

Theme: Insects

Lesson Plan (Quick View)

1. **Warm-up:** Caterpillar Chant
2. **Vestibular:** Bumble Bee flying game
3. **Proprioception:** Jump and swat bugs on the wall
4. **Balance:** Bug hunt obstacle course
5. **Eye-Hand Coordination:** Bug catching with “net”
6. **Cool Down:** Insect/Caterpillar book
7. **Fine Motor:** Caterpillar art project

1. Warm-Up

Using sentence strips and a pocket chart, the teacher can write the following chant on sentence strips for the students to read aloud. This could be spoken in a “wrap” style.

Caterpillar Chant (Author unknown)

A caterpillar looks so small.
It is hardly there at all.
It munches on green leafy treats,
and gets bigger when it eats.
It eats and eats, till pretty soon,
It wraps up tight in a cocoon.
When it wakes up it blinks its eyes
And say, “I’m now a butterfly!”

***Curriculum Suggestion:** Several science benchmarks and indicators can be addressed easily here. Begin by studying the insect life cycle. The adult insect bodies are made of three main parts: head, thorax, and abdomen. Students can “become” an insect body part simply by picking a card that is labeled with the body part name or picture. Students can crawl around the room to find 2 people who have different body part cards than them. Once three “body parts” have connected they can form themselves into an insect body by arranging themselves into the correct order: head thorax, abdomen. They must identify which is the front, middle and rear part. When complete instruct them to make up a name for the insect they have become. Next, they can draw and label the parts of that insect—including any other parts they have learned about: eyes, antennae, 6 jointed legs, wings, etc.

2. Vestibular

Have the children make-believe that they are bees with their wings (arms) spread out (arms straight to the side). While they are flying, they can make a buzzing noise. Have colored spots scattered randomly on the floor as pretend flowers. The children will choose a flower to start on and “fly” to the next one.

Choices of flight patterns: spinning, up on toes, walking in a squatting position, walking on knees, really fast, really slow.

***Curriculum Suggestion:** Put sight words on the paper flowers. This is a great way to integrate a reading benchmark. For older primary (later 2nd grade) the words could be changed to study synonyms or antonyms. Give the students a word card. They could be instructed to ONLY “land” on or “collect” words that mean the same or close to the same thing as their word card. This would make it become a vocabulary lesson also.

Another way to address a math benchmark is to give the children a number; 10 for example. Label the flowers with numbers too. Tell the “bumblebees” that they must collect the addends (flowers) that equal the sum that they are carrying.

3. Proprioception

Tape pictures of bugs with grade level spelling or sight words at varying heights on the wall or chalkboard. Have the children jump up to swat the bugs/words with a fly swatter.

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Sample lesson plan taken from: *Learn to Move, Moving Up! Sensorimotor Elementary School Activity Themes*

By Jenny Clark Brack, OTR/L, BCP

Autism Asperger Publishing Company 2008

4. Balance

This activity would be ideally done outside with shoes and socks off, but could also be done inside with the shoes off. Create an obstacle course where the theme is searching for bugs. You can have the children carry a magnifying glass to “look” for the bugs. Have the obstacle course include crawling over an object, under an object, through a tunnel, across a balance beam, and jumping/ hopping in and out of hoops laying flat on the ground.

5. Eye-Hand Coordination

This can be done two ways. The children should be holding a net of some sort with a handle. An adult would throw a beanbag “bug” to the children, who would attempt to catch the bug with their net. The children could also be the throwers/ tossers of the bugs and try to toss them under hand into a “net” target.

Optional Eye-Hand Coordination activity:

Have the children hold a fly swatter and attempt to swat at bugs, which are balloons that are tossed into the air. The children should attempt to keep the bugs flying in the air.

6. Cool-Down

Read a book about insects/caterpillars.

Charlie the Caterpillar by Dom Deluise (Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing, 1993)

How To Hide A Butterfly & Other Insects by Ruth Heller (Penguin Young Readers Group, 1992)

***Curriculum Suggestion:** After reading this book that illustrates camouflage as a survival strategy for insects, instruct children to search for a quiet and similarly colored or textured area to hide in the classroom or outside. Play a game where one or two children leave the room—they can be the “predators” while the insects hide. Allow them 1 minute to hide then let the predators come in. Time each group to see who can locate the camouflaged insect first. Practice several more times. Provide the students with some different colored coats or old clothes that they can wrap around themselves easily. By doing this they will experience some deeper thinking as they try to figure out the best color to suit an environment in which to hide. Finally, the whole class can discuss the significance of an insect’s colors.

7. Fine Motor

This is a cutting, sequencing, gluing, and copying project, which can be altered for varying levels of ability. Have the children trace a circle on a 4x4 piece of construction paper. You will need a total of 6 different colors, which can be stapled together in stacks of three for cutting the circles out (have the children cut around the traced circle). Have the children copy a pre-made model to sequence the circles in the correct order to make a caterpillar; glue the circles onto a large piece of paper. Have the children also copy the model to draw in eyes, antennae, mouth, feet (2 per circle except head circle), and a triangle on the tail circle. This activity can be modified by having the circles pre-cut and/or having a sheet of paper with highlighted circles (of the same colors of the circles) on it for the children to match. You can also break the sequencing of the circles down and have the children place them individually by color, starting from left to right.

Materials

- A variety of 10 inch colored paper circles
- Pictures of many different bugs
- 2 Fly swatters
- Tape
- Magnifying glasses

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- Crawling tunnel
- Balance beam
- 2-3 Hula hoops
- 2 Nets with a handle
- 2 Bean bags
- 2 Balloons blown up
- Insect/Caterpillar book (See book suggestions under Cool-Down)
- Scissors- 1 for each child
- Glue- 1 for each child
- Circle shapes that the kids can trace- 1 for each child
- Choose 6 different colors of 4 x 4 pieces of construction paper- 6 colors for each child
- Stapler
- Large white construction paper- 1 for each child

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