Sorting the Four Seasons

Teacher		**Class**	Year 1
Subject	Science	**Topic**	The four seasons
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United Kingdom

Pupils learn how weather, plants and daylight change across the year. They sort months and pictures into spring, summer, autumn and winter hoops.

Curriculum links

- observe changes across the four seasons [1]
- observe and describe weather associated with the seasons and how day length varies [2]

Learning objectives

- Students will sort month cards and nature pictures into the four seasons.
- Students will observe and describe weather and daylight changes across the seasons.
- Students will describe how leaves and plants change in each season.

Success criteria

- I can name the four seasons in order starting from spring.
- I can match weather, plants and animals to each season.
- I can put March to February months into the right season hoop.

What students already know

Show four colour season cards. Ask: Which season words do you know? What is the weather like today?

Key words

spring	the March, April and May time when plants start to grow and flower [8]
summer	the June, July and August time with the hottest, sunniest days [8]
autumn	the September, October and November time when leaves change colour and fall [8]
winter	the December, January and February time that is the coldest with the shortest days [8]

Materials

- 4 hoops
- season labels
- 12 month cards
- weather and nature picture cards
- Slides 1-4, Slide 6, Slides 9-10, Slide 12
- Video clip 1 (0:00-4:04) on Slide 6
- Worksheet page 3
- trays for sorted cards

Before the lesson

- Print season labels, 12 month cards and weather and nature picture cards, one set per group
- Test Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00-4:04) for sound and picture
- Print Worksheet page 3 for plenary check, one per pupil
- Lay out 4 hoops with space to walk around them

Lesson outline

0–10 min **Starter** 10 min · Whole class

To recall season names and hook pupils with the mixed-up year problem.

YOU DO

1. Tip a box of month and picture cards on the carpet and say the hook in an worried voice.
2. Show Slide 1 then Slide 2 and read: A year has four seasons. Each one lasts about three months.
3. Hold up March card and model thinking aloud about where it goes.
4. Ask pupils to chant the four seasons in order with actions.

STUDENTS DO

1. Chant spring, summer, autumn, winter in order with actions.
2. Suggest which hoop March and a blossom picture might go in.
3. Share one word they know about any season.

Say: The year is all mixed up in this box. Who can put spring, summer, autumn and winter back together? A year has four seasons and each one lasts about three months. Today we will sort them back into order.

Worked example: Hold up March card. Say: March, April and May is spring [7], so March goes in the spring hoop. Spring is when plants start to grow and flower [8], so I put the blossom picture with it too.

Ask: How many seasons are in a year and how long does each last? (Four seasons, each lasts about three months [8].) · Which season comes after winter? (Spring.)

Check understanding: Hands up for the season that comes next when teacher points to each hoop; re-chant order if unsure.

Support: Keep the four season picture cards visible so pupils can copy the order and words. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to say what the weather feels like in the season they name, e.g. windy, rainy, sunny.

Use: Slides 1-2

10–25 min **Teaching** 15 min · Whole class

To observe how weather, daylight, plants and animals change across the seasons.

YOU DO

1. Show Slides 3-4 and talk through one tree across the year with gestures.
2. Play Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00-4:04) and ask pupils to spot sunny, rainy and windy and new plants and animals.
3. Pause and sort two examples together: blossom for spring when birds build nests [7] and bare branches for winter with no leaves [7].
4. Teach daylight change and sun safety rule.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch the video and call out sunny, rainy, windy and new plants or animals they spot.
2. Join in with leaf actions: grow, full, fall, bare.
3. Answer which season has long light days and which has short light days.

Say: Seasons change weather, plants and animals. In summer trees are full of leaves [7] and we get lots of daylight hours in summer and much fewer in winter [8]. We learn by looking at light and leaves, never by looking at the sun.

Worked example: Show tree pictures in order. Say: In spring plants start to grow and flower [8]. In summer leaves are green and full. In autumn leaves change colour and fall [8] and most trees drop their leaves [7]. In winter branches are bare with no leaves [7] and days are shortest [8].

Ask: What happens to leaves in autumn and winter? (In autumn leaves change colour and fall [8]; in winter trees have no leaves and branches are bare [7].) · When do we get lots of daylight and when do we get much less? (Lots of daylight hours in summer and much fewer in winter [8]; summer has the longest days and winter the shortest [8].) · Is it safe to look at the sun to learn about light? (No, it is not safe to look directly at the sun, even when wearing dark glasses [2].)

Check understanding: Hold up sun card for long light days and moon card for short light days when teacher names a season; reteach with wide and small arm gestures if mixed.

