

Learning objectives

- To understand what a minibeast is.
- To investigate different habitats.
- To be able to identify a number of common minibeasts.
- To be able to understand the lifecycles of a number of creatures.
- To understand simple food chains and webs.
- To observe similarities and differences.
- To observe how they are suited to their environment.

20-30
mins

KS1
& 2

Teacher preparation

Site visit, risk assessment, photocopy and laminate one or two ID charts for the group, photocopy observation sheets for pupils (key stage 2 only).

Equipment & resources

- Collecting pots (jam jars, margarine tubs or yoghurt pots)
- Flat inspection trays (old lunch boxes are suitable – white is best)
- A hand lens or magnifying glass
- ID keys
- Plastic spoons or twigs to scoop up the beasties

Main activity

1. Prior to the hunt, discuss with the pupils what minibeasts are and where they might expect to find them.
2. Organise the class into pairs or small groups and encourage them to look for and collect minibeasts using the collecting pots. Encourage them to look:
 - Under stones or logs
 - In leaf litter or grass
 - On plants and trees especially in rough bark
 - In the cracks and crevices of buildings, windowsills, under plant pots.
3. Once they have found some creatures encourage them to put them in the trays for closer inspection and a group discussion.
4. Using the ID key see if the pupils can identify the creatures they have found.
5. With older pupils you can discuss 'who eats who' or if their creatures have any special adaptations for living in this habitat i.e. external shells, wings.
6. You can sort the creatures by the Number of legs, wings, body parts etc.
7. **REMEMBER** - Always put the animals back where you found them when you have finished looking at them.

Safety points:

Site visit and risk assessments are essential for this activity. Ensure that the chosen area is free from hazards. Make sure the children wash their hands thoroughly after the task. Baby wipes or antiseptic hand cleanser are really useful items. Some teachers may prefer to use gloves.

Follow-up activities:

Compare different habitats e.g. school grounds vs. woodland

Create your own mega bug (worksheet) – Talk to the class about how many minibeasts have special adaptations for the habitats they live in e.g. wings, hard shells or pincers. Encourage them to design their own mega bug. They can be as imaginative and creative as they like, however encourage them to think of reasons why their mega bug has special features and what they are used for.

- My minibeast
- Habitat estate agents
- Research a minibeast from another country
- Minibeast who am I game?
- Create a minibeast fact file on one particular minibeast
- Minibeast quiz