

GIANT FOOTPRINT

Ages 6+

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn that many tiny organisms live all over the ground and we must be careful where we walk in nature.

Summary: Many tiny organisms live underfoot that often go unnoticed.

Subject Area: Science

Time: 30 minutes

Background

This activity aims to show students that not all organisms are easy to spot with the naked eye. Some creatures are so small that we need a magnifying glass or even microscope to see them. This activity will help give students a greater appreciation for the smaller organisms in different habitats.

Before the Lesson

- Familiarize yourself on the different invertebrates found in your area.
- Ensure you have the required materials or alternatives.
- Make sure there are no threats to students in the area you will be conducting the activity, like harmful insects or plants.

Materials

- Large wire footprints made from old coat hangers, one for each group (an alternative for this could be a paper cut out of a footprint)
- Magnifying glasses (one per student if possible)
- Giant footprint handout on page 3 (one per group)
- Pencils
- Identification book or card on types invertebrates found in your area

Discussion/Reflection

Have each group share what was found in their “footprint”. Ask if the students found anything that they weren’t able to identify. Have students draw their mystery creature on the board or in their notebooks and work as a group to identify it using invertebrate/creature identification aids.



Activity - Giant Footprint

Procedure

1. Divide the class into an even number of groups of three or four students. Give one student from each group a wire “footprint”. If wire is unavailable, have students trace their foot prints onto a piece of paper and cut out the center. Use the outer piece of the paper as your “footprint”.
2. Have the students who are holding the footprints stand in a circle facing outwards. Tell them to take three giant steps away from the circle and stop.
3. Have them put the footprint down on the place where their next step would have fallen.
4. The rest of the group may now join them.
5. Have each group inspect the area inside the “footprint” and make a detailed list of all the different kinds of things that they find inside their footprint (sand, shells, mud, stones, plants, sticks, insects, feathers, crabs, worms etc.), using the Giant Footprint sheet on page 3.
6. Give the groups 10 minutes to list everything they can find inside the footprint. Then call the students all together, and have each group compare what they have found in their footprints with what another group has found. Encourage them to discuss anything that they found that they weren't expecting.

References

- Mangrove Action Project, Marvellous Mangroves - A Wetlands Education Resource Book for the West Indies



Giant Footprint

List all of the things found inside the giant footprint.

