



# MINIBEASTS

SUMMER TERM 1  
SQUIRREL CLASS

The page is framed by a decorative border featuring various colorful illustrations of insects and plants. At the top, there are yellow flowers, green leaves, and a blue dragonfly. On the right side, a black beetle is visible. The bottom of the page is adorned with a variety of butterflies in shades of yellow, orange, and pink, along with green foliage. The central text is enclosed in a white rounded rectangle with a red border.

## Minibeasts

This half term our topic is 'Minibeasts'. We will be doing a study each week on a different minibeast, looking at their lifecycles, habitats and characteristics. We will be focusing on our descriptive vocabulary and using our symbols and Makaton to learn about and describe the minibeasts. Our studies will include caterpillars, bees, ladybirds and spiders and towards the end of the topic we will be exploring how the minibeasts all live together in our wondrous world.

We have lots of exciting minibeast themed activities planned for the children to enjoy that will incorporate literacy and maths skills as well as fine and gross motor skills.

Our topic will link in to both the prime and specific areas of learning as well as each child's PDP goals.



# PRIME AREAS OF LEARNING

## Personal, Social & Emotional Development

The children will continue to work on building some of their peer to peer friendships this half term. We will also be looking at turn taking and

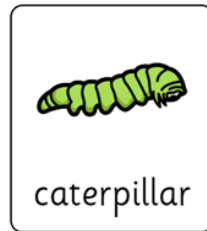
collaborative working where we focus on building a new minibeast related sensory bottle together each week, taking it in turns to add something each child likes to the bottles and then enjoying these in our play.

We will also be exploring healthy eating this half term and comparing foods that are healthy and not healthy.



## Communication and Language

Communication and language remains a vital area of our teaching in Squirrel class. We have seen the children make great progress in their listening and attention from their active participation in Bucket Time and we will continue this with a minibeast theme this time around.



The children will explore natural treasure baskets which include small word minibests and we will encourage them to explore these independently and allow an adult into their play to name, recognise and point at different items.



## Physical Development

Move Momentum are back this half term and the children will enjoy some minibeast themed, wheelchair friendly dance fun. We will also be working on our gross motor skills and practising out throwing with games like 'Caterpillar Catch' where the children will need to throw bean bags into the hungry caterpillar's mouth.



We will be developing our fine motor skills using our chunky tweezers to pick up small world insects and using our magnifying glasses to inspect them.



# SPECIFIC AREAS OF LEARNING

## Literacy

### Reading:

Our key texts this half term are 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and 'The bad tempered ladybird'. We will be exploring these stories in greater depth looking at the predictable and patterned language in them and learning about sequences of events

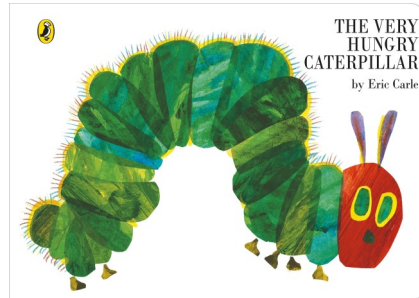
This half term we will be looking at descriptive language, identifying things like colour, texture and size using symbols and Makaton to communicate our findings.

### Phonics:

We will be continuing to work on Phase 1 phonics looking at environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion and the introduction of rhythm and rhyme. The children learning Phase 2 phonics will recap all of the SATPIN sounds.

### Mark Making & Writing:

The children will be developing their fine motor skills with our daily 'Dough Disco' sessions and will have plenty of opportunities for mark making through sensory play. Some children will be ready to develop their pre-writing skills and this will be some with a range of tracing activities and the opportunity to explore different writing materials such as pen, paintbrush and crayons.



## Maths

### Numbers 1-5:

We will continue to learn all about the numbers 1-5 through a variety of play based activities and number songs that are incorporated into our daily routine. We will use our Minibeast provision as opportunities to count leaves, bugs, legs and spots.

### Shape & Spatial Awareness

We will also be comparing big and small minibeasts and looking to arrange them in the order of their size. The children will be able to use symbols and switches and eye pointing to communicate their knowledge and understanding.

We will also continue to look at shape and will be exploring how shapes fit into similar shaped holes by using resources such as shape sorters and inset puzzles. The children, where possible, will be encouraged to do these independently and progress in difficulty when they master a particular puzzle or activity.

### Pattern:

This half term the children will continue to explore the concept of patterns. They will look specifically at repeating coloured patterns using objects such as pompoms to make colourful caterpillars.





# SPECIFIC AREAS OF LEARNING

## Understanding the World

The children will be learning all about minibeasts. They will have the opportunity to investigate the different kinds of minibeasts and at their lifecycles and characteristics. They will go on a minibeast hunt and a nature walk in our outdoor areas and use magnifying glasses to investigate their findings.



The children will learn all about the lifecycle of a caterpillar and how it starts life as an egg before hatching into a caterpillar then it changes into a chrysalis and then emerges a butterfly.



They will also learn about how bees collect nectar from flowers to turn into honey. We will explore what a honeycomb looks like.

The children will learn about this through sensory play, books, music and a variety of adult-led activities.

## Expressive Art & Design



The children will be learning some new minibeast songs and rhymes and using instruments to enhance the songs. We will explore different kinds of instruments and compare the sounds that they make.

We will be making caterpillar paintings using pompom and tweezers, incorporating our fine motor skills into our art activities. We will also be looking at symmetry art and using this idea to design and make some beautiful butterflies. We will also use this opportunity to explore other things that are symmetrical.

We will be building up a collection of minibeast themed sensory bottles that all the children will be a part of making and carefully considering resources that are suitable for the bottles.



## Outdoor Learning and Enrichment Opportunities

We will be incorporating the following outdoor learning and enrichment activities into our learning this half term:

- The coronation of King Charles III.
  - Whole school party to celebrate.
  - Crown making.
  - Bunting making and decorating
- Outdoor minibeast hunts in the sensory garden or local area.
- Collecting natural materials to make a bug hotel.
- Healthy eating and making fruit pizzas and then enjoying these together during an outdoor picnic.
- Planting some flowers in our garden to encourage the bees to collect nectar.

## Additional Information

Last day of School (3.15pm Finish)

Friday 26th May

May Break

Monday 29th May —Friday 12th June

Monday 15th June: Return to school

## Monster Phonics

<https://monsterphonics.com/>

## Online Safety for 3-7 year olds

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/smartie-the-penguin/>