

Mini-beasts in the Classroom



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Where to find mini-beasts

dark corners

rotting logs

sheds

woodpiles

leaf litter

bushes

grass

under rocks



How to catch mini-beasts

- glass with paper
- collecting pot
- pooter/vacuum
- pitfall trap
- food traps
- branch beating
- light trap
- nets
- galls
- egg clusters
- cocoons/chrysalis
- rotting logs
- digging in dirt
- pet stores



Homes: temporary or permanent?

- purchased kits
- pet cages
- aquariums
- terrariums
- dishpans/tubs
- boxes
- jars
- jugs
- cut holes
- cover openings with cheesecloth, narrow gauge screen, netting, or pantyhose



Observe the mini-beasts

- viewing posts
- magnifying glasses
- amplifiers
- space for children to gather
- time to spending watching
- maintaining habitat



Record observations in a notebook with drawings and notes.

- **Habitat:** where does it live? long grass, short grass, under a rock, in trees, on plants or flowers, in water, in dead wood ...
- **Wings:** how many wings does it have? flying motion, pathways, height of flypath
- **Head:** Is the head large or small? Eyes? Antennae or feelers?
- **Legs:** How many; jointed?
- **Body:** segmented, symmetrical



Research Questions

- What is metamorphosis?
- How do mini-beasts protect themselves from predators? Who is predator, who is prey?
- Which mini-beasts are helpful to humans and which are harmful?
- What and how do mini-beasts eat?
- How do they move?
- Do they like shade or light?
- Do they like it damp or dry?



Constructing Mini-beasts

styrofoam pieces

pipe cleaners, wire

egg cartons

paper plates

tissue

coffee filters

cellophane paper

sticky paper

pompoms

flower stamens

garbage bags

paper mache



Art Projects

illustration studies

fingerprints

blobs

transparencies

printing

painting

rubbings

marble painting

collage

resist

clay

plaster of paris

tissue

sponge-painting

murals



Food Experiences

- butterfly nectar (sweet juices) with straws (headbands with antennae)
- fruit kabobs
- vegetable kabobs
- salad
- finger gelatin
- ants on a log
- banana bugs
- original creations with canned fruit, vegetables, cheese, raisins, nuts, cereals, bread, ...



Drama and Movement

- Costume Props:

- headbands with velcro
- New Year's blow outs
- wings
- segments
- velcro spots

- Scenarios:

- creative and open-ended
- ants in pants
- life cycle
- hunting
- moving



Math Activities

- graphing
- patterning
- counting
- recording
- tallying
- symmetry
- predicting
- measuring
- sorting
- classifying
- estimating
- sequencing
- number sets



Language Arts

- fiction books and multimedia resources
- non-fiction books and multimedia resources
- author studies (Eric Carle)
- pattern books
- shape books
- reports
- retellings
- reader's theater
- research
- listening center
- puppets