

# Animal adventure

## The story

Cosmic and Gem are sitting on the climbing frame. They are bored. They can't think what to do next.

They see children playing chasing games but they don't feel like running around. Two of their friends are swapping cards but Cosmic and Gem don't have any cards to swap. "Let's go on an animal safari!" shouts Gem, jumping down off the climbing frame onto the ground.

"OK," Cosmic replies. He starts to prowl around Gem pretending to be a tiger.

"No, not a pretend safari," says Gem, "I mean a real animal adventure." Cosmic looks puzzled. He follows Gem round the playground. She looks high, she looks low but doesn't seem to be able to find what she is looking for.

"Uncle Astro said that there are little animals, called minibeasts, all around us," says Gem. "But I can't see any."

"Wow! You mean tiny lions and tigers and things?" asks Cosmic. "Come on, let's see if Uncle Astro can help us."

Where do you think Uncle Astro will tell them to look?

## What do I do?

1. Follow the instructions on the ACTIVITY CARD. Make sure you give the children time to talk where this symbol shows. ►
2. Read the story. Get the children to talk to a buddy about the questions and the ideas in the Concept Cartoon.
3. Talk through how and where they might look for minibeasts and other animals. You need to decide if you will collect the minibeasts or look at them where they are living. You might also decide to include larger animals in the hunt, such as birds.
4. Discuss safety issues and the welfare of the animals.
5. Help the children to look carefully at the minibeasts.
6. Discuss how the animals are adapted for their environment.
7. If writing a poem, encourage the use of 'describing words' e.g. 'Small, shiny, hard, round, scurrying – a woodlouse!'
8. There are follow up activities for children who have finished or who want to do more finding out at home and earn a bonus sticker.



## ★ Handy hints

### Things to look out for

- ★ Teach the children to handle all animals with care. It is best to observe animals in their natural environment. However, they can be taken inside for short periods, as long as they are treated with respect and returned to where they were found.

### Safety

- ★ Make sure that children wash their hands carefully after handling creatures.
- ★ Follow the organisation's guidelines for outdoor work.
- ★ Make sure that stones are not too heavy and are lifted carefully.
- ★ Do not bring wild birds or mammals into school as they may carry diseases.

### Background information

- ★ Many children believe the word 'animal' refers only to large furry animals and not humans, fish, birds, insects, etc. This hunt focuses on minibeasts but could also include other animals such as birds.
- ★ The term 'minibeast' means a small animal. The scientific name for minibeasts is invertebrates. This means an animal without a backbone. Some invertebrates have no skeleton, like worms. Others, like insects and spiders, have a skeleton on the outside (exoskeleton).
- ★ You can generally find plenty of minibeasts living in moist, damp, dark environments which help to keep them safe and stop them 'drying out'.
- ★ See website for more information about minibeasts  
[www.britishsociety.org/creststar](http://www.britishsociety.org/creststar)

### Resources

- ★ Outdoor environment, brick walls, rocks, logs, large stones, pieces of old carpet (you could place some on the ground a few weeks earlier), damp corners e.g. the bottom of a fence, grassy patches
- ★ Magnifying glasses and/or digital microscope (available in many schools)
- ★ Collecting jar or pooter (special devices for catching minibeasts)
- ★ Identification book (optional)

### How can children share their ideas?

- ★ Draw pictures, take photographs, make models or write poems.

