

Invertebrates KS2 - How to guide

Collect equipment from the centre and follow the map to the Minibeast Meadow.

Equipment

All equipment is provided: please do not bring your own.

Each small group will need:

- 1 white tray
- 1 brush
- 1 bug box
- 1 identification guide
- 1 sweep net (if weather is dry)

Instructions

1. Introduce invertebrates, what do we mean by an invertebrate?
Discuss: how are invertebrates different from us?
Can they think of some examples of invertebrates that they might find? (a chance to address misconceptions around animals that are not invertebrates, such as frogs)
Split the children into small groups (ideally 3 per group)

2. Invertebrate Hunting:

Tree tapping: white trays are held under a branch and the branch is given a gentle shake to dislodge invertebrates into the tray for identification: discuss are trees living or dead? Shake gently so as not to cause damage.

Bug boxes are to be placed in front of an invertebrate and the brush used to gently sweep invertebrates into the pot. Place the lid on, being careful not to catch any legs/wings etc. No slugs, snails or worms should be put in bug boxes as this makes them very sticky and other creatures will get stuck to them!

There are lots of logs in the meadow, ask the group to use their hands (not feet) to turn logs over gently. They might see lots of invertebrates running around or they might be hiding under leaves so they must look very carefully and be careful not to stand on the areas they have uncovered.

Sweep nets should be swept through long grass or nettles (being careful not to catch brambles), the bag of the net should then be held closed and then tipped out into the white tray where the bug box and brush can be used as above to catch invertebrates.

Use an identification guide to identify the invertebrates. Optional Minibeast Investigation worksheet, giving the opportunity to look in depth at one invertebrate.

Important:

- Logs should be put back in the same place and the same way up that you found it. This is the invertebrate's home so we can't leave it broken with no roof!
 - Never pick the invertebrates up with your fingers as they can be easily squashed. Some invertebrates might also feel threatened and try to bite, but they're all very small and no invertebrates are dangerous enough to pose a real risk.
 - Don't put too many invertebrates together in a pot, they don't all get on!
 - Nets should not be used to catch butterflies, dragonflies or damselflies as this can cause serious damage to the invertebrates.
 - If you find a lizard or a newt, please do not pick them up, please do not pick them up, it may be a protected species and, as such, can only be handled under licence. The logs should be placed carefully back over them with small sticks placed either side of the creature to prevent the log from crushing them.
3. Classification Hoops activity: The aim is to collect as many different creatures as possible for the Classification Hoops activity (see separate resource sheet).
 4. Invertebrates should be returned back to where they were found. If under a log, they should be released beside the log so they can crawl back underneath by themselves.
 5. Discuss: what did you find? Where did you find things? Did you find more under logs or in the long grass? Why was this? Why do we classify things? How does it help to group things according to their characteristics?

At the end of the activity

Ensure all bug boxes are empty (and complete with lids!), turn nets inside out to ensure nothing remains inside and return all equipment to the centre. Please count all equipment to ensure that none is left behind, there should be 10 sets of all equipment.

