



STAR

Organiser's Card:

Animal Adventure

About the activity

This activity is designed to get children thinking about minibeasts and habitats. You could run the activity with small groups, or with a whole class.

Cosmic and Seren are bored. Cosmic wants to go on an animal adventure. Uncle Astro said that they will find minibeasts if they look carefully. Cosmic looks high and low but he can't find any little animals. Seren thinks that they should ask Uncle Astro for help.

Through this activity you will support children to:

- Go on a minibeast hunt.
- Find out about the minibeasts they see and their habitats.
- Share their findings with the rest of their group.

What to do

1. Introduce the activity using the story on the accompanying slides or activity card. Ask the children where they think they will find minibeasts.
2. Explain that they will be going on a minibeast hunt.
3. Encourage children to share their ideas about how they will hunt for minibeasts. Prompt questions:
 - Where will we look for minibeasts?
 - Will we collect them?
 - How will we make sure we don't harm them?
4. Give out the equipment to the children.
5. Support children to conduct their investigation and make their own records of their results. They could take photographs or make drawings. Support them to identify what they find – if you have a tablet or mobile phone, you could use Google Lens or a similar app to help with this.

Kit list

- Suitable minibeast collection kit, e.g. pooter, collection jar, collection scissors (special devices for catching minibeasts)
- Appropriate magnifiers, e.g. magnifying glasses
- Identification book or app (optional)
- Outdoor environment, preferably with rocks, logs, large stones, pieces of old carpet (you could place some on the ground a few weeks earlier)

Key words

- **Habitat**
- **Damp**
- **Moist**
- **Minibeast**
- **Skeleton**
- **Invertebrate**

6. Ask the children to share their findings with the rest of the group.
7. Return any collected minibeasts to their habitat.

Things to think about

Teach children to handle all animals with care. It is best to observe minibeasts in their natural environment. However, they can be taken inside for short periods, as long as they are treated with respect and returned to where they were found.

Take it further

Many children believe the word 'animal' refers only to large furry animals and not humans, birds, fish, insects, etc. This hunt focuses on minibeasts but could also include spotting other animals such as birds.

The scientific name for minibeasts is invertebrates, this means an animal without a backbone. Some invertebrates have no skeleton, like worms. Others, like insects and spiders, have a skeleton on the outside (exoskeleton).

You can generally find plenty of minibeasts living in moist, damp, dark environments which help to keep them safe and stop them 'drying out'.

The children could design and make minibeast homes or bug hotels as a follow-up activity. They might like to make up a song or poem about the minibeasts, or create models of them.

Watch out!

- Children should be supervised at all times during this activity – levels of supervision will vary depending on the location and the age of the children.
- All children should be made aware of the boundaries of the minibeast hunting area.
- Children should be reminded not to put their fingers in their mouth, nose or eyes and to wash their hands afterwards.
- Make sure that any stones are not too heavy and are lifted carefully.
- Common outdoor allergens include plants, animals, pollen and stings. Check school records beforehand to see whether any of the children have severe allergies to these.
- Do not bring wild birds or mammals into school as they may carry diseases.
- Follow your organisation's guidelines for outdoor work.
- You can find more guidance on minibeast collection on the CLEAPSS website, in [Guide P144](#)

Activity Card:

Animal Adventure

Cosmic and Seren are sitting on the climbing frame in Cosmic's garden. They are trying to think of something to do.

"Let's go on an animal safari!" shouts Cosmic, jumping down.

"Ok," Seren replies, "Do you mean with toy animals?"

"No, not a pretend safari," says Cosmic, "I mean a real animal adventure."

Seren looks puzzled. She follows Cosmic round the garden. He looks high, he looks low but doesn't seem to be able to find what he is looking for.

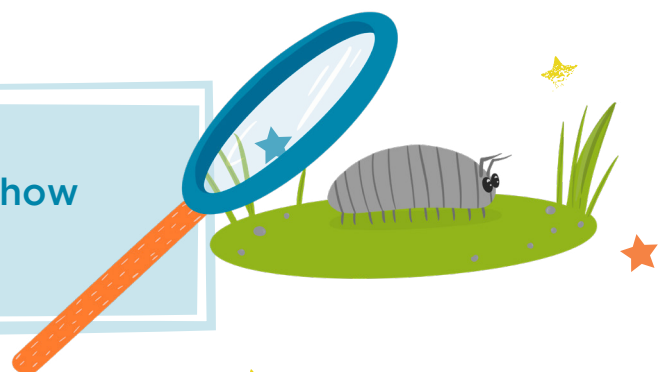
"Uncle Astro said that there are little animals, called minibeasts, all around us," says Cosmic. "But I can't see any."

"Wow! You mean tiny lions and tigers and things?" asks Seren. "Come on, let's see if Uncle Astro can help us."

Where do you think Uncle Astro will tell them to look?

Your challenge

Go on an animal adventure and see how many minibeasts you can find.





Discuss

Cosmic thinks that they might live under logs and stones. Seren thinks we might need to look in trees and on the top of walls.

What do you think?

Getting started

Find a place with a large stone or log. Look carefully all around it to see how many minibeasts you can spot.

Now lift the log or rock very carefully (ask an adult for help) - how many minibeasts can you see? You might collect some of them to look at indoors (check with an adult first).

Test your ideas

Can you find out the names of the minibeasts?

Can you find out more about some of them?

Where is the best place for them to live?

Where do you find the most minibeasts?

Share your ideas

You could take a photo, draw a picture, make up a song or poem, or make a model of the minibeasts you find. Share them with your group.

Extra things to do

Can you think of other places to look for minibeasts?