

# Minibeasts (and other creatures)

## Linked Learning

### KS1 & KS2

#### Maths

Problem Solving  
Positional language  
Counting

#### PSHE

Parallel Play  
Communicating and sharing ideas  
Empathy and kindness towards other living things

#### Science

Observations of living things  
Categorisation  
Exploring materials

#### D.T.

Designing and planning projects  
Selecting the correct materials and tools

#### Art

Using a range of tools and materials  
Exploring colour, texture and pattern

## Context

The Fantasy Forest area has been designed specifically to enhance the curriculum offered at Grange school. Each module strand aims to :

- build pupils confidence and independence
- increase feelings of empathy for each other and for nature
- improve physical and mental health
- allow opportunities to learn by experience

The minibeast module will allow the pupils to have an in-depth look at other living things which they find in the world around them.

With direct links to other curriculum areas they will be given opportunities to categorise insects and other creepy-crawlies based on observations of them (Science), work co-operatively on projects (PSHE) and problem solve by designing different habitats and areas for animals (D.T.) as well as expressing themselves creatively by replicating the minibeasts which will be studied (Art).

Underpinning the module is the development of a understanding and respect for all other living creatures, their environments and needs.

## Vocabulary

### Wave 1

#### Vocabulary for AL03-AL6

bug  
leg  
wing  
eye  
bird

### Wave 2

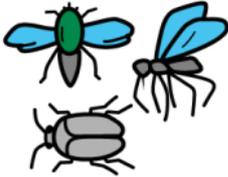
#### Vocabulary for AL07-AL10

creature  
caterpillar  
millipede  
insect  
shell

### Wave 3

#### Vocabulary for AL10 +

camouflage  
predators  
hibernation  
texture  
patterned

Suggested Activities AL03—AL05	Curriculum Links
<p><b>Minibeast safari</b></p> <p>Take the pupils on a walk around Fantasy Forest on a hunt for minibeasts - as well as any other living creatures who might cross your path. What can you spot? Adults to model walking slowly and staying quiet to not scare the bugs away. Remember to look high up for birds, look low down for ants, look underneath logs for woodlice etc.</p> <p>If you can, catch some of the creatures in small pots.</p> <p>The pupils can then look at the bugs more closely.</p> <p>What colour are they? How many legs have they got?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science - Pupils match objects and materials in terms of a simple feature or properties.</li> <li>• Number - I will join in with an adult who is counting.</li> <li>• U+A - I will look for things when I cannot see them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clay hedgehogs</b></p> <p>Supported by pictures of hedgehogs, discuss the hedgehogs spines. What do they look like and what do you think they'd feel like? Take the pupils to Fantasy Forest to collect twigs, pine needles, or anything else which would be suitable to use as spines.</p> <p>Allow the pupils to shape a ball of clay into the shape of the hedgehogs body, then stick in the 'spines' which you collected into it's back.</p> <p>Where do the hedgehogs eyes need to go? How many eyes does it need?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art - Pupils show an active interest in a range of tools and materials.</li> <li>• Science - Pupils explore objects and materials provided, changing some materials by physical means and observing the outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bird feeders</b></p> <p>Birds get hungry, just like we get hungry. Especially over the winter when there is less food for them to find. Making bird feeders is a fun and easy way to help!</p> <p>Mix up a combination of wild bird seed, oats, breadcrumbs, sultanas, currents and unsalted peanuts (you don't need all of these, a mixture of any is fine). Melt 1 part lard/vegetable fat for every 2 parts dry mixture you have, and mix it in.</p> <p>Support the pupils to mix up all the ingredients, and then fill up half orange peels with the mixture.</p> <p>Hang these up from trees in Fantasy Forest, and watch to see how quickly the birds find their new tasty snacks!</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food tech - Pupils copy a simple movement with a tool.</li> <li>• PSHE - Pupils can engage in parallel activity with several others.</li> <li>• U+A - I will show you I know when you have added more to a pile or plate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Animal footprint walk</b></p> <p>Print off and laminate the footprints of different animals and creatures (saved in the supporting worksheets folder). Place these around Fantasy Forest.</p> <p>On a walk through the forest, how many foot prints can the children find? Can they matching pairs of footprints which are the same?</p> <p>What animals do you think they might be from? (Maybe the footprints could lead to a picture of the corresponding animal?)</p>  <p>This could be extended by making footprints of the children's own feet, either in a muddy area, or using paint.</p> <p>What is the same about the footprints? What is different?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U+A - I will sort or match objects by knowing what is the same.</li> <li>• SSM - I will look for things when I cannot see, hear or touch them.</li> <li>• P.E. - Pupils recognize and collect, on request, familiar pieces of equipment with some prompts.</li> </ul>

