Called a rice paper plant  
(tetrapanax papyrifer). Nearby is a magnolia tree,  
it's an evergreen and the flowers smell like  
lemon meringue pie.



## 6. The Mediterranean Garden (map ref.6)

All these plants come from the Mediterranean, the Canary Isles and Madeira. Find the cork trees. Feel and describe the pieces of bark on the floor. What is bark used for? (*making corks*). Find the sundial explain how it works.



## 7. The Olive Grove (under development Map ref. 7 ).

Look at the leaves, what colour are they?  
Do they have one colour or two?  
(*Green one side, white the other*).  
What do olives provide? Oil.



## 8. The Arid Garden (map ref 4)

These plants like hot ,dry conditions to grow.  
Find the Prickly Pear(Optutia).  
Careful it has sharp spines. Look for the Agave (thick, spiky leaves with sharp edges). Search for the Aloe it spirals either clockwise or anticlockwise.



## **THROUGHOUT THE WALK**

Ask questions:

Do they know what plant it is? What part of the plant is it?( worksheet provided)

What season is it, how do we know, what clues does the garden give to help us to know? Look for signs.

How can we tell if a tree is deciduous or evergreen?

(Various Recording Worksheets provided.)

### **Sound – Ornamental pond by Edulis (no.19 on map)**

Stand still and listen quietly for 1 minute exactly.

Listen for different sounds .Count them on your fingers. How many you hear? Can you identify all of Listen to sounds in and beyond the garden, where are the sounds coming from? Are they identifiable noises them?

What are the loudest / quietest sounds? Are they natural or man-made sounds?

Now listen to the fountain, what noises does it make? (worksheet provided)

### **Touch**

Textures, as you walk around...

Are there things that feel interesting? How many different textures can you find? Tree bark, leaves and petals.

**Do not taste any plants outside.**

Bark rubbing and leaf rubbing.(worksheet provided)

### **Sight**

Use eyes to look around at all height levels to see colours and shapes and spy unknown wonders.

Colour matching (worksheet provided)

Can you find plants /leaves that are the same colours as those on your work sheet?

Can you find the colours of the rainbow?(worksheet provided)

### **Smell – Herb and Medicinal garden (no.16 on map)**

Smell the different herbs and plants in this bed. You may be able to spot a plant called lavender that has such a lovely smell it is used in perfumes.

Gently rub the leaves and smell your fingers.

Can you identify any other smells?

There are plants in the herb bed we use in our cooking. Can you smell what it is?

Sniff the air, familiar smells? New smells? Identify location of strongest smell. What do smells remind you of ?

They smell like..... old socks? .... sweet smelling as cosy as grandma?

Time to be poetic.

Which is your favourite smell?

(Recording worksheets provided)

**Which sense have we not used today?**

Why do you think this is?

What is special about this garden?

How is the botanic garden different from your garden at home or school?

Although they have not experienced tastings around the gardens, hopefully they will bring a packed lunch.

*Please join in our waste free lunch challenge!*