

Lesson Idea: Micro Hike

You don't need to go on a long journey to discover something new. Forget a one kilometre hike. Try a one metre hike instead!

Activity Summary

Shrink your students down to the size of a bug and send them off on a miniature hike across the school grounds. Students take on a different perspective as they slow down and observe smaller elements in the landscape and ecology.

Use this activity in a **Science** investigation like a Bio Blitz of the natural inhabitants of the school grounds, or in an imaginative story writing project in the **English** curriculum.



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Create an informal transect through a chosen environment
- Observe small natural items and features with natural eyesight or a magnifying glass
- Reflect on how observation changes with a different perspective
- Highlight the types of small creatures that live in the school grounds

Materials Needed

- string, thin rope, or yarn
- scissors
- a magnifying glass (optional)

Introduce the Activity

1. Ask students to name the smallest creature they have seen in the school grounds.
2. Invite students to explain what it would be like for that creature to walk across the oval or another part of the school grounds.
3. Organise lengths of string or rope for each small group. The students could estimate the length of 1 metre (3 feet) using their bodies or accurately measure using a large ruler or measuring tape.
4. Distribute magnifying glasses if available.



Micro Hike Activity Steps *(Download the free Nature Passport App to complete this activity)*

- Go into the schoolyard and measure out about one metre of string for each hiker or pair of hikers. This will be your hiking trail.
- Imagine you've shrunk! You are now the size of a thumbnail.
- Lay down your trail and begin your hike at one end of the string, getting close and looking at every detail.
- Hike slowly! Remember you are only the size of a thumbnail and have very short legs.
- Record your discoveries. What would you say if you were a tiny, thumbnail-sized person seeing the trail for the first time?
- Capture your favorite discoveries on the trail, through photographs or drawings.
- Does pretending you are tiny change the way you look at the world? In what ways did the journey change your perspective?



Lesson Reflection

1. Create a class list of some of the terrain, plants and animals that the students observed. You could write it on a 3 column chart, with a column for each of the above observations.
2. Invite students to share their quiz answers to the question: "Does pretending you are tiny change the way you look at the world?"
3. Brainstorm other ways to imagine a different viewpoint and how you would try them out.

Extension Ideas

- Estimate how many blades of grass an ant will need to pass if it walks across the oval. Start by counting blades of grass along the Micro Hike string line, then multiply by the number of string lines it would take to cross the oval.
- Estimate how many bugs live on the school oval through counting then multiplying the number of bugs in a metre square.
- Write a story of a bug's journey across the school grounds. What terrain does it pass through and who does it meet?
- Use field guides, online keys or image searches to identify insects found on the Micro Hike.
- Use the Safari feature of the Nature Passport App to investigate and record small animals and insects found around the school.

You can download the Nature Passport app for free on both the [App Store](#) and [Google Play Store](#) to complete this activity and many more! Visit the website at www.naturepassport.org, where you'll find lots of useful information for families and teachers on how best to use Nature Passport.