Support: Use the words long light time and short light time and repeat with gestures wide and small. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to say what they do after school when it is light compared with when it is dark.

Use: Slides 3-4 and Slide 6 (Video clip 1 0:00-4:04)

25–45 min **Main activity** 20 min · Groups

To sort month and picture cards into the four season hoops and explain the changes.

YOU DO

1. Lay out four hoops with season labels and show Slide 9 task and Slide 10 clues.
2. Explain spring is March, April and May, summer is June, July and August, autumn is September, October and November, and winter is December, January and February [7].
3. Model placing one month and one picture, then send groups to sort the rest and talk hot or cold, leaves or flowers.
4. Visit groups, ask for reasons and remind pupils to handle cards gently.

STUDENTS DO

1. In groups place 12 month cards into the four hoops in order.
2. Place weather and nature picture cards, e.g. blossom and birds nests for spring, brown leaves for autumn.
3. Practise saying months in one hoop and one change they see in that season.

Say: Look at pictures with your partner. Talk: hot or cold? leaves or flowers? Put each card on its season mat. Spring is March, April and May and the other seasons each have three months too. Say why you put it there.

Worked example: Pick July. Say: July is in June, July and August, so it is summer [7]. Summer usually has the hottest, sunniest days [8], so I put the bee and sun picture in the summer hoop because in summer we see flowers, bees and trees full of leaves [7].

Ask: October is in which hoop and why? (Autumn, because autumn is September, October and November [7] when days get shorter and cooler [8].) · Where does the frosty bare-tree picture go? (Winter, because winter is the coldest season [8] and trees have no leaves [7] and it can be wet, snowy and frosty [7].)

Check understanding: Each group names the months in one hoop and one change; check hoops together and move any wrong cards with reasons.

Support: Colour-match the cards to the hoop colour and sort only the picture cards first. **Stretch:** Students put the four hoops in calendar order starting from spring.

Use: Slides 9-10

45–60 min **Plenary** 15 min · Whole class

To check recall of season signs and correct true or false ideas.

YOU DO

1. Line groups in year order holding season cards to retell the tree story.
2. Show Slide 12 statements one by one and take true or false votes.
3. Give out Worksheet page 3 for pupils to tick true or false on their own.
4. Go through answers together and link back to sorting hoops.

STUDENTS DO

1. Stand in year order and retell one part of the tree story in own words.
2. Vote true or false with thumbs and explain why.
3. Complete Worksheet page 3: True or false: Tick if it is true or false, then check answers.

Say: Tell the year story in order. Plants start to grow and flower in spring, leaves are full in summer, leaves fall in autumn and branches are bare in winter. Show me if each sentence is true or false.

Worked example: Read: Days are longest in winter. Say: False. We get lots of daylight in summer and much fewer in winter [8], so days are longest in summer. Summer has the hottest days and winter is the coldest season [8].

Ask: Which season is cold and icy with the shortest days? (Winter is the coldest season with the shortest days [8].) · Is it true that leaves fall in autumn because trees drop leaves? (True, most trees drop their leaves in autumn [7] when leaves change colour and fall [8].)

Check understanding: Collect Worksheet page 3 ticks; if many errors, re-sort two hoops on the carpet before finishing.

Support: Give sentence starters, e.g. In spring I see... and let pupils point to the card. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to add a weather change and a daylight change to their part of the story.

Use: Slide 12, Worksheet page 3

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Putting brown falling leaves in winter instead of autumn	Winter hoop has leaf-fall pictures	Remind that most trees drop their leaves in autumn [7] and leaves change colour and fall in autumn [8]; winter has bare branches with no leaves [7].
Saying days are longest in winter	Pupils vote true for longest in winter	Show sun and moon cards: we get lots of daylight hours in summer and much fewer in winter [8], so longest in summer.
Mixing up months, e.g. July in spring	Month cards in wrong hoops	Chant spring is March, April and May, summer is June, July and August, autumn is September, October and November, winter is December, January and February [7].

Support

- Colour-match the cards to the hoop colour and sort only the picture cards first.
- Work with an adult using sentence starters like In spring I see...

Stretch

- Students put the four hoops in calendar order starting from spring.
- Add a weather symbol and daylight idea to each season and explain clothing choice.

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For the LSE or teaching assistant

Support one group during hoop sorting using colour matching, then sit with focus pupils for Worksheet page 3 true or false.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Which three months are in spring?	March, April and May [7]
Which season usually has the hottest, sunniest days?	Summer [8]
What happens to most trees in autumn and winter?	They drop leaves in autumn [7] and have bare branches with no leaves in winter [7]

Homework

With a grown-up, spot one plant or weather sign outside and say which season it shows.

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