

One Metre Hike

Ages
4 and up

There is no need to take a long hike to explore new environments. Instead, try a one metre hike! There is an entire world of creatures in the grass, the garden or on the forest floor. One metre may not be a long hike for you, but imagine you are a tiny beetle or a little snail. One metre would be a long and exciting adventure.

Supplies:

- ◇ A one metre long piece of string or yarn
- ◇ Magnifying glass if you have one
- ◇ Sketch or notebook and pencil or pencil crayons

What you do:

1. Find a patch of grass, garden, or forest floor.
2. Lay down your string (consider a curvy trail) and begin your hike at one end of the 'trail'.
3. Pretend you are a very small creature. Get your eyes very close to the ground and 'hike' slowly. (Remember you have tiny legs.) Take a close look at every detail as you hike along the trail. Use your magnifying glass if you have one.
4. Take time to pause on your hike to record your discoveries. Draw, photograph or make notes on any interesting things you see, such as insects, worms, seeds, or bird poop.
5. Pack a mini picnic with teeny, tiny sandwiches or itty-bity bits of cheese, for example.



Expansion Pack— ideas an even more exciting adventure.

- ◇ **Before** — make some predictions about what you might discover during your hike. At the trail's end compare your observations to your predictions.
- ◇ **During** — conversation points— notice living (biotic) and non-living (abiotic) things. Explore the nature of producers (convert sunlight into matter), consumers (eat matter), decomposers (breakdown matter) —how are they different, how are they the same? Keep a running tally of insects, spiders or particular plants. Sort by characteristics such as colour, markings, leaf shape or margin (toothed, lobed), and so on.
- ◇ **After** — conversation points—does pretending to be tiny change how you look at the world? In what ways did the hike change your point of view?

Using your tallies, calculate how many insects or dandelions, for example, would be found if you hiked 100 metres or across your yard.

Write a story of a creature's hike across your yard, the park, or the school grounds. Who does it meet and what terrain does it pass through?

Draw what your world would look like if you were the size of a small beetle.

Use field guides, online resources to identify creatures and plants found on your hike.

TIP: Using a miniature toy figure to hike the trail can help little ones take their time.



Find a spot in nature or your yard and, with some twine and stakes, map out a 30cm square station. Make regular observations of what you see inside that station once a day, once a week, or as the seasons begin to change. It is exciting when something new appears and easy to make connections to the seasons and to the events in nature surrounding your station.