

INSECTS



Stepping
Stones

A Texas Migrant Early Childhood
Program for 3- and 4-Year Olds

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INSECTS

BIG IDEA

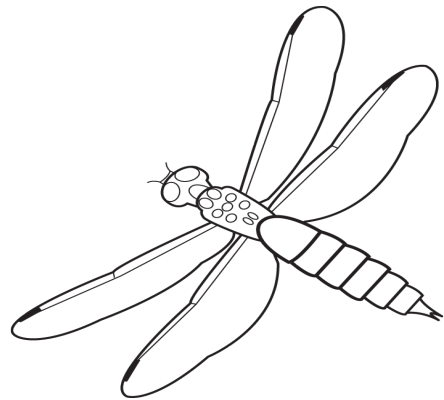
Exploration of living organisms helps children learn about their world. Children investigate in order to describe, organize, classify, and compare characteristics of insects.

Content objective(s):

The child will identify and describe size characteristics of insects and sort insect illustrations into categories: big and small.

Materials needed:

- ♦ T-chart (Handout 1)
- ♦