

## Investigating habitats in our school grounds

Context	The National Education Nature Park is an initiative designed to increase biodiversity across the education estate and have a real impact on halting the decline of nature in England. Investigating different habitats in the school grounds can develop a range of fieldwork and mapping skills, and facilitate pupils' knowledge and understanding of features of the school grounds and the range of habitats it provides.		
Length of time	Flexible	Suitable location	School grounds
Equipment needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map of the school grounds</li> <li>• Camera for taking pictures (optional)</li> </ul>		
Suggested delivery			Objectives (2-3) Key Skills
<p>In class, study a map of the school grounds, and identify key features such as the building, car park, wildlife area, field, etc. Ask pairs or groups of pupils to think about the range of habitats the school grounds might provide for birds, insects and other animals. What habitats do different sorts of creatures need? Where would pupils expect to find most wildlife?</p> <p>Study this <a href="#">RSPB page</a> illustrating the range of habitats which could be in your school grounds.</p> <p>Outside, allocate groups of pupils different areas of the school grounds to investigate. Ask each group which of the features shown on the RSPB sheet they can find in their allocated area. They could use a tally system to record the number of each feature and mark the locations of these on the map. If pupils have cameras, they can take photos to show the range of habitats provided.</p> <p>In the classroom, ask each group to report on their findings. They could report verbally, make a poster, or create a PowerPoint Presentation. Use the information pupils collected to create a large map of the school grounds annotated to show the range of habitats.</p> <p>Discuss the results of the investigation. How wide is the range of habitats your school grounds provide? What new features could be developed to increase biodiversity?</p>			<p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop knowledge and understanding of how features of the school grounds provide different habitats.</li> <li>2. Develop knowledge and understanding of how different habitats support biodiversity.</li> <li>3. Encourage positive action to improve biodiversity in the school grounds.</li> </ol> <p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fieldwork skills in observation and recording.</li> <li>• Map reading and recording information on maps.</li> </ul>
Potential risks to consider	Most school grounds are a relatively safe place for pupils to conduct fieldwork investigations, but before you go outside, encourage them to identify any potential risks (e.g. moving vehicles in the car park) and how to avoid them.		
Possible follow-up activities	Pupils could create a plan for improving biodiversity in the school grounds and propose it to the Headteacher, Eco-Committee, or School Governors.		
Resources	<a href="#">RSPB</a> - school visits on reserves <a href="#">RSPB</a> - activities <a href="#">National Education Park</a> - find out more about the initiative		