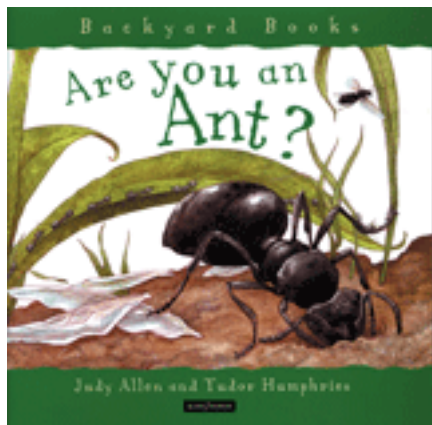


A Teacher's Guide



Are You an Ant?

by Judy Allen

illustrated by Tudor Humphries

- Looking and Learning
- Reading and Talking
- Looking Further

"An informative and enjoyable nature series for young children." — *Booklist*

"A great literature connection to . . . 'Life Cycle' or . . . part of a thematic unit on behavior or ecology." — *NSTA Recommends*

"Will attract young nature lovers." — *School Library Journal*

Looking and Learning

1. Create an alphabet list of backyard creatures, beginning with "A is for Ant." Make a backyard alphabet scrapbook, with a letter, name, and picture on each page.
2. How many different kinds of ants, bees, caterpillars, butterflies, and spiders can you find in your neighborhood? Be careful. Many bees sting, and some ants and spiders can bite.
3. Find a butterfly chrysalis and bring it (and the stem or branch that holds it) into your house or classroom. Watch it every day and watch the butterfly emerge.
4. Look for dragonflies in your neighborhood. What do they look like when they are flying? What colors are they?
5. Catch a grasshopper and hold it loosely in both hands cupped together. What does it feel like? Put it in a large jar with lots of grass and holes punched in the lid. What does the grasshopper do? After a day or two, let the grasshopper go free in your backyard.
6. Watch for and make a list of other creatures that you can find near your home. How are these creatures similar to or different from the creatures in these books?
7. Ladybugs are easy to catch. Let one crawl on your hand and fingers. What does it feel like? What does it look like close up?
8. Follow a snail's slime trail and see if you can find the snail hiding under a board, a leaf, or other protection. Does the snail have a shell? If it doesn't have a shell, what do you call it?

9. Make crayon pictures of the backyard creatures observed and post the pictures on the refrigerator, a bulletin board, or other prominent place. Make up a story for each picture.
10. When the grasshoppers come to your backyard or park, how many can you count in a day? How many dragonflies, ladybugs, and snails can you find?

Reading and Talking

1. What kinds of homes do ants, bees, butterflies, dragonflies, grasshoppers, ladybugs, snails, and spiders live in? How do they make those homes?
2. What do the different backyard creatures eat, and how do they find their food?
3. What do you like about ants, bees, butterflies, dragonflies, grasshoppers, ladybugs, snails, and spiders? What don't you like about them? Why?
4. What do ants do in their nest? What do bees do in theirs?
5. How do bees and butterflies find flowers? What do they do when they find flowers that they like?
6. How do caterpillars turn into butterflies? How do young dragonflies, grasshoppers, and ladybugs turn into adults?
7. Why do you think caterpillars, young dragonflies, young grasshoppers, and young ladybugs eat so much, grow so fast, and have to change their skins so often?
8. Why are a dragonfly's eyes so large? How are the eyes of ants, bees, dragonflies, grasshoppers, ladybugs, snails, and spiders different from your eyes?
9. How many legs do ants, bees, butterflies, dragonflies, grasshoppers, and ladybugs have? How many wings does each have? How many legs do snails and spiders have?
10. Why is their silk thread important to spiders?

Looking Further

Among the many Web sites relating to backyard creatures that are appropriate for preschool children, the following are particularly attractive. In addition, parents and preschool teachers and caretakers may do browser searches for "insects preschool," "ants preschool," "bees preschool," etc. (Neither Kingfisher nor Houghton Mifflin Company is responsible for the content of any of these Web sites.)

<http://abcteach.com/>

http://www.angelfire.com/dc/childsplay/Bugs_n_Butterflies_Theme.htm

<http://daycare.about.com/cs/insecttheme/index.htm>

<http://www.edhelper.com/cat304.htm>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com>

<http://www.first-school.ws/>

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/gbug.shtml>

http://www.preschoolexpress.com/theme_station.shtml

<http://www.stepbystepcc.com/themes2.html#five>

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