



KS2 Minibeasts Lesson Plan

AIM

To understand and respect all creatures

OBJECTIVES

To understand what a minibeast is

To understand the importance of minibeasts

To be able to identify a number of common minibeasts

To be able to understand the life cycle of a number of minibeasts

CURRICULUM LINKS

English EN1 Speaking and Listening

EN3 Writing

Citizenship 5a To take responsibility

Science 2 Life Processes and Living things

ESDGC

EQUIPMENT

ID keys

Collecting pots

Pooters

Sweep nets

Beating trays

SAFETY POINTS

Make sure the group is calm before they start. Point out the hazards of running, vegetation, rabbit holes etc.

PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES

Discuss what an invertebrate is. It is a creature without a backbone which makes them very flexible.

See if children can name as many invertebrates as possible and record them on your whiteboard. Now see how children feel about them, are they scary, dirty, creepy etc. Explain that some minibeasts may hurt us. Bees and wasps can sting, some caterpillars have bristles which may give us a rash, but minibeasts such as snails, British spiders and earwigs, are harmless. Point out that the only reason that they hurt us is because they are trying to protect themselves.

Get children to imagine what it is like to be a fly in the classroom, or a spider in the corner. What are they doing, how are they feeling? What happens when a human comes and tries to catch them? Now how do they feel?

Why do creatures come into our homes and classrooms? To look for food and warmth or because they were born there? Explain what a habitat is (a home). This can be large (a woodland) or small (a leaf). Humans also have habitats (or home or bedroom). What does a habitat need? Food, water shelter, company/mates. Give children a picture of an animal and ask them to think about what habitat each animal lives in and what that habitat offers them.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Show the children the equipment that they are going to take out with them and how they use each item. It is important that they don't loose the creatures after they have caught them, but even more important, they should not need to touch any of the creatures with their hands.

Go to your wildlife area and point out good minibeast habitats such as under stones or logs, in long grass or on trees and spend some time looking for a wide variety of creatures. Identify each creature using the id keys and think about any special features that they may have.

- Do they have a hard shell to protect them?
- Are they slimy to help them crawl up walls
- Do they have a sting in case they are attacked?
- Do they have wings so that they can fly?

Remember to put your creatures back carefully where they have come from. Where possible use the same plant or stone as this will be close to its food. Remember to put all stones back where you found them.

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

Minibeasts are a vital part of the food chain. Some minibeasts feed on dead materials, helping to turn it into useful compost. Some make passages in soil preventing it from getting too compact. Minibeasts such as ladybirds eat aphids in the garden. Use wildlife pictures to make a food web with the children. How do they all link together? What happens if all of the invertebrates were killed? What effect would this have on the other wildlife.

Each child takes a piece of string back out into the wildlife area and lies on the ground next to it. Imagine you are one of your insects and follow it's journey along the string. What happens when he meets an obstacle like a rock or a puddle and what happens if he meets another insect? Write a story or a poem about their journey.

VOCAB

Adaptation, community, food chain, food web, habitat, predator, prey.