

## Summer 1 – Minibeasts and Lifecycles

### Introduction

This term's "**Minibeasts and Lifecycles**" theme will allow children to explore the fascinating world of minibeasts and the lifecycles of various creatures. Through hands-on experiences, storytelling, and creative projects, children will learn about the importance of minibeasts in our ecosystem, how they grow, and the ways they contribute to the environment. We look forward to a wonderful journey together as we uncover the secrets of the minibeasts in our gardens and beyond!

### Communication and Language

**Minibeast Curiosity:** Encourage children to ask questions about minibeasts, such as their habitats, movements, and diets. Children will share their favourite minibeasts and discuss what they enjoy about them.

**Rhymes and Songs:** Children will sing minibeast-themed songs like *There's a Worm at the Bottom of the Garden*, *Incy Wincy Spider*, and *Ladybird, Ladybird*.

**Descriptive Game:** Play "What am I?" by describing a minibeast (e.g., "I have 8 legs, I spin webs. What am I?"). Children will guess the minibeast based on the description.

**Minibeast Role Play:** Using masks and props, children will role-play as different minibeasts, practicing new vocabulary and prepositional language to describe movements and habitats.

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

**Helpful Minibeasts:** Discuss how minibeasts are helpful to the environment, like bees pollinating flowers or ants gathering food. Children will reflect on ways they can be helpful at school and home.

**Respect for Nature:** Create a set of class rules for handling minibeasts, emphasising being gentle and respectful when exploring their habitats.

**HeartSmart:** This term's HeartSmart topic, "Fake is a Mistake!", will focus on honesty and authenticity, encouraging children to be true to themselves and genuine in their actions and words.

### Physical Development

**Minibeast Movements:** Children will explore movements such as wiggling like a worm, sliding like a snail, scuttling like a woodlouse, and fluttering like a butterfly.

**Fine Motor Skills:** Activities will include using tweezers to pick up string "worms" hidden in soil or sand, making minibeasts out of playdough, and threading beads onto pipe cleaners to create "worms."

**Obstacle Course:** Set up climbing equipment and tunnels for children to crawl through, practicing agility while moving like different minibeasts.

**Dinosaur-Themed Coordination:** In the "**iThink Dino Movers**" unit, children will imagine traveling back in time to the Land of the Dinosaurs. They will develop hand-eye coordination by manipulating and controlling equipment, learning to follow simple rules, and thinking of different ways to accomplish tasks.

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		This activity will build their confidence, coordination, and object control skills.
<p><u>Literacy</u></p> <p><b>Minibeast Display and Scrapbook:</b> Children will capture images of minibeasts through photographs, drawings, and collected items, creating a class scrapbook for everyone to enjoy.</p> <p><b>Rhyming Practice:</b> Using <i>Mad about Minibeasts</i>, children will revisit rhyming patterns and attempt to write their own minibeast rhymes.</p> <p><b>Minibeast Hunt and Labelling:</b> Children will search for hidden minibeast photos outside, using clipboards to write down and label each one they find. They will also label lifecycle stages, such as the butterfly lifecycle after observing their class butterflies. We are very grateful that we are able to have our very own caterpillars to see the lifecycle with our very own eyes! We will also be doing this with frogs as we have our own frog spawn to look after and watch develop over time.</p> <p><b>Non-Fiction Exploration:</b> Children will research their favourite minibeasts, visit the library to find non-fiction books, and create minibeast fact files with interesting details.</p>	<p><u>Mathematics</u></p> <p><b>Measuring Minibeasts:</b> Using cubes or paper clips, children will measure minibeast pictures placed in size order.</p> <p><b>Sorting and Grouping:</b> Children will sort small-world minibeasts by characteristics, such as the number of legs or whether they have wings. They will also learn to explain their sorting criteria.</p> <p><b>Pattern Making:</b> Using minibeast figures, children will create and extend repeated patterns. They will also revisit the concept of doubles.</p> <p><b>Counting and Subitising:</b> Practice counting with minibeast-themed tens frames and laminated ladybirds to reinforce subitising skills.</p> <p><b>Symmetry:</b> Create symmetrical 2D butterfly art to explore symmetry and design.</p>	<p><u>Understanding the World</u></p> <p><b>Minibeast Hunt:</b> Children will go on a minibeast hunt in the woods, identifying various types, comparing their features, and discussing similarities and differences.</p> <p><b>Lifecycle Observations:</b> Children will watch the lifecycle of a butterfly unfold in the classroom and release the butterflies into the wild. They'll also explore other minibeast lifecycles.</p> <p><b>Bug Hotel Construction:</b> Create a bug hotel with children, discussing the needs of minibeasts and the importance of providing shelter for wildlife.</p> <p><b>Wormery Exploration:</b> Build a classroom wormery to observe worms in action, fostering curiosity and understanding of minibeast habitats.</p>
<p><u>Expressive Arts and Design</u></p> <p><b>Percussion Sounds:</b> Children will use instruments to mimic minibeast sounds, experimenting with different rhythms, volumes, and tempos to represent</p>		



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each creature.

**Colour Mixing and Art:** Using paints, children will explore colour mixing to create vibrant minibeast art. They'll also use junk modelling materials to create habitats.

**Spider Web Creation:** After observing spider webs outdoors on our welly walks, children will create their own webs using various materials, like string on paper plates or drawn webs.

**Matisse's 'The Snail':** Children will study Matisse's artwork *The Snail*, then create their own snail-inspired art by arranging colourful shapes in spiral patterns.