


Literacy Topic, Willow, Summer 2, Topic 6		Minibeasts - Legs, wings and wriggly things!	
<p>*I know that many different types of minibeast exist, and have learned some amazing facts about them. *I understand that minibeasts do lots of important jobs, pollinating flowers and keeping the soil healthy. *I know it's important to take care of minibeasts - and the places where minibeasts like to live. *I can engage creatively with our topic, imagining what life might be like from a minibeast's perspective, and imagining (and role playing) my own minibeast superhero! *I have experimented with a new art technique, handling my tools with care.</p>		<p><b>Weekly focus (6 weeks)</b></p> <p>*Prepare to Bee Amazed!</p> <p>* Ground Level: Tales from the Earth</p> <p>* Butterflies and Moths</p> <p>* What Bug am I?</p> <p>*Butterfly garden (DT focus)</p> <p>*Super-bugs!</p>	
		<p><b>Key Vocab</b></p>	
Personal, Social & Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children overcome any squeamishness or nerves and join in with minibeast handling activities. They are patient awaiting their turn and gentle and considerate when handling them.</li> <li>They know that it's important we wash our hands before and after handling minibeasts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minibeast:</b> Collective name given for insects, arachnids, gastropods etc.</p> <p><b>Insect:</b> Small creatures with 6 legs and usually 1 or 2 pairs of wings. Bees, ladybugs and butterflies are all types of insects.</p> <p><b>Arachnid:</b> Arachnids have 8 legs and bodies in 2 sections. Spiders are arachnids.</p> <p><b>Gastropod:</b> Snails and slugs are both gastropods. They have a single large foot for movement.</p> <p><b>Decomposition:</b> The process by which natural materials are broken down and reabsorbed into the soil. Minibeasts such as worms and woodlice aid decomposition and in turn, help keep the soil healthy.</p> <p><b>Pollination:</b> Pollination is the transfer of pollen from one flower to another resulting in its fertilisation. Bees and other insects are pollinators.</p> <p><b>Life cycle:</b> A series of changes occurring over the life of an organism, including reproduction.</p> <p><b>Metamorphosis:</b> The process of transformation that some organisms undergo before reaching adulthood. Butterflies and frogs both metamorphize, changing from caterpillars and tadpoles respectively.</p> <p><b>Symmetry:</b> describes the quality of being made up of identical elements facing each other along an axis, or line of symmetry. The effect is of a mirror image. Butterfly wings are symmetrical.</p> <p><b>Food chain:</b> A series of organisms each dependent on the next as a source of food, for example worm → chicken → fox.</p> <p><b>Habitat:</b> The natural home or environment for a particular animal or plant. A garden or meadow is a natural habitat for many minibeasts.</p> <p><b>Entomologist:</b> A person that is an expert on insects.</p> <p><b>Seasons / Summer:</b> The year is divided into 4 seasons, each with distinctive natural characteristics and weather. Summer is the hottest season when the days are longest. Flowers bloom, fruit ripens, and there is lots of minibeast activity in the summer.</p>	
Expressive Arts & Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children join in with minibeast movement activities, being expressive through movement.</li> <li>They learn the topic song 'Please don't squish me', and sing others from the Niki Davies Minibeasts songbook.</li> <li>They explore symmetry and pattern in minibeasts and in our own creations.</li> <li>Using the Tataki Zome 'flower pounding' technique, children create a work on paper and on fabric.</li> <li>They enjoy creating their own minibeast superhero characters, roleplaying and making up narratives for them.</li> <li>Alongside lots of free creative opportunities (process over product), they try their hand at other goal-orientated makes, including making seed bombs, honey sandwiches and honey cookies.</li> </ul>		
Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children build their understanding of the natural cycle of the seasons They can distinguish Summer from the other seasons, spotting some of the 'signs of summer' in the natural world around them.</li> <li>They learn about other natural cycles, including the life cycles of butterflies and moths.</li> <li>They use butterfly nets at the Whitchurch Maze to help them find out more about minibeasts in our area. Time at Withymead nature reserve also affords the opportunity for fieldwork.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sticky Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are now in the season of Summer, a time when flowers bloom, fruit ripens, and there is lots of animal activity. People like spending time outside in the summer too, enjoying the hot weather and long days. We can spot lots of signs of summer in the natural environment.</li> <li>There are many different kinds of minibeast - some live in the ground and some can fly. Some have 6 or 8 legs, some have no legs at all. Many minibeasts have amazing abilities - spiders spin webs, bees make honey, caterpillars undergo an amazing transformation, growing up to be butterflies or moths. These are just a few of the incredible things we learned about minibeasts!</li> </ul>	

- They observe real minibeasts, paying attention to their detail and talking about what they see. They note the distinctions between different minibeasts - and between minibeasts and other animals we've talked about in Willow, continuing to build a rich picture of the animal kingdom.

- Minibeasts are living creatures and we need to treat them with kindness. We also need to take care of their habitats. There are lots of things we can do to help minibeasts thrive - including planting flowers, and keeping areas of our garden wild and inviting for them.
- Minibeasts are very important for the environment, they help new plants to grow through pollination. They also help break down - or decompose - dead plants, tidying up the environment in the process and keeping the soil healthy.
- Insects are at the base of many food chains too - and many other animals rely on them for food.

Suggested supporting Books



Books

- Agghhh Spider!
- Bee and Me
- Bee
- The Bumblebear
- Snail Trail
- The Snail House
- Yucky Worms
- Diary of a Worm
- Du Iz Tak?
- Gotta go! Gotta go!
- Caterpillar Dreams
- Tadpole's Promise
- The Bug Collector
- The Bog Baby
- What bug am I?
- Twist and Hop, Minibeast bop
- Superworm
- Spyder

Links with KS1 / 2

In Year 1, they learn about the different types of plants and flowers  
 In Year 2, they learn about how plants and animals depend on each other in their habitats  
 In y3 they make wormeries in science as part of rocks and soils topic  
 In Year 3, they learn about pollination of flowers  
 In Year 3, they learn about the life cycles of plants  
 In Year 5, they learn about the life cycles of mammals, amphibians, insects and birds.

Enrichment Opportunities

snail observation tank, and mini-beast rich compost to explore  
 Using butterfly nets to catch and observe minibeasts at the maze  
 Making honey sandwiches and honey biscuits  
 Experimenting with the Tataka Zome flower pounding technique  
 Forest school sessions at Whitchurch Maze and Withymead nature reserve  
 Celebrating Pride Week  
 Summer Solstice activities

