



Northern Ireland Forest School Association

NIFSA Lesson Plan - Minibeasts

National Insect Week 25 June 25

Planning	
Location	Secret Garden
Date	25/06/25
Class	Preschoolers - Kilmoody
Classroom Management	Whole class introduction at welcome time, then split group work with additional adults which will be spread around the outdoor classroom area.
Connected Learning/Prior Knowledge	National Insect Week 23-29 June 2025 Forest school rules and how we operate a session. Reminder about boundary signs. Discuss what we will find in the Secret Garden? What natural resources are there?
Health and Safety	Risk Assessment carried out & Daily Checks. Clothing, depending on weather. Taking care when collecting sticks, leaves. Wash hands thoroughly after session.
Learning Intention	Class will have more knowledge regarding minibeasts – what they look like, how they move, what they like to eat.
Success Criteria	Children will be able to demonstrate their knowledge/what they have learnt at the end of the session. Children will be able to collect sticks, leaves and natural materials to create an insect.
Resources	Insect printables for dice/movement game; magnifying glasses & binoculars, mini beast hunt sheet; natural resources for bug art construction; printables for art activity. Need Whistle, rucksack, boundary flags.
Differentiation/Target Groups	All inclusive – activities will be adapted to allow accessibility by all. Children need to communicate with others to discuss how to create their insect, what resources will they need? 1 of the children will have 1:1 adult - divide groups equally so all groups have assistance of an adult.
Other	

Lesson Content	
On Arrival	Children will be reminded of the rules of Forest School. One whistle – freeze like a tree; two whistles come back to me. The boundary flags will be placed. 1. Insect movement dice game 2. Mini beast hunt 3. Insect/bug art
Activity explained	1. A dice will be thrown and children will have to move or do the action as per the insect, ie buzz like a bee; flutter like a butterfly. 2. Children will go in pairs using binoculars or magnifying glasses to see if they can find any bugs or things on their sheets. 3. Split children into groups and explain they are to make a picture. Give children time to explore the area and gather resources. Have 2 distinct areas with tarpaulin laid out for the children to create pictures. Natural resources such as stones, sticks, leaves will be used to create insects. Photographs will be displayed to help spark the children's imagination.
Finishing	Bring children together to talk about what they have made. Can they explain their pictures to the other groups. Remember the importance of clearing up and leave no trace.

Evaluation/Review	
How did the group session go?	This linked really well with National Insects Week. Children enjoyed the story of the Minibeasts and had their own ideas of what they would like to make. Children worked well in the two groups, having an adult with each helped to support the children who needed it. It also allowed me the freedom of capturing photographic evidence. Children really enjoyed this session, they had creative ideas and were able to agree on what they could make. I was also really pleased the session went so well as it was my first time leading an outdoor learning session. We did however have to come back into the hall to create our minibeasts without the wind. It kept blowing the leaves etc away. We have now adopted the whistle approach for all outdoor activities and the children have responded/adapted to it so very well.
Focus on individual pupils	Natural resources were plentiful but some children found it difficult to communicate their interpretation within a team and got frustrated with others. A group of three girls collectively made a minibeast and worked collaboratively together. Another child who wouldn't go near the art area usually made a wonderful spider with eight legs.
What would you change for next time?	Perhaps let children have an individual wood slice each, especially at the start of the academic year to allow them their own space if they wanted to create their own piece of artwork instead of a group piece.



'Woodlouse' is a movement based game for younger children. It is a bit like 'Simon says.'

One person is the caller – they call out minibeast names and movement and the players have to mimic that creature. For example – "Flutter like a butterfly", "hop like a grasshopper", "wiggle like a worm", "scurry like a beetle", "spin like a spider" etc

Anytime the caller shouts 'Woodlouse!' the players have to roll into a ball.

Ask the children to offer example minibeasts and associated movements.

It works best if the caller keeps changing the minibeasts quite quickly.

BUG HUNT CHECKLIST



ant



beetle



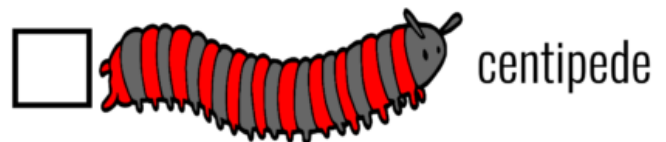
bee



butterfly



caterpillar



centipede



dragonfly



fly



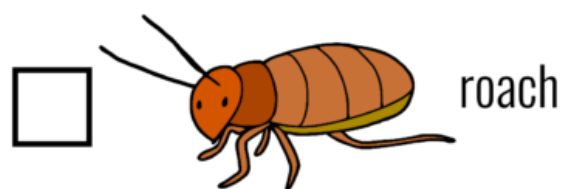
grasshopper



ladybug



praying mantis



roach



spider



worm