

Making a Bug Hotel

Some pupils may be put off by the idea of attracting invertebrates to the garden or school grounds. A discussion on why invertebrates are important to have around (e.g. they provide food for birds and other animals, they help with decomposition) might be a nice way to start off this activity.

You will need...

- A selection of plastic or cardboard tubes — enough for one per pupil, pair or group. Plastic tubes tend to work best as they are weather-proof. You could use sections of plastic soft drinks/milk bottles with the tops and bottoms cut off (be careful not to leave any sharp edges). One large plastic soft drinks bottle could be cut into 2 or 3 sections.
- A variety of objects to go inside the tubes and provide a habitat, e.g. twigs, straw, pine cones, leaves, grass, short lengths of bamboo cane, paper straws.
- Lengths of garden twine/string.
- Sticky labels, or pieces of card and sticky tape so that pupils can create signs for their hotels.
- An appropriate outdoor area to place the hotels.

Notes

- If you are placing the hotels in the school grounds, you'll need to help pupils find suitable safe locations to leave them in. If pupils are taking the hotels home to put in their garden, another adult will need to help them find somewhere to place it.
- Hotels could be left in flower beds or hung from low branches of a tree. Alternatively, they could be placed in an out-of-the-way corner of the playground.
- If the hotels are being tied to a tree, pupils may need a demonstration of how to tie string around their tubes.
- After a week or two, pupils could go out to inspect their bug hotels and see whether they can spot any invertebrates in or around them — the hotels should be interfered with as little as possible though, to avoid disturbing the mini-beasts.

Making a Bug Hotel

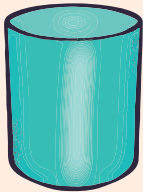
Invertebrates (also called bugs or mini-beasts) like to live in small, dark places. For example, under a stones, logs or dead leaves, or in a crack in the wall.

You are going to have a go at making a bug hotel — a mini-habitat for invertebrates to live in.

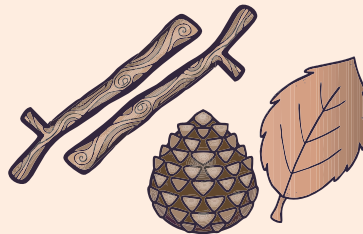
Your teacher will give you:



a tube



some materials to make a habitat



material to make a sign



Here's what you need to do:

1. Take your tube.
2. Fill it with the materials that you think invertebrates might like to live in the most.
3. Make a sign with the name of your hotel on it and attach it to the tube.
4. Choose a place outside to put your hotel.
Your teacher will tell you where you can do this.

Your tube needs to be packed full so that the materials don't fall out.

If you want to hang your hotel from a tree, you'll need to tie a piece of string around the tube at each end. You can then tie the ends of each piece of string to a branch.

Now answer these questions:



1. What materials did you make your hotel out of?

.....

.....

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2. Where did you decide to put your bug hotel?

.....
.....

3. Write down the names of three invertebrates that you think might come to stay in your bug hotel.

.....

4. It is important that your hotel is open at each end.
Write down two possible reasons for this.



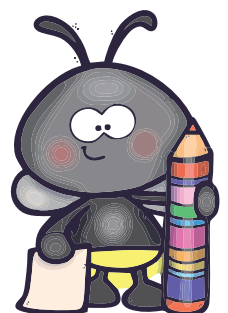
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5. Modern gardens are often very neat and tidy.
Some don't have a lawn. Many don't have a compost heap.
Why do you think bug hotels might be a good thing in these types of gardens?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Bonus Task

Imagine you are an invertebrate who has come to stay in your bug hotel.
Write a review of what it is like to stay in the hotel.
What could be done to improve it?



Making a Bug Hotel

Answers

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Many possible answers......
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Answers

2. Where did you decide to put your bug hotel?

Many possible answers.....

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3. Write down the names of three invertebrates that you think might come to stay in your bug hotel.

E.g. woodlice / spiders / ladybirds / earwigs / centipedes.....

4. It is important that your hotel is open at each end.
Write down two possible reasons for this.



E.g. to help the invertebrates get in and out.....

To make sure that the invertebrates get enough air.....

.....

5. Modern gardens are often very neat and tidy.
Some don't have a lawn. Many don't have a compost heap.
Why do you think bug hotels might be a good thing in these types of gardens?

Invertebrates in neat and tidy gardens might not have.....

many places to shelter/live. Bug hotels would give them.....

somewhere to live, which would help to attract more.....

invertebrates to the garden.....

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