

# Life in a muddy puddle

## (Habitats)



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles



CurriculumVisions

VisionMasters

Comprehension Workbook 4

# Life in a muddy puddle (Habitats)



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

understand • key words • summarise • sequencing • AF2-3 • AF4-5 • AF6-7 • discuss • create

# Caring for our environment

Matches the requirements of the Literacy Strategy and designed to integrate with your normal subject studies. (This material is independent of any specific text book and can be used alongside any publisher's books including our textbook.)

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# Life in a muddy puddle

Many surprising places make good homes for small animals and insects. One of these is a muddy puddle, a kind of small pond. Small insects and animals lay eggs in muddy puddles. When the eggs hatch, the insects or animals live in the puddle.



Muddy puddles form when it rains, and some last for many months. The day after the rain falls, you can find tiny animals called water bears in the puddle. Water bears are so tiny that you will need a microscope to see them. The water bears live in soil or mud. When the rain falls and makes a puddle, the water bears come out and swim around.

After two days, you can see fairy shrimp in the puddle. Fairy shrimp can live their whole lives in one muddy puddle. The fairy shrimp eggs are covered with a thick shell. When the puddle dries out, the eggs dry up and sink into the mud. At the next rain, when the puddle fills up, the eggs hatch and the fairy shrimp live in the puddle.

Three days after the rain, you can find butterflies, mayflies and mosquitoes at the puddle. They lay their eggs in or near the puddle.



Frogs also lay eggs near muddy puddles. When the puddle is one week old, the eggs hatch and the tadpoles live in the puddle. The tadpoles eat the fairy shrimp and water bears in the puddle.

When the puddle is two weeks old, birds come to visit the muddy puddle. They eat the insects and tadpoles in the puddle. Small animals like mice come to the puddle to drink.

Finally, the puddle dries up again. The animals and insects will leave until the next rain. So next time you are thinking about jumping into a muddy puddle, take a minute to think about all the life that may be using the puddle as well.



# Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

**a** Write a sentence in which you found the word '**microscope**'.

**b** From that sentence, write what you think '**microscope**' means.

**c** Write a new sentence using the word '**microscope**'.

**d** Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to '**microscope**'.

**e** Give an example of something you would use a '**microscope**' for.





# Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: suprising	unexpected

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# Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

**1** Write a heading for your summary.

**2** Now write the main idea in one sentence.  
e.g. "This story tells us..."

**3** Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.



**Finally,  
can you rewrite your  
summary to make it better?**

- 1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.**
- 2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.**
- 3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.**
- 4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?**

**There is  
nothing wrong  
with rewriting; even  
the best authors  
rewrite their  
work.**



123  
4

# Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.



When the puddle is one week old, the eggs hatch and the tadpoles live in the puddle.

After two days, you can see fairy shrimp in the puddle.

When the puddle is two weeks old, birds come to visit the muddy puddle.

Three days after the rain, you can find butterflies, mayflies and mosquitos at the puddle.

Finally, the puddle dries up again.

The day after the rain falls, you can find tiny animals called water bears in the puddle.



# Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



1 Where do water bears live when there are no puddles?

2 What is the fairy shrimp's egg covered with?

4 What do the birds eat?

5 Where do the tadpoles live?





# Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.



1 What is the first animal to come to the muddy puddle?

2 How can you see water bears?

3 Why do frogs lay their eggs in the puddle?

4 Why do small animals come to the puddle?





# Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.



