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Snail-powered science: hands-on biology for active classrooms

Activity 2 worksheet

Procedure

1. Expose a pond snail to filter paper that has been soaked in either water culture (the control sample) or with fish water/diluted coffee for two minutes.
2. Flip the snails onto their dorsal surface. Dislodge each snail 5 times.
3. Record the mean righting time for each treatment:

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Discussion

- What is the purpose of measuring righting behaviour in snails?

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- Why do you think fish water might influence the snails' behaviour differently compared to culture water?

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- How might differences between individual snails affect the interpretation of results?

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- What other types of snail behaviour could be studied to assess the health of freshwater ecosystems?

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- How could the results of this experiment be connected to human health, particularly mental well-being?

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- What ethical responsibilities do scientists have when studying living snails? And how can experiments be designed to respect animal welfare while still producing meaningful data?

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