

Where shall we explore in Harlow Carr Garden?

These notes are for secondary teachers to help you decide what you'd like your students to see and do in the Garden during your self-guided time.

Please remember you will be required to consider your own dynamic risk assessments on the day and prioritise these judgements ahead of our suggestions.



How to use this guide

- ☐ Decide on a focus to fit the season
- ☐ Check you have time to walk there and back
- ☐ Use the map symbols to help navigate



FOCUS	APPROX WALKING TIME FROM LEARNING CENTRE	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES EN ROUTE (Remember, these will add to your walking time)
A route that's all about the plants	15 minutes 	Turn right out of the Learning Centre until you're at the pond in front of Betty's Café. Can you see some stripy stems in the water? This plant is called horsetail, and each band is a very small leaf. Are there any animals visiting the pond? Walk along the main path, past the entrance steps, to the main flower borders. How many different colours can you see? Are any insect pollinators visiting the flowers? Carry on the main path towards the Limestone Rock Garden to get a close-up look of the plants that usually grow up in the mountains. Then enter the sub-tropicana garden to pretend you're on a jungle expedition. Can you find a banana tree and a tree fern?
A route to search for who lives in our garden habitats	20 minutes 	Turn right out of the Learning Centre until you're at the pond in front of Betty's Café and then go left walking towards the bridge over the stream. You can see tadpoles wiggling in the water in the spring; dragonflies and damselflies whizzing past in the summer; and sometimes ducks at any time of the year. Stop to look for spiders' webs in between the stones. Have any spiders caught their dinner in their web? Turn right and walk along the streamside looking and listening for any insects visiting the flowers. Turn left at the Old Bath House to find the bird sound posts and visit the Bird Hide.
Quieter area of the garden - Arboretum	25 minutes	Follow the route above and then continue past the wildflower meadow into the arboretum to get in amongst the trees.
Places where nature can inspire your artwork	Anywhere in the garden! You can sketch and take photos as you move around. You can also have a go at natural sculpture and floor art with natural items you find on the ground; just remember not to pick any living plant parts.	

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The place to be inspired to grow your own fantastic food at school	10 minutes  → 	Turn right out of the Learning Centre and walk along the main path, past the main entrance steps, until you get to the Kitchen Garden. What fruit and vegetables are growing? Which parts of the plant do you eat? Which are your favourites?
Best for <i>really</i> wet weather	15 minutes  → 	Turn right out of the Learning Centre and walk along the main path, past the entrance steps, and keep going until you get to the Alpine House. Look closely at the amazing plants and sketch your favourite. Imagine you could shrink to a tiny fly – what would it be like walking on and flying inside these plants? Which colour flower would you fly to first? What do you notice about the names of the plants?
Plant evolution	15 minutes  → 	Turn right out of the Learning Centre and walk along the main path, past the main entrance steps, until you get to the Harrogate Arms café. Grab a drink or a bite to eat so you can chew over these questions: What plants are on the menu? What do tea, coffee, chocolate and oranges all have in common? What do they produce that acts as a stimulant to us? Why do you think these plants evolved to produce this substance? How do you think people eating plants has affected plant evolution? What is selective breeding? Is genetically engineered food a good thing?
Looking at variation between the plants	Anywhere in the garden! Search to find examples of continuous variation and discontinuous variation. You could take photos on your phone and then put them together using the PicCollage app. Too easy? Make it tougher by looking to see if the variation is interspecific or intraspecific.	

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