Enlighten Press
Parents' & Teachers' notes

MINIBEASTS MAKE THE WORLD GO ROUND

INTRODUCTION

Beneath what the eye can see there is the unseen majesty of the tiny world of minibeasts. Take a deep dive into the beauty and the delight of the inner workings of these magnificent creatures. What do they do for us? What do we do for them? How can we help continue their ongoing legacy? Use this book to teach children a deep appreciation of the interconnectedness of all creatures on our Earth, as an introduction to sustainability and an understanding of the balance of our biosphere.

QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. What are minibeasts? What do they do for the Earth and the humans that inhabit it? If you took out one group of minibeasts (bees for example) what might happen for humans and the Earth?
2. How does a food web or chain work? What do minibeasts eat? What eats minibeasts in turn? Where, if ever, does it end?
3. How can we help protect minibeasts? Why might we need to protect them?
4. What does it mean to appreciate something? When we are afraid of minibeasts or think they are gross, how do we treat them?
5. What minibeasts have the children seen before in their own backyard?

ACTIVITY AND ENGAGEMENT

1. Create an insect house or bug hotel. Collect various sticks and logs to create a home for minibeasts. Look up what minibeasts need and what might attract them to your bug hotel.
2. Go on a discovery adventure. At your school or centre, go outside with the children and a magnifying glass and overturn sticks and rocks to see if anything is hiding beneath. Check up the trees and in the plants and bushes. What can you find? Keep a log of the different minibeasts you found and look up some facts about them.
3. Movement challenge. Ask the children to come up with different types of minibeasts - how do they move? Have the children show a movement and guess which minibeast they might be.
4. Play an online sound clip of a particular minibeast. Allow the children to guess what minibeast this might be coming from.
5. Create some paper links that make a chain. On each link draw or write a part of the food chain to illustrate it in succession. If you want to go a bit deeper, teach the children which part of the chain are consumers and which are producers.
6. What is the lifecycle of a snail? How about a spider? Pick some interesting minibeasts and look up what their life cycle is compared to some others. How is it the same? How is it different?
7. Print out some minibeast colouring pages. Cut out the minibeasts and create your own story about your fantastic little creatures. Document the story and make your own book!
8. Look up what different cultures use minibeasts for e.g. some cultures eat certain insects for protein.
9. If you have a camera with a macro lens, take close up photos out in the yard of the different minibeasts you find. If you don't have one, look up photos online and see what features and attributes these minibeasts have.
10. Delve into the classification of each of the sub groups of minibeasts. Sort them into groups, which have legs, which have antennae? Which classification has a soft body, which has an exoskeleton? How many legs do arachnids have? What about myriapods?
11. Read Enlighten Press' *I Am An Insect* to go deeper into the world of amazing minibeasts. Learn about the life cycles of some insects too!
12. Watch Enlighten Press' *Teach Children to Love the World Minibeasts* video for a full and up close experience. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1k_dOozgqdA

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THINKING POINTS FOR EDUCATORS

1. What do children find most fascinating about minibeasts? How can we foster more curiosity and wonder through our teaching?
2. Understanding what minibeasts actually do for the Earth and for humans is truly extraordinary. What steps can we take to have the children understand that they can make choices that may help minibeasts and their future (along with our own futures)?
3. Minibeasts is a broad term for a group of small invertebrate animals; arthropods, annelids and molluscs. Each classification has sub groups which can be explored for their unique features and attributes.

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK OUTCOMES

OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY 1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency. 1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.
OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD 2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect. 2.4 Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.
OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS 4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity. 4.2 Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating. 4.3 Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another. 4.4 Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials.
OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS 5.1 Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes. 5.2 Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts.

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LINKS TO THE CURRICULUM

Foundation
• Living things have basic needs, including food and water (ACSSU002) • Science involves observing, asking questions about, and describing changes in, objects and events (ACSHE013) • The way objects move depends on a variety of factors, including their size and shape (ACSSU005) • Science involves observing, asking questions about, and describing changes in, objects and events (ACSHE013) • Engage in discussions about observations and represent ideas (ACSIS233) • Share observations and ideas (ACSIS012)
Year 1
• Living things have a variety of external features (ACSSU017) • Living things live in different places where their needs are met (ACSSU211) • Science involves observing, asking questions about, and describing changes in, objects and events (ACSHE021) • People use science in their daily lives, including when caring for their environment and living things (ACSHE022) •
Year 2
• Living things grow, change and have offspring similar to themselves (ACSSU030) • Science involves observing, asking questions about, and describing changes in, objects and events (ACSHE034) • People use science in their daily lives, including when caring for their environment and living things (ACSHE035) • Participate in guided investigations to explore and answer questions (ACSIS038) • Represent and communicate observations and ideas in a variety of ways (ACSIS042)
Year 3
• Living things can be grouped on the basis of observable features and can be distinguished from non-living things (ACSSU044) • Science involves making predictions and describing patterns and relationships (ACSHE050)

The Sustainability Cross Curriculum Priority
• OI.1 The biosphere is a dynamic system providing conditions that sustain life on Earth. • OI.2 All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival. • OI.3 Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems. • OI.9 Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.