



HANDS-ON LAB

Life Under a Microscope

Using a microscope properly is an important skill for many biologists. In this lab, you will review microscope skills by examining a drop of water from the surface of a local pond.

PROCEDURE

1. Make a wet mount slide. Place a drop of pond water in the center of a microscope slide and carefully put a cover slip over the water.
2. View the pond water sample under low power on the microscope. Use the coarse focus knob to bring the sample into focus. In the space below, draw and label any organisms that you see in the sample.
3. View the slide under high power. Use the fine focus knob to bring portions of the sample into focus. Draw and label any organisms, including details of their structures, that you see in the sample.

MATERIALS

- cover slip
- pipette, plastic disposable
- pond water (1 drop)
- microscope
- microscope slide



ANALYZE AND CONCLUDE

1. How did you determine whether items in the pond water were living or nonliving?

2. Did the organisms you observed exhibit all the characteristics of living things? Which of the characteristics were more difficult to observe, and how could you further investigate whether these criteria were met?

