

Pond Dipping KS2 - How to guide

Walk to the raised pond to collect the equipment.

Introduction

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

Equipment

You will need to bring:

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

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

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. Half fill the white trays with pond water (it may be easier for an adult to do this). Trays should be spaced out, on the ground in the area away from the pond.
3. Now you are ready to dip! Pupils should take turns to dip. The person dipping should 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. 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. Place a spoon of water in the small dish (on the green part), carefully catch an animal using the spoon and place in the viewer before placing the conical lid on top. Animals should NOT be placed in the viewer without water! 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.

Ensure that only one invertebrate is placed in the viewer at a time and do not leave them in the viewer for too long as they can get hot. Once the animals have been looked at, place them back into the white tray.

7. If the water in the tray becomes dirty or clogged with weeds, replace the water by resting the tray on the edge of the pond before gently tipping it out and refilling with fresh water.
8. Use the Freshwater Name Trail key to identify each animal.
9. 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 them, and some may 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 newt, it may be 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. Return all animals in the tray to the pond by resting the tray on the edge of the pond and gently tipping it out
2. Check the nets, trays and viewers carefully for animals stuck to the sides and rinse out so that all the animals are returned to the pond.
3. Take the equipment back to the decking area and wash in the side sink. Leave out to air dry.
4. Rinse the nets in the sink and hang carefully onto holders to drip dry.
5. Ensure that everyone washes their hands thoroughly with soap and water before moving on to the next activity, eating or drinking.
6. 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).