1 Do you think muddy puddles are important?

2 What happens when the puddle dries up?

3 Do you think all of these animals and insects would come to live in a puddle on the pavement?

4 Where can you find muddy puddles near to where you live?

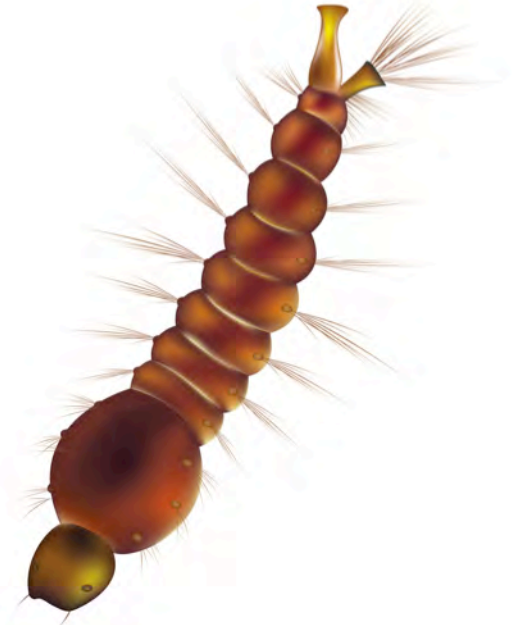
5 Do you think we should try to protect muddy puddles?



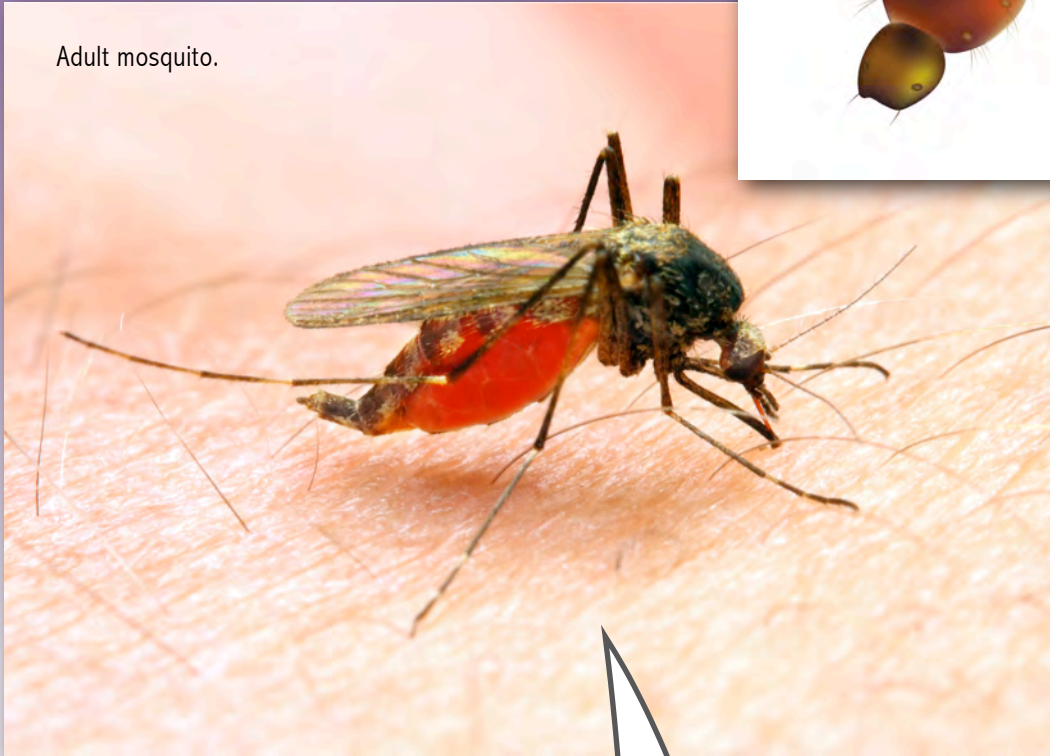
# Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.

Mosquito lava.



Adult mosquito.



## Discussion topic: Making puddles

Some of the insects that come to the puddles, like mosquitoes, can be dangerous. Nevertheless, do you think we should try to make muddy puddles so we can have more small animals, birds and insects?



# Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



## A Muddy Puddle

One day, there is a big rainstorm. Afterwards, you notice that a large muddy puddle has been made in your garden. You go outside to take a look...

(Now continue the story of describing what happens to your muddy puddle in the next three or four weeks...)



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