## Suggested Activities AL05—AL08

## Curriculum Links

### Bug hotel

Encourage insects to feel welcome in Fantasy Forest by building a bug hotel. These can be built by recycling old planks of wood or pallets, and filling up gaps between them with twigs, logs and other natural materials you think might keep bugs cosy and feeling safe.

The children could help to source some materials from around the forest area, or maybe from a walk on the Vale, thinking about which ones bugs might like/not like to be used.

Revisit regularly to see which Creepy Crawly residents have taken up home there!



- PSHE - Pupils can communicate feelings and ideas in simple phrases.
- D.T. - Pupils demonstrate preferences for materials.
- SSM - I will explore the position of things, putting them in and out of containers.

### We're going on a bug hunt...

Explain to the pupils that we are going to go on a bug hunt. What bugs do they think we might find? Where do they think we might find them.

Using the pre-prepared checklist (saved in the supporting worksheets folder), children can tick off the different creatures as they see them. Encourage them to check carefully which bug they think it is.

What colour is it?

How many legs does it have?

Can they count how many of each different creature they see?

How could you record how many of each type of bug you see?

Ant		
Ladybird		
Woodlouse		
Snail		
Butterfly		
Worm		

- Number - I will count beyond 10.
- Science - Pupils match objects and materials in terms of a simple feature or properties.
- U+A - I will respond well to key words like how many.

### Snail paper plates

If possible gather some real life snails for the children to study closely.

Are they all one colour or are they a mixture?

What shapes can you see?



Pupils to paint the snails, choosing carefully which colours to use to keep the snails as accurate to real life as possible.

Encourage them to explore mixing different colours to see what happens, and to keep looking back at the snail to check what colour they need next.

The paper body can be stuck on once they have finished to complete the snail.

- Art - Pupils choose tools and materials which are appropriate to the activity from a limited selection.
- Science - Pupils can communicate related ideas and observations using simple phrases.
- S+L - I can use simple describing words.

### Make a wormery

Add the following to a large glass jar/container:

- 1/4 cup of gravel per jar
- Layers of dirt, sand, leaves and grass clippings
- 1 TBS of water

Then all that's left to do is to find some worms to enjoy their new home!



What do you think the worms need to stay healthy and happy?

What might they use the earth for? What might they use the leaves and grass cuttings for?

(Remember to release your worms back into the wild once you have finished!)

- Science - Pupils use resources with independence by following instructions involving more than one step.
- SSM - I will explore the position of things, putting them in and out of containers.

