

# Dyke Dipping KS2 - How to guide

Collect equipment at the centre and walk to the dyke dipping platform

## Introduction

Arrange pupils so that they can all see the demonstration.  
Split the pupils into small groups (ideally 3 or 4 per group)

## Equipment

**All equipment is provided; please do not bring your own.**

You will need to bring:

- clipboards and pencils
- printed 'Study of a pond animal' sheets for pupils to complete

Each small group will need:

- 1 white tray
- 2 spoons
- 1 pond viewer
- 1 Freshwater Name Trail identification key
- 1 net

Top tip – Check out our 'How to dip!' demonstration video on the website

## Instructions

1. Check hands for open cuts, wounds or severe eczema. These pupils must wear a glove to avoid pond water getting into their wound and keep it on until they have washed their hands. Remind the group to keep their hands away from their face and to wash their hands after the activity before eating and drinking.
2. An adult should half fill the white trays with dyke water using the bucket provided to collect water from the dyke. Trays should be spaced out, on the grass away from the dyke. Please ensure you keep the footpath and area in front of the dipping platform clear.
3. An adult should demonstrate how to dip and then pupils can take turns. Pupils should take turns to dip. The person dipping should kneel at the edge of the platform and hold the net firmly with two hands and sweep it through the water (not the mud) in a figure of eight motion, turning it so that the net stays open and filling.
4. Raise the net to allow the water to drain out. Pupils should shuffle back from the edge of the platform before standing. Take the net to the tray, turn it over, push the net inside out and submerge it in the tray.

5. Swish the net in the water to remove any animals caught in it before passing it to the next person in the group for their turn to dip.
6. Those not dipping can examine the animals caught using the viewer. Use the spoon to place some water in the small dish on the base of the viewer. Ensure the dish is covered with water, but not over-flowing. Carefully catch an animal using the spoon and place in the viewer before placing the conical lid on top. Hold the handles and look through the viewing hole on the side or through the top of the viewer. Viewers must be kept level or water will leak out.
7. Use the Freshwater Name Trail key to identify each animal.
8. Use the 'Study of a pond animal' sheet for pupils to complete with observations of their finds.

### **Important**

- Never pick up animals with your hands as it is easy to hurt the animals and some might defend themselves when scared. None of the animals you will find are dangerous but some can give a nasty nip.
- If a group finds a Fen Raft Spider, it is a protected species and, as such, can only be handled under licence. Observe the animal before carefully returning it to the pond.

### **At the end of the activity**

1. Adults should return all animals in the tray to the dyke by kneeling at the platform edge and carefully lowering the tray towards the water and gently pouring the water back into the dyke. Please ensure all animals are returned to the water, this may require the use of a spoon as the small snails often stick to the tray.
2. Check the nets, trays and viewers carefully for animals stuck to the sides and rinse out, in the dyke, so that all the animals are returned to the dyke.
3. Return the equipment to the wheelbarrow.
4. Return to the centre and lean the nets against the window sill outside the activity room to dry and leave for our staff to put away.
5. Now you can play Deadly Links: a game looking at energy transfer in a food chain and the impact of other factors on a food chain (see separate resource sheet).
6. Ensure that everyone washes their hands thoroughly with soap and water before moving on to the next activity, eating or drinking.