

# LITERACY learning springboards

Pappus

## Poppy metaphors

### Research non-fiction text and poetry

**Aim:** To research poppies using the Pappus Poppy ID sheet and Playful Springboards, and write original poems.

#### Language in Poetry

by Hungarian poet Erzsébet Osvát:

*Red silk, wearing a cap,  
make friends with everyone.  
He goes dancing with the stray wind,  
whispers with lots and lots of brothers.  
It puts the butterflies to sleep,  
as if he had a mother.  
Look, look  
gentle eyes, almost, almost cracking towards you.*



#### Hidden meanings in literature

The names of plants are often used to convey hidden meanings in literature – and the name itself could be ‘hidden’ by being used in its botanical ‘binomial’ form, or by one of the many common or colloquial names that plants have.

In Slovak literature, a novel by famous Slovakian writer Jozef Cíger Hronký, uses poppy seed as the surname of the main character, Jozef Mak. ‘Mak’ means poppyseed in Slovakian. The name of the main character was chosen because the novelist wanted readers to know that Jozef Mak is “as ordinary as poppyseed”.

What meanings can pupils devise for commonly found plants in their school grounds? How could these be used in poetry or imaginative writing? Try to include ‘hidden’ meaning or metaphors in their writing.

#### More springboards:

- Pappus Playful springboard: Poppy
- Pappus Poppy ID sheet – there are 15 Plant ID sheets in total, so try to find other plants in the grounds whose properties or name could be used as metaphors.

#### Success Criteria

- ✓ I can relate two facts about the creation of the poems that use poppies as a metaphor
- ✓ I can explain some of the language features that are effective
- ✓ I can explain why poppy poems are so touching.

## Oak, poetry, folklore and celebrations

### Non-fiction text and poetry as inspiration

**Aim:** To get to know an oak tree (or other locally significant tree) in the grounds or locality.

#### Activity:

- Explore the tree using all the senses; stretch your body to embrace the tree; inhale deeply to smell its elemental aroma; scratch your fingernails down its ridged bark; listen to the leaves shivering and the boughs creaking in the wind; watch as leaved spiral down back to earth.
- Research its history and speculate about what it might have ‘seen’ over its lifetime. Collect fallen leaves and acorns to decorate the borders of poems and stories.
- Use your words and observations to create richly textured poetry celebrating the tree.

#### The Oak Tree

by Johnny Ray Ryder Jr

*A mighty wind blew night and day  
It stole the oak tree's leaves away  
Then snapped its boughs and pulled its bark  
Until the oak was tired and stark*

*But still the oak tree held its ground  
While other trees fell all around  
The weary wind gave up and spoke.  
How can you still be standing Oak?*

*The oak tree said, I know that you  
Can break each branch of mine in two  
Carry every leaf away  
Shake my limbs, and make me sway*

*But I have roots stretched in the earth  
Growing stronger since my birth  
You'll never touch them, for you see  
They are the deepest part of me*

*Until today, I wasn't sure  
Of just how much I could endure  
But now I've found, with thanks to you  
I'm stronger than I ever knew*



#### Resources:

- Pappus Oak ID sheet; Playful Springboards and Learning Springboard: Interview with a Tree

#### Success criteria:

- ✓ I can describe the characteristics of a significant tree in my locality.

