Puzzlewood

A Magical Woodland in the Forest of Dean

Minibeasts KS1 and 2

Puzzlewood is a designated ancient woodland. It is a special, important and protected place. The woodland is so old it has developed intricate communities of plants, animals and fungi.

Puzzlewood is an ideal environment for the study of minibeasts in their habitats and is suitable for a range of ages.

We strongly recommend that you visit the site before your visit, as there are so many varied opportunities for creative curriculum development.

National Curriculum Programs of Study:

SCIENCE:

Year 1

- To name, observe, describe and compare the structure of a variety of common animals.
- To use the local environment throughout the year to explore and answer questions about animals in their habitat.
- To understand how to care for animals taken from their local environment and the need to return them safely after study.

Year 2

- To identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited.
- To describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals and plants, and how they depend on each other.

Year 3

- To introduce the idea that all living things have certain characteristics that are essential for keeping them alive and healthy.
- To raise and answer questions which help pupils become familiar with the life processes that are common to all living things.
- To be introduced to the terms 'habitat' and 'micro-habitat'.

ART:

KS1

- To use a range of materials creatively to design and make products.
- To use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share ideas, experiences and imagination.
- To develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and

space.

KS2

- To create sketch books to record observations and use these to review and revisit ideas.
- To improve pupils' mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials [for example, pencil, charcoal, paint, clay]

Puzzlewood offers huge opportunities for the teaching and learning of minibeasts at both KS1 and lower KS2. Our woodland and covered barn offer both indoor and outdoor spaces, meaning that work can happen whatever the weather. Below is a suggested list of activities that would be ideal for a school visit but it is by no means exhaustive! We highly recommend a teacher visit so that you can see the endless possibilities for yourself! Note: You are welcome to use natural objects found on the ground but please don't pick leaves or flowers.

Suggested activities for your visit

Before your visit:

Look at photos of minibeasts and possible habitats.

Collect vocabulary associated with topic and make a glossary with definitions.

Make predictions about which creatures might be found and where.

Investigate how to collect and take care of creatures they may find e.g. make up rules on how to behave with minibeasts and the environment.

Experience using a magnifying glass and bug box etc. Make lists of questions they might find the answers to.

During your visit:

You are requested to stay on the marked paths in order to preserve this important ancient site.

Using the map of site, follow trail to the *house in the woods* for bug hunting where you will find many habitats e.g. leaf mould, stones, moss, logs.

Make predictions about where you might find minibeasts as you walk along trail. **Please do not disturb the area along the trail as there is plenty of opportunity for closer study in the area surrounding the house in the woods and story circle.**

Causing as little disturbance as possible, look for minibeasts using their equipment. Identify then observe in habitat – movement, food sources, behaviour etc.

Discuss with adults why the minibeast was in a particular environment and how it is suited/adapted. Discuss why other minibeasts aren't there. Discuss camouflage.

Photograph, record e.g. using iPads to aid observational recordings (video and voice to record thoughts)

Collect samples/photos of different habitats to describe and compare after visit.

Identify how the habitat provides shelter as well as food. Older children can classify minibeasts using keys

Discuss food chain – think about minibeast predators; how animals in an environment depend on each other

Children, on site, given two halves of an animal to find a suitable habitat for in Puzzlewood. Photograph and record. This could lead to a newspaper report of an unusual sighting.

Imagine you have shrunk to the size of a minibeast and found yourself in Puzzlewood. Which habitat would you choose to live in and why? What would you eat? How would you move? Who would you be afraid of? What would you do all day? This could lead to a diary, an adventure story etc. Younger children could describe a journey using prepositions.

Around the area of the story circle and along the trail, the children can imagine the unusually shaped trunks and rocks as living creatures. This could lead to observational drawing, imaginative photo alteration or creative writing.

Teamwork – using the Puzzlewood map, children search for pictures or plastic models of minibeasts and mark where they found them on the map.

This could be developed by leaving riddles in various places and children have to identify creature from the collection in their bag.

After your visit:

Match photo cards of minibeasts and environments and make ‘Top Trump’ cards

Make observational drawings and label (including adaptations for older ones)

Find a contrasting minibeast in the school environment – discuss and make a suitable habitat for it and keep for a few days to make comparisons

Write a report about chosen minibeast, describing how it lives successfully in its habitat. Encourage use of technical words and their definitions e.g. carnivore, antennae etc.

Make up own minibeast e.g. using ‘tops and tails’ cards or own drawings photocopied, cut in half and swapped with a friend. (Possible ideas ladybird + caterpillar = ladypillar or caterbird) Then invent a report telling people everything they would need to know about this creature – habitat, food, movement, predator, position in food chain.

Look at writings of Charles Darwin who found undiscovered creatures on his travels and wrote scientific studies of his observations.

Make a small storybook featuring some of the 'new' creatures in their settings.

Imagine you are one of the minibeasts you have observed, write a diary of a day in your life….

Imagine you are a minibeast.
Write a poem beginning
'If I were a …… instead of a child I would ……..
(this would illustrate their understanding of the minibeast's life)
To end the poem
'but if a ……(predator) ever came
I'd quickly turn back to a child again!'

Make a 'Wanted' poster for either a real or imaginary minibeast. Include information about appearance, habits and where it was last seen. Don't forget the reward!

Imagine you are a minibeast. Write a riddle which leaves your most obvious clue to last.

From observational drawings –

- make monoprints or press prints or string prints
- paint the creature in a camouflaged habitat
- make accurate clay models of either a real minibeast or an imaginary one for display in a museum – write a caption using scientific language for museum visitors
- textiles – make a stitched design of a minibeast

Prior to visit, make a huge minibeast using 2 flowerpots stuck together as a body and papiermache. Bring minibeast to Puzzlewood unpainted, decide on its habitat and paint it in situ so it is camouflaged. Don't forget to take a photo to use back in school.