

Minibeast Hotel

What's a mini-beast? They are the little creatures that live all around us, like spiders, snails and insects. We'll be using natural materials like sticks, leaves and gum nuts to create new habitat for our mini beast friends.

What you will need

A recycled container (eg. a soft drink or milk bottle, small wooden box)

Sticks, bark, stems, dry leaves and grass, large gumnuts, hakea and banksia fruits, bamboo stakes.

What to do

1. Cut the end from your container so that it becomes a tube. The length doesn't matter – you can cut your container in half if you like.
2. If you want to hang it, pass the string through now and tie a knot.
3. Put all your sticks and bark and other things inside the tube, making layers until it's nice and compact so it won't all fall out.
4. Find a nice shady spot at your site. Now hang it in a tree branch or on a bush at your planting site, or pop it on the ground in the plants for insects to find.
5. Keep an eye out and wait for your minibeast guests to arrive!



Minibeast Hotel – Teacher Resource

Suggested Lesson time – 1 lesson, approximately 50 minutes.

This lesson will teach students about the importance of biodiversity and show them how to create a habitat for minibeasts made from natural and recycled materials. It can be a standalone lesson or be combined with any other worksheet and lessons in the Habitat Warriors program (for example, 'Habitat Level Up' and 'Lovely Leaf Litter'). This lesson can be combined with the 'Minibeast Safari' worksheet to allow students to learn more about minibeasts.

At the end of this lesson students will:

- Create a suitable habitat for minibeasts using natural and recycled materials.
- Understand the importance and role of minibeasts in our natural environment.

This lesson can be made suitable for all primary levels – suggestions on how you could 'level up' the lesson are also given, while links to the Victorian Curriculum can provide additional ideas.

Basic Lesson Outline

Explain to students what a minibeast is, and where they are found (refer to the 'Minibeast Safari' worksheet for more detail).

Explain to students why it is important to create a safe habitat for minibeasts in their local environment.

- Ask students if they can name a few minibeasts that they have seen. What role do they play in the environment?
Where do they like to live?
- What materials should be used to build the minibeast hotel?
- How will the different materials used to make the minibeast hotel (grass, leaves, twigs, gumnuts) help create a suitable environment for a range of minibeasts?

Provide students with the 'Minibeast Hotel' worksheet.

Divide students into small groups and provide each group with a container. Ask students collect leaves, twigs, bark, stones and grass clippings to construct the minibeast hotel. Each group can work together to construct the hotel.

Class discussion

- Ask each group to describe the habitat that they created for minibeasts.
- Why is it important to provide new habitats for minibeasts?
- Why do you think different minibeasts will prefer specific parts of the minibeast hotel?
- Do you think that the minibeast population in your hotel will change over time?
- What other things can we do to protect and provide habitat for minibeast populations in our local environment?

Lesson Level Up

There are multiple ways to extend and expand this lesson to make it more comprehensive and/or introduce more complex topics for older children/year levels. For example:

Expand the Science component:

- Measure the temperature in different parts of the minibeast hotel and record minibeast activity. Compare findings to see how temperature influences where minibeasts are found and their activity levels.
- Ask students to create a detailed field guide showing the minibeasts that they have observed, complete with morphological illustrations and interesting facts. This can be shared with other classes.

Expand the English component:

- Ask students to imagine that they are one of the minibeasts living in the hotel. Write a diary entry about their day. Describe their habitat, activities and any encounters with other minibeasts.
- Ask students to choose one type of minibeast found in the hotel. Research its characteristics, habitat, diet, life cycle, behaviours, adaptations (e.g. camouflage), role in the food chain and so on. Write a report summarising their findings.

The complexity of this section could be adjusted depending on year level.

Detailed Curriculum Links

Science			
	Foundation – Level 2	Level 3 – Level 4	Level 5 – Level 6
Science Understanding			
Science as a human endeavour	People use science in their daily lives.	Science knowledge helps people to understand the effects of their actions.	Scientific understandings, discoveries and inventions are used to inform personal and community decisions and to solve problems that directly affect people's lives.
Biological sciences	Living things have a variety of external features and live in different places where their basic needs, including food, water and shelter, are met.	Living things can be grouped on the basis of observable features and can be distinguished from non-living things.	Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment
Science Inquiry Skills			
Questioning and Predicting	Respond to and pose questions, and make predictions about familiar objects and events.	With guidance, identify questions in familiar contexts that can be investigated scientifically and predict what might happen based on prior knowledge.	With guidance, pose questions to clarify practical problems or inform a scientific investigation, and predict what the findings of an investigation might be based on previous experiences or general rules.

Science			
	Foundation – Level 2	Level 3 – Level 4	Level 5 – Level 6
Planning and conducting	Participate in guided investigations, including making observations using the senses, to explore and answer questions.	Suggest ways to plan and conduct investigations to find answers to questions including consideration of the elements of fair tests.	With guidance, plan appropriate investigation types to answer questions or solve problems and use equipment, technologies and materials safely, identifying potential risks.
		Safely use appropriate materials, tools, equipment and technologies.	
Communicating	Represent and communicate observations and ideas about changes in objects and events in a variety of ways.	Represent and communicate observations, ideas and findings to show patterns and relationships using formal and informal scientific language.	Communicate ideas and processes using evidence to develop explanations of events and phenomena and to identify simple cause-and-effect relationships.
English			
Language			
Phonics and Word Knowledge			
Literacy			
Interpreting, analysing, evaluating			
Texts in context			

Creating Designed Solutions

Investigating	Explore needs or opportunities for designing, and the technologies needed to realise designed solutions	Critique needs or opportunities for designing and explore and test a variety of materials, components, tools and equipment and the techniques needed to create designed solutions	Critique needs or opportunities for designing, and investigate materials, components, tools, equipment and processes to achieve intended designed solutions
Generating	Visualise, generate, and communicate design ideas through describing, drawing and modelling	Generate, develop, and communicate design ideas and decisions using appropriate technical terms and graphical representation techniques	Generate, develop, communicate and document design ideas and processes for audiences using appropriate technical terms and graphical representation techniques