

EduTrend Contents

W4C · BIOLOGY & LIFE SCIENCES · PRIMARY

Minibeast Safari

Which animals live where, and why?

Ages 8–11 | Level: Developing | 60 minutes | Groups of 4 · up to 30 | Activity 02

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 pupil worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 02 · AT A GLANCE

Minibeast Safari

Pupils explore two contrasting habitats in the school grounds, such as a lawn and a shady hedge. They sample carefully with a quadrat, identify minibeasts using a simple key, count and compare, and explain how each animal suits its habitat. The activity develops identification skills, sampling and respect for living things.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- use a simple key to identify common minibeasts;
- sample a habitat fairly using a quadrat;
- compare numbers of animals in two habitats;
- explain how animals are suited to where they live.

KEY WORDS

habitat · minibeast · quadrat · key · invertebrate · adaptation · sample

CURRICULUM LINKS

Science: living things and their habitats, classification. Maths: tally charts and bar charts. Geography: fieldwork.

1	2	3	4	5	6
QUESTION	**PREDICT**	**PLAN**	**OBSERVE**	**RECORD**	**EXPLAIN**
What do we want to know?	What will happen?	Keep it fair	Look closely	Measure and note	What does it show?

Materials (per group)

- Quadrat (hoop or 50 cm square of string)
- White tray, soft paintbrush, pooters or spoons
- Pots with lids and air holes
- Hand lenses
- Minibeast key card
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Choose two safe habitats and check them for hazards.
- Lay pieces of wood or carpet in shady spots a week before to attract minibeasts.
- Print key cards.
- Agree the rules for handling and returning animals.
- Check the weather and pupils' clothing.

SAFETY

Wear gloves or wash hands afterwards. Avoid stinging nettles and animals that bite or sting. Handle animals gently and return them to where they were found.

ACTIVITY 02 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Timings are for 60 minutes. If the weather is poor, use leaf litter brought indoors in trays, then return it outside.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–5 min **Hook**	Show a hidden minibeast under a log. Ask why it chose that spot.	*"Why do woodlice hide under logs?"*
5–15 min **Learn the key**	Model how to use the key with a picture of a woodlouse.	*"How many legs? Does it have a shell?"*
15–40 min **Survey**	Groups place the quadrat three times in each habitat, search carefully and tally animals.	*"How can we make our sampling fair?"*
40–50 min **Compare**	Groups combine tallies and draw a bar chart.	*"Which habitat had more animals? Which kinds?"*
50–55 min **Explain**	Discuss how animals suit their habitats: dark, damp, food.	*"What does a slug need that a lawn cannot give?"*
55–60 min **Return**	Return every animal carefully. Wash hands.	*"Why must we put them back?"*

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Find out whether more minibeasts live in the shady habitat or the open habitat. Use the quadrat three times in each place and give evidence for your answer.

ACTIVITY 02 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The biology in brief

A habitat provides what an animal needs: food, water, shelter and suitable conditions. Many minibeasts, such as woodlice, slugs and millipedes, need damp, dark places so their bodies do not dry out. Others, such as ants and beetles, are more common in open, sunny places.

Scientists sample habitats because they cannot count every animal. A quadrat marks out a fixed area, and several samples give a fairer picture. Keys help identify organisms by asking yes-or-no questions about features such as the number of legs or wings.

Common ideas to listen for

- "All minibeasts are insects." Spiders, woodlice and worms are not insects.
- "One quadrat is enough." More samples give a fairer result.
- "Animals choose habitats for fun." They survive best where their needs are met.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use a picture key with five animals only and one habitat.

Stretch

Measure light and dampness in each habitat and link them to the animals found.

WORKSHEET 1

Survey sheet

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Tally each minibeast you find in each quadrat.

Tally

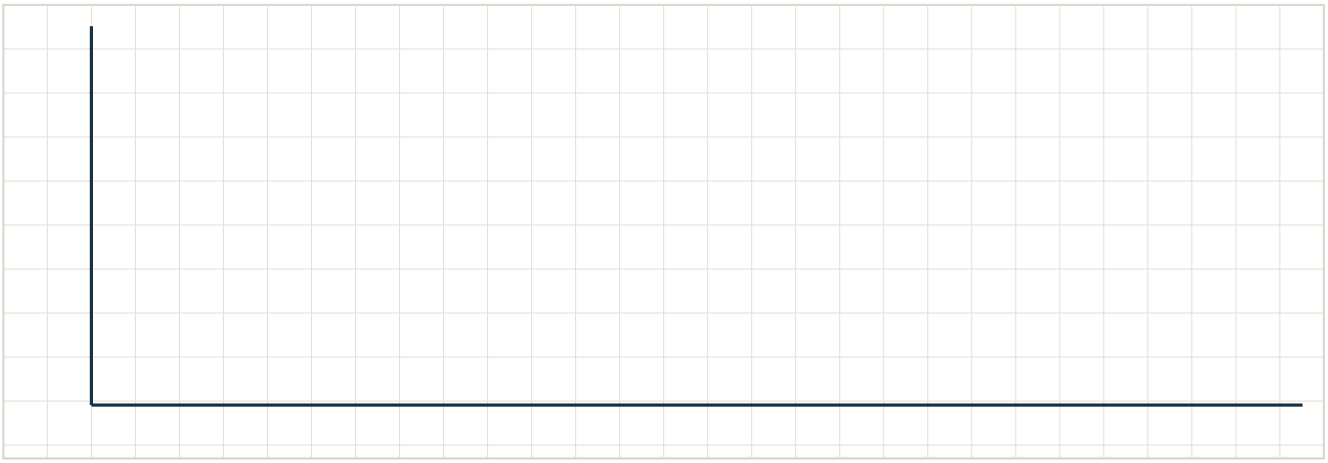
Minibeast	Habitat 1	Habitat 2
Woodlouse		
Worm		
Snail or slug		
Spider		
Beetle		
Ant		
Other		

WORKSHEET 2

Compare the habitats

Draw a bar chart of your totals.

Bar chart



y-axis: number found

x-axis: minibeast

Which habitat had more minibeasts? Why?

WORKSHEET 3

Naturalist's log

Colour in the box that is true for you.

What I can do

I can...	Not yet	Nearly	Yes!
use a key			
sample fairly			
handle animals gently			
explain why animals live where they do			

Draw one minibeast and label two features that help it survive

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight pupils; copy as needed.

Pupil	Uses a key accurately	Samples fairly	Explains habitat links

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Minibeast Safari is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents W4C Biology & Life Sciences programme (primary, level: developing). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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