Dust and breathing

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Searching for dust mites: Student sheet

Equipment

- Microscope
- Glass slides
- Cover slips
- Tweezers
- Plain paper and a pencil
- Dust samples

Method

1. Read through the instructions before you begin
2. **Carefully** set up your microscopes. Make sure you choose the lowest magnification (around x40), or the weakest zoom setting to begin. You will know you are ready when you see a crisp, evenly lit, white circle when you look through the eyepiece
3. Once you have been given your sample, use tweezers to transfer a tiny pinch of dust onto your slide
4. Gently lower the cover slip onto the dust sample. **Be careful.** Handle the edges to avoid fingerprints on your slip
5. Slowly start to focus the lens on your dust sample
6. Do not rush around looking; move around the slide delicately, comparing what you can see to the drawings on the screen
7. Sketch and label an example of each thing you identify. If it helps begin switching to a higher magnification (around x100) or stronger zoom setting
8. If you find things you cannot identify, sketch it out to compare later

You will know when you have found a dust mite in your sample. Remember not to panic; they are only a fraction of a millimetre across and can't bite or sting.