

# Organism Hunt

All sorts of organisms can be found in and around your school. In this activity you will set your own traps and find out just what kinds of organisms occupy your space. Then you will determine what your organisms are and when their relatives first appeared on Earth.

## Procedure

- 1 Take a look around your classroom and school and select an area where you think you might find some organisms. This can be near a plant, on a sunny windowsill, near a garbage can, even outdoors near a tree. This is where you will be placing your trap. This should be out of the way of foot traffic so that no one will step on your trap.
- 2 Obtain a sticky trap from your teacher. Do not peel back the trap cover until you are ready to place it in its location. Before you place the trap, place a small amount of tape in the corners of the non-sticky side, take the cover off the sticky side, and tape the trap down **sticky side up**. Label the trap with the date, time, and location. Record the conditions of the area where you placed the trap.
- 3 After two days, remove the trap and place it on a sheet of white paper. Use a magnifying glass to look closely at each of the organisms your team collected. Catalog each organism. Your catalog should list each organism and its characteristics as well as include a drawing of each organism showing all of its body parts.
- 4 After cataloguing your organisms, conduct research to identify each organism you have collected. Use the resources listed on your "Links and Books" handout to aid in your research. Once all teams have identified their organisms, you will be asked to share what your team found.
- 5 You will now choose one organism for further study that belongs to the phylum Arthropoda. Create a tree that includes all the major orders within the phylum, and categorize your chosen organisms into the correct order (and if possible, class) level. Provide a short description of your organism's characteristics.
- 6 When you have finished classifying your organism, conduct research to determine your organism's evolutionary history.
- 7 Once you have discovered more about the evolutionary background of your organism, create a time line showing the eons, eras, and periods of geologic time. Note on the time line the approximate geologic time period your organism first evolved.

