

# INTRODUCTION TO THE GARDENS

An Education Program suitable for Prep - 6

## Program snapshot

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Introduction to the Gardens provides a delightful introduction to the wondrous world of plants. The focus of this program is unearthing the delights found in a garden using story, play, horticulture and sensory exploration as stimuli for learning.

A learning environment rich with endless possibilities, the plants and landscapes of the Royal Botanic Gardens inspire children to question, imagine, create, and to share their ideas.

This program and its accompanying Teachers' Kit provide excellent opportunities to address **Victorian Essential Learning Standards** across a range of Domains, including Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning, Civics and Citizenship, Science and Communication, while helping your students make connections with the natural world. (Please see our website for the VELS program Guides).

The broad themes in this program provide flexibility to focus on particular aspects that match the curriculum needs of the teacher. It also allows scope to provide choice for students' experiences, interests and intelligence types.

## Experiences

- In the majestic presence of the oaks on **Oak Lawn** children pot up their own seedling to take home. They explore plant needs and survival, the seasonal changes and are told the miraculous story of **The Lightning Tree**. Plant treasures are collected along the way, each one telling another story or revealing the great diversity of the plant world.
- On their way to the Herb Garden the children wind through the **Camellia Forest** gathering fallen flowers from the path in winter. In the **Herb Garden** the children explore the diversity of herbal fragrances and through the making of a bag of **pot pourri** they make connections with the many ways that herbs and other plants are used in our daily lives.
- Exploring the **Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden**; the children are able to experience the many exciting plant landscapes of a garden designed for play and exploration.  
NB In school groups children are lead through by an RBG teacher for 10-15 minutes or are able to divide into adult-supervised groups of 4-5 children.



## Some plants that the children will meet...

### Bunya Pine

'Bunya Bunyas' have very spiky leaves and were possibly eaten by dinosaurs. The large egg-shaped seeds contained in the large glossy-green female cones were a favourite food for Aboriginal people of Southern Queensland. The seed is starchy and delicious, with a texture like waxy boiled potatoes. Children explore the 'dinosaur qualities' of the Bunya Bunya pine, collecting male cones, feeling the textures of leaves and trunk and enjoying a dinosaur stomp around the tree!

### Lavender

Lavender is a great plant to grow at school for many reasons. Having originated from the Mediterranean it is a good water-conservation plant. Because it has many uses children can use it to make items such as lavender bags. It attracts pollinators such as bees and butterflies which keep your garden fertile. It adds a wonderful fragrance in your garden and looks beautiful. And it is easy to propagate!

### Oaks

There are more than 30 kinds of oak on Oak Lawn, which has been listed by the National Trust as important for all Australians. Some of the trees on Oak Lawn are at least 100 years old.

Children explore the changing seasons such as gathering acorns in summer, collecting leaves in autumn and feeling the catkins (flowers) and young leaves in spring.

### The Lightning Tree

An icon for visiting children, this oak was stuck by lightning on Melbourne Cup day in 1972. There is a big scar down the trunk showing where it split. The tree crew used winches and steel cables to fix the damage. Children experience the awe of the dramatic story and meeting the huge tree with its many fairy doors.

### Teachers Kit

Teacher's resource material including pre and post excursion activities and plant information can be downloaded from the website:

[www.rbq.vic.gov.au/education/teacher\\_resources](http://www.rbq.vic.gov.au/education/teacher_resources)

### Session Times:

Morning sessions 10.15am –12.00noon

Afternoon sessions 12.30pm –2.15pm

Please speak with our Booking Officer if these times are not suitable

### 2007 Prices:

\$9.00 per student including GST

Minimum Charge is \$150.00 for small groups

Teachers free of charge

### Contact

The Education Booking Officer  
on 9252 2358

Email: [edserv@rbq.vic.gov.au](mailto:edserv@rbq.vic.gov.au)

Or visit our website at

[www.rbq.vic.gov.au/education](http://www.rbq.vic.gov.au/education)

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Teachers/ Adults free (Maximum 8 adults per class)

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