

Third Grade / Fall Walk / At A Glance

Mini Creatures ⌚ 60 minutes

Goals

- Discover and observe insects and other mini-creatures in different habitats (open grassy area, forest edge area, woods, and administration bldg.).
- Distinguish between insects, spiders and other mini-creatures
- Discuss the importance of mini-creature in the food chain

Introduction

⌚ 5 minutes

Before visiting the sites, find a grassy place for each group to sit or stand and set the stage for the walk. Today we are going to observe mini-creatures and what makes their environment suitable for them to survive.

- Basic Requirements of Life - *What do all living things need to survive?*
 - **Air**
 - **Warmth** (*Who is wearing a sweatshirt or jacket?*)
 - **Water** (rain, puddles, dew – whose shoes are wet?)
 - **Food**
 - **Shelter**
 - **Protection** (SAFE place to build one's shelter; skunk, camouflage)
- *What is a mini-creature?* An animal the size of your hand or smaller. Most will be insects, but not all of them.
- *What is a habitat?* (A place where an organism lives and includes the 6 basic requirements of life)

Explore Habitats

⌚ 40 minutes

Visit three to four habitats on the school grounds and find and discuss a mini creature in each. Each group should start at a different site. Let's explore some habitats. *Can you think of some mini-creatures we might find today? Where would be a good place to look for them? Why?*

At each habitat do the following:

- *What mini-creatures do you think we will find? How many do you see? What are they doing?*
- Collect a specimen for observing and drawing (No bees or spiders in bug box)
- Draw mini-creature on Student worksheet and answer questions.
- Use key to determine if mini-creature is an insect.
- Determine Role in Food Chain
 - What are they eating? Ants-aphids honeydew; Worms- dead grass/leaves
 - Who would eat them? Spiders-ants, Birds – insects
 - How are they protecting/sheltering themselves? (Protecting itself from being eaten)

Habitat	Animals to Look For	Food Chains
Front of Admin Building	Ants, worms, chipmunk hole, wasp nest, spiders	dead grass/leaves → worms → birds Ants → Spiders → Birds
Edge Area	Pollinating insects, leaf miner trails larva/cocoon/moth cycle, spiders	leaves → flying beetles → spider leaves → leaf miner → wasps
Open Grassy Area	Grasshoppers, dragonflies, spiders, hopping/flying insects, shallow holes =skunks looking for grubs	Grass → caterpillar → robin Grass → worms → robin Grass → grasshopper → spider
Woods	Under rotting logs = beetles, sow bugs, centipede, ants, millipedes, salamander (newt), snakes, gall larva	insects → slugs → Salamander Salamanders → Turtles/snakes/owls → hawks Plant gall → larva in gall → chickadee

Wrap up

⌚ 5 minutes

What discoveries did you make about mini-creatures?

This summary does not replace the walk guide.

Activities, their order, and duration will vary depending on your group dynamics and weather.