

What is living in your water?

Water can be home to a lot of life forms and microorganisms, especially when it's dirty water found in ponds or near plants. Why not take some samples, view them under a microscope and see what you can find?

How clean is the water from your tap compared to the water found in a pond?



What you'll need

A concave glass slide

An eye dropper

A microscope

Different samples of water (tap water, pond water, muddy water etc.)

Around plants or from muddy puddles are good places to take samples as they usually contain more microorganisms.

Instructions:

Set up your microscope, preferably using its highest setting.

Use the dropper to take some water from one of your samples and put it on the concave slide. Focus the microscope. What can you see?

Don't worry if you don't see anything right away. Check that the microphone is in focus. If you still can't see anything, try with a different water sample.

Look at how the creatures move. After observing their movements, you might like to record their behaviours and try to draw them.

What might you see?

Some of the creatures and microorganisms you might be able to see include:

Euglenas - These are between a plant and an animal. They have a long tail called a flagellum that allows them to move.

Protozoa - They have flagella (tails) that can be hard to see.

Amoebas - These microorganisms swim by wobbling. They surround their food like a blob in order to eat it.

Algae - Not considered to be plants by most scientists, these organisms might be coloured yellowish, greenish or reddish. They may be found by themselves or in chains.

There might even be larger creatures such as worms or tadpoles in your water samples, depending on where you took the water from. Make a list of all of the interesting things you see in your water sample and compare with your classmates.

