

Activity 2 - Micro mapping

This activity works well in gardens, parks and woodlands, but you can try it anywhere to discover the micro-scale variations in your surroundings.

Making a micro map helps us to observe the world at a tiny scale, a scale that small children tend to notice, but is often overlooked by older children and adults. Even in a place that looks like it's made of 'only' grass, there is lots of diversity once you look closely, and sometimes you will observe tiny nature dramas too!

Things to bear in mind before you start:

- Pick a place that is safe for you to be very close to the ground - avoid areas where there is a possibility of dog or other waste; or lots of thorns/nettles. You will be on your hands and knees, getting close to the ground to see all the tiny details!

You will need:

- Collect 4 sticks or bring piece of string between 1-2m long
- Paper, pencil/pens/colours

How do I make a micro map?

Step 1. Pick your location. Find the spot you want to map.

Step 2. Mark out your mapping area using your string or the sticks you collected.

Step 3. Get in there and see what you can see.

Step 4. Draw or sketch what you observe. You can make this as detailed or artistic as you like - there are no rules for these maps, other than that you capture in your way what you notice.

Consider:

- What is growing in different parts
- Stony or bare soil areas; paths
- Signs/presence of insects or animals
- Smells in different areas
- Where you think North is
- A legend (a type of menu for your map)
- Try different sizes of patches

If you don't have paper with you, you can do this mapping exercise by just observing what you see when you move

