

Moving snails investigation

Equipment

- snails
- large, plastic tub
- correction fluid
- marker pen
- map of school grounds



Method

- 1 Look in dark, damp places to find 10–20 snails and collect them in a large plastic tub.
- 2 Use small dots of correction fluid and a marker pen to number the snails' shells, making sure the correction fluid doesn't touch their soft, fleshy bodies.
- 3 Record information about each snail, including its size, species and any other notable features. Predict where the snail will move to in the school grounds.
- 4 Release the snails from a single location in the playground.
- 5 The next day, see if the snails can be found again and mark their locations on a paper or digital map of the school grounds.
- 6 Make a note of any snails that couldn't be found.

Results

- Talk about the results of the investigation and compare them to the children's predictions. Ask questions such as 'Where were the snails found? Why? Which snail travelled the furthest? What direction did the snails travel in? How do you know?'

Top tips

- Carry out this investigation in the summer term. Snails may hibernate between October and April.
- Remind children to wash their hands after handling snails.
- Ask children not to move the snails if they find them, just record their location on the map.
- Encourage children to look high and low for the snails, as they often move up vertical surfaces.
- To extend this activity, ask the children to spend five minutes each day over the course of a week searching for and recording each snail's location.