

## Topic Focus

Living things and their habitats, plants and animals and working scientifically.

## Overview

The activities in this topic encourage children to see burial grounds as important havens for a range of wildlife. They encourage children to explore different habitats and to view burial grounds from different angles. By investigating mini-beasts, habitats and trees as well as important British species like Hedgehogs, Bumblebees, Lichens and Yew trees the children will use and develop observation and recording skills as well as simple field techniques.

The activities are: Tremendous Trees, Green Guardians, Mini-Beast Mania, Habitat Hunter, Let's Investigate Lichens, Creature Comforts - Hedgehogs, Bumblebees, Slow Worms, Swifts.

## EYFS, KS1 & KS2

### Key Skills

Investigating  
Observing  
Questioning  
Classifying  
Identifying  
Recording  
Measuring

### Key Words

Habitat  
Conditions  
Mini-beast  
Lichen

## Curriculum Links

This topic helps develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in Science, Geography, and PSHE.

### EYFS

Understanding the World  
The World

## John Muir Award

*Discover*  
*Explore*  
*Conserve*  
*Share*



Try the following activities if you are working for any of the following badges:

**Rainbows** - Look and Learn

**Beavers** - Explore Activity

**Brownies** - Environment, Friend to Animals, Science Investigator, Seasons, Wildlife

**Cubs** - Naturalist Activity

**Guides** - Animal Active, Science

**Scouts** - Naturalist Activity, Global Conservation Activity

## Mini-beast Mania

Burial grounds are a haven for mini-beasts. The activity ideas give children an opportunity to collect and examine a selection of them.

### Learning Outcomes

Children will:

- Identify differences between some local habitats and the mini-beasts that live there
- Explore and use classification keys to help group, identify and name a variety of living things in their local environment

### Resources

Magnifying glass, viewfinder, pooter, fine paintbrush, scooper (plastic spoon), net, white sheet, collecting tub, mini-beast information books

Top Tips for Mini-beast Hunting

Take a Closer Look

Mini-beast Identification Key

Mini-beast Writing Frame

### Key Questions

**Where do mini-beasts like to live? What conditions do they prefer?**

### Activity Ideas

**1. We're going on a mini-beast hunt** - In small groups have a go at collecting mini-beasts from different places using different collecting techniques. Use the top tips for mini-beast hunting to help. Not sure where to look? Check underneath logs and rocks, on headstones and monuments, walls and buildings, in shady areas, in leaf litter, on and underneath leaves, in bushes, on trees and grasses. All will reveal a variety of creatures.

**2. Take a closer look** - Now you have found lots of mini-beasts use your magnifying glass to take a closer look. Don't forget to use your other senses to explore them too e.g. Are they slimy? Do they make a sound? Do a detailed observational drawing of your bugs and record your findings on the take a closer look sheet.

**3. Identify** - Use the mini-beast identification key to name the animals you have found. If you have mini-beast books with you share extra information with your group about the bugs you have found.

When you have finished your investigations, put the mini-beast back where you found it.

### Plenary

**Discussion point** - Which mini-beast is most common? Why do you think that is? Where did you find the most mini-beasts? Where did you find the least? Why do you think that is?

### Back at School

#### Exciting Writing

Use the notes gathered in the field to create a riddle for your favourite mini beast.

#### What am I?

I have got ? legs.  
My wings are ?  
I am ? in colour.  
I live within ?  
I enjoy to ?  
What am I ?



- Use the bug hotel guide in this pack to help you to encourage mini-beasts into your school grounds.
- Create a new imaginary species of mini-beast. Give your new creature a name.
- Make a butterfly feeder. Remember the brighter the colours you use the more chance you have of attracting butterflies. You can find instructions here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/makes/bp-butterfly-feeder-make>
- Research mini-beasts. You may find the following websites useful: Oxford University Museum of Natural History, The Learning Zone – [www.oum.ox.ac.uk](http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk), The Royal Entomological Society – [www.royensoc.co.uk](http://www.royensoc.co.uk), Natural History Museum site for identification – [www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk)





## Top Tips for Mini-beast Hunting

1. Treat your bugs with care; remember they are fragile and to always put them back where you found them.
2. Roll logs and stones gently to reveal mini-beasts. Remember to always replace any logs or stones moved.
3. Give a branch a firm shake over a white sheet and watch the mini-beasts drop.
4. Explore grassland and meadow using a sweep net. Sweep the net from side to side as you walk.
5. Use a wide mesh garden sieve. Put a handful of leaf litter into a sieve and shake it carefully over a white sheet.
6. Use your paintbrush to gently encourage the mini-beast into your pot.

Can you make a rule for looking after mini-beasts?  
Tell your partner.

# Take a closer look

What is it called?	How many legs does it have?	How many body parts does it have?
Draw where you found it?	List the food you think it eats.	
Describe how it moves. Does it run, wiggle or fly?	How big is it? Measure its length	

My Mini-beast

Choose one mini-beast  
and have a closer look





# Minibeast Identification Key



