

# Minibeasts

The detailed and colourful photographs on this poster are a wonderful resource to enhance the children's exploration of minibeasts.

Encourage close observation of features to identify the creatures

## Activities across the curriculum

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Display the poster in your entrance along with a notice 'Help us to find minibeasts'. Provide families with an information sheet and invite them to go on a minibeast hunt with their children, recording what they find and take photographs. (Emphasise that the creatures should not be removed from their habitats.)
- Discuss the word 'minibeast' and explain that the actual creatures are much smaller than the poster images. Introduce the word 'fragile', using the dragonfly's wings as an example, and discuss the need to be quiet and gentle when observing such tiny creatures.

### Communication and Language

#### Literacy

- Look at the image of the caterpillar munching the leaf and point out the frayed leaf edges on the poster. Read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle (Picture Puffin) to stimulate ideas before making up a story about the caterpillar on the poster.
- Read minibeast action rhymes relating to the poster, for example, 'Little Arabella Miller' and 'Ladybird, Ladybird, Fly Away Home' from *This Little Puffin...* compiled by Elizabeth Matterson (Puffin Books).

### Mathematics

- Invite the children to count the spots on the image of the ladybird on the poster. Explain that ladybirds have the same number of spots on both wings. How many spots will be on the ladybird's other wing? Encourage the children to create ladybirds from red play dough and add black card spots. Remind them to make sure that there are the same number of spots on each wing.
- Look closely at the butterfly's wing pattern on the poster. What do the children notice? Introduce the word 'symmetry'. Invite the children to paint a butterfly wing on a sheet of paper, then put a safety mirror along the edge to create a whole symmetrical butterfly.

### Understanding of the World

- Explore the image of the bee on the poster. Explain how the bee probes deep down into the flower to reach the sweet nectar. It then flies back to the hive and other bees transform the nectar into honey. Read books about how bees create honey and, with parental permission, have a honey-tasting session.
- Look at the image of the snail on the poster. Explain that the snail has two pairs of tentacles – longer ones with eyes at the end and shorter ones for smelling and feeling. Ask the children to point to the four tentacles and decide the function of each one. Ask, 'Do we have tentacles?', 'What do we use to see, smell and feel?'.



### How to use the poster

Create an interactive 'minibeast' display. Place the poster in the centre and clearly label each image. Add some minibeast pictures and information. Display the children's artwork and arrange plastic minibeasts in a miniature environment with magnifying glasses and books. Display cards depicting the names of the minibeasts so that the children can match them to the poster labels.

Alternatively, cut out and laminate the poster images and use as game cards. Or move the poster, for example, outdoors or into the investigation, small-world or creative areas.

### Physical Development

- Look at the caterpillar image on the poster and explain that a caterpillar moves in an arching, rippling motion. Invite the children to imitate the caterpillar's movements on all fours.
- Explore the butterfly image and talk about the function of the wings. Give the children two contrasting colours of tissue paper. Place one on top of the other and tie them in the centre. Open out the end to form a butterfly shape. Tie the butterfly to a string so that children can run about to make their butterflies fly.

### Expressive Arts and Design

- Talk about the pattern on the caterpillar image on the poster. Do all caterpillars look the same? Help the children to search for images of caterpillars on the internet. Encourage them to create pictures of caterpillars with interesting patterns using a range of printing techniques.
- Explore the poster with the children and talk about an ideal environment for the minibeasts shown. Suggest that the children recreate their ideas in a builder's tray using creative, recycled and natural materials. Provide a wide range of materials such as sand, compost, twigs, leaves, fabric scraps and tissue.

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