# Minibeasts (and other creatures)

Suggested Activities AL08+	Curriculum Links
<p><b>Ant farm</b></p> <p>Place a small glass jar (upside-down) inside a large glass jar, and fill the space around the small jar with sand. Cover the top of the jar with cling film, or the lid with holes punched into it to allow the ants to breathe, and go hunting for ants to add to the jar!</p> <p>Given a bit of time, the ants will begin to dig and form tunnels in the sand, which should be visible from the outside of the jar! How many can you spot?</p>  <p>Don't forget to release your ants back into the wild once you have finished.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science - Pupils can make observations about features of living things.</li> <li>• SSM- I will use words to describe positions or to compare two quantities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hedgehog house</b></p> <p>Hedgehogs usually hibernate between mid November and March, and need safe places to be able to do this.</p> <p>Use an empty cardboard box to design and build a house for a hedgehog. What tools might you need to complete the house?</p> <p>How will the hedgehog get in to the house? Where will it sleep? What will it eat/drink?</p>  <p>How can you camouflage the house to keep the hedgehog safe so predators won't be able to find it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D.T. - Pupils explain their choices of materials for a product they are designing.</li> <li>• Science - I can make personal choices about the equipment to use, who to work with or which activity to be involved in.</li> <li>• PSHE - pupils are often sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Squirrel obstacle course</b></p> <p>You're challenge is to design an obstacle course for a squirrel. The rules are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The squirrel must travel between at least 5 different objects/areas</li> <li>2. The squirrel must never touch the ground</li> <li>3. The squirrel must reach the end of the course at least once.</li> </ol>  <p>What equipment do you think you might need to complete this challenge?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D.T. - Pupils' plans show that, with help, they can put their ideas into practice.</li> <li>• U+A - I will be organised when solving problems.</li> <li>• Science - With prompts, pupils can suggest different ways they could have done things.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Minibeasts rock!</b></p> <p>Collect some stones which are roughly insect shaped. On a walk around the Fantasy Forest see how many different mini-beasts the children can spot. Ask them to look closely at the colour, shape, texture and patterns on the bugs. If appropriate try to catch some in a small clear pot.</p> <p>Using paint and other resources, the children can choose one mini-beast each to create on a rock (or alternatively make out of clay?). How will they make sure they get the correct colour pattern and texture onto their mini-beast?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art - Pupils are able to develop an idea from its starting point.</li> <li>• Science - Pupils make simple observations about features of familiar living things.</li> <li>• S+L - I can express ideas using appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul>

## Resources

AL03-AL05 Activities	AL05-AL08 Activities	AL08+ Activities
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minibeast safari</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small pots for bug catching - ideally with a magnifying glass on the top.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Bug hotel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old planks of wood or pallets</li> <li>• Hammer and nails</li> <li>• Twigs/small logs/tubes/ other appropriate natural resources</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Ant farm</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A large glass jar</li> <li>• A small glass jar</li> <li>• Sand</li> <li>• Ants</li> <li>• Clingfilm</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Clay hedgehogs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clay / salt dough</li> <li>• Twigs/pine needles or similar items gathered from Fantasy Forest</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>We're going on a bug hunt</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printed copies of the 'We're going on a bug hunt' checklist (saved in the supporting work-sheets folder)</li> <li>• Clipboards and pens</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Hedgehog house</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empty cardboard box</li> <li>• Scissors</li> <li>• Sellotape</li> <li>• Other natural resources gathered from Fantasy Forest</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Bird feeders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A combination of wild bird seed, oats, bread-crumbs, sultanas, currents and unsalted peanuts</li> <li>• Lard/vegetable fat</li> <li>• Orange peel halves</li> <li>• Bowl and wooden spoon</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Snail paper plates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snails</li> <li>• Paper plates</li> <li>• Paint in 'snail' colours</li> <li>• Paintbrushes</li> <li>• Card</li> <li>• Scissors</li> <li>• A black marker pen</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Squirrel obstacle course</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twigs, sticks, straws etc</li> <li>• String</li> <li>• Any tools or equipment which the pupils request</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Animal footprint walk</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printing animal foot-prints (save in the sup- porting worksheets fold- er), placed around Fan- tasy Forest</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Make a wormery</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large glass jar</li> <li>• Soil</li> <li>• Sand</li> <li>• Leaves/grass</li> <li>• Worms</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mini-beasts rock!</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat rocks</li> <li>• Small clear pots (ideally with a magnifying lid)</li> <li>• Paints</li> <li>• Paintbrushes</li> </ul>