



Children appreciate minibeasts and the vital service they provide to soil, plants and ourselves.

Minibeast Magic 1



Keywords picture interpretation • exploration • critical thinking

- 1 Display the photos of soil minibeasts (**Resource File**) on your whiteboard. Ask the children what they know about them, which of them they have seen, etc. Start a discussion about them. You will likely hear negative comments about minibeasts. In this activity you turn that view around by leading the children to understand the creatures' vital role in the cycle of life.
- 2 Now display the *Minibeast Collage* from the **Resource File**. The children analyse the photos to discover information about the minibeasts such as (a) what they eat (b) where they live (c) whether they like dark or light places (d) if they prefer wet or dry places, etc. Invite the children to find something they liked about each minibeast. Assist, using information from *Minibeast Minifacts* in the **Resource File**.
- 3 In this step the children understand minibeasts' role in recycling life. Go on a tour of the school grounds and look for minibeasts. See if you can match any of the information with what you observe together. Look in particular at the detritus/compost where you find minibeasts such as woodlice. Feel it, smell it and look at its colour. How is it different from soil? It is darker and richer because it is full of nutrients from dead plants that the woodlice and their friends make.
- 4 Outdoors, you may put some humus in water and compare it with another container where you put soil in water. What differences do the children see? When a plant drinks through its roots, it takes up the rich juice, thanks to the minibeasts. Make sure the children wash their hands after the activity (avoid single-use wipes).
- 5 Back in class, plot this simplified nutrient cycle on your board: LIVING PLANT > DEAD PLANT > WOODLOUSE BREAKS DEAD PLANT INTO SMALL PIECES > SMALL PIECES ENTER THE SOIL > NEW LIVING PLANT TAKES IT UP. If you talk about recycling, or have a recycling bin, make the link. In this way the children understand that minibeasts are nature's great recyclers, as they constantly create food in the soil.

Use the Dinja Waħda Notice Board and tell the school about what you're doing.

Send photos of children

- ☐ discussing minibeast photos
- ☐ observing minibeasts in schoolyard

