

Course code SI.1.BIO

Last update 02/12/21

## Course information

Title	Exploring Biodiversity and Ecology Through the Lens of Creativity and Culture
Concept by	Nessa Darcy
Course URL	<a href="https://teacheracademy.eu/course/biodiversity-and-ecology/">teacheracademy.eu/course/biodiversity-and-ecology/</a>
N. of participants	Min. 4 - Max. 14
Course length	One week (6 days, Monday - Saturday)
Language	English. Other languages may be available upon request
Locations and starting dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Dublin</a> - First Monday of the month</li> <li>• <a href="#">Barcelona</a> - Second and fifth Monday of the month</li> <li>• <a href="#">Maribor</a> - Third Monday of the month</li> </ul> <p>On request, we can organize this course directly at your school. Discover all the dates at <a href="https://teacheracademy.eu/courses-dates/">teacheracademy.eu/courses-dates/</a></p>
Free time activities offered	All courses include at least one city guided tour and one full-day Cultural Activity.
Type of certification awarded	Certificate of Attendance, including a description of the course contents (80% of attendance required); other Certificates may be available upon request
Price	<p>Starting from 480€ *</p> <p>* Our courses are eligible to be completely funded by the <a href="#">Erasmus+ KA1 funds</a> and several other programs.</p>

## Course contents

### Description

We, humans, tend to perceive nature as something to control or visit rather than being instinctively aware that it is something of which we are an integral part and on which our lives depend. How can we re-wild ourselves and the land which we use? This course aims to reintroduce you and your students to your natural habitat through colorful, interactive encounters with diverse plants and animals.

Combining **hands-on ecology** with visual arts, storytelling, music, drama, and games makes it easy to form an **intimate knowledge of our planet's ecosystems** and a deep affection for the biodiversity which they support. It enables us to imagine a healthy, abundant future for our environment and take positive action towards that vision.

Multi-sensory observation of nature has mental health benefits and is a way to include all kinds of learners. It can also act as a gateway into other learning opportunities and personal development. It is an ideal subject for boosting the confidence of quieter students as they can easily gain first-hand personal expertise in this fascinating topic.

Each day of the course builds on the previous one, from introducing the concepts to hands-on field-based activities, to the creative treatment of a species encountered on a **field trip**, and then to act on what you have learned. The course takes a **place-based learning approach**, encouraging engagement with your local wildlife, folklore, community, and citizen science biodiversity recording schemes.

We will focus in particular on insects and the plants on which they live, as these are the most widespread, diverse, and easily accessible study subjects for children. Every dramatic scene you would expect from a nature documentary can be witnessed in miniature in the undergrowth. Students who find insects repulsive are soon converted to bug-saving heroes after they have held one in their hands, drawn its portrait, and gained an understanding of why it is important and what it needs to survive!

### Learning outcomes

- Facilitate the scientific and sensory exploration of living things and their habitats;
- Engage students in understanding and appreciating the living world through simple creative activities;
- Increase their knowledge of flora and fauna, with a particular focus on invertebrates, an easily accessible, diverse, and useful group of species;
- Nurture students' relationship with local natural folklore and ancestral nature knowledge;
- Boost students' confidence and wellbeing as they develop a personal knowledge of and connection with nature;
- Inspire student action to conserve and spread awareness of biodiversity in creative ways.

## Tentative schedule\*

<b>Day 1 - Exploring the concept of biodiversity</b>	<b>Day 2 - Introducing ecology</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to the course, the school, and the external week activities;</li><li>• Icebreaker activities;</li><li>• Presentations of the participants' schools;</li><li>• Exploring the concept of biodiversity: from your lunchbox to the rainforests of Madagascar;</li><li>• Using creative activities to make biodiversity accessible to children with different learning styles.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introducing ecology and the interdependence of living things;</li><li>• Developing awareness of the local environment and the life it supports;</li><li>• Provoking students to think creatively about the human species' relationship with our ecosystem, through physical and visual activities;</li><li>• Drama and storytelling about nature.</li></ul>
<b>Day 3 - Field trip</b>	<b>Day 4 - Place-based nature</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Field trip to Turvey Park in Donabate / Red Rock in Howth / Tymon Park / Phoenix Park;</li><li>• En route: teaching biodiversity through song;</li><li>• Discovering biodiversity through a range of field sampling techniques;</li><li>• Using art to document insect anatomy and habitats;</li><li>• Setting a moth trap or pitfall trap.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revealing and recording the contents of your insect trap;</li><li>• Engaging with identification resources;</li><li>• Adaptations for survival: a rich source of inspiration for creative practices;</li><li>• Reacquainting ourselves with folklore: place-based nature relationships, including the biodiversity knowledge of migrant communities.</li></ul>
<b>Day 5 - Art and environmental activism</b>	<b>Day 6 - Course closure &amp; excursion</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Designing biodiversity conservation actions for your school;</li><li>• Using art to create a shift in attitudes towards nature and engage in environmental activism;</li><li>• Untidy Towns: collaborating with the local community;</li><li>• Painting a vision for the future of a healthy planet.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Course evaluation: round up of acquired competences, feedback, and discussion;</li><li>• Awarding of the course Certificate of Attendance;</li><li>• Excursion and other external cultural activities.</li></ul>

\*The schedule describes likely activities but may differ significantly based on the requests of the participants, and the trainer delivering the specific session. Course modifications are subject to the trainer's discretion. If you would like to discuss a specific topic, please indicate it at least 4 weeks in advance.

## Links and resources

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- Self-paced online courses for teachers: [online.teacheracademy.eu](https://online.teacheracademy.eu)
- Online English Courses for Teachers: [online.teacheracademy.eu/tag/english-courses/](https://online.teacheracademy.eu/tag/english-courses/)
- The New 2021-2027 Erasmus+ Programme Made Easy: [online.teacheracademy.eu/course/erasmus-programme-2021-2027/](https://online.teacheracademy.eu/course/erasmus-programme-2021-2027/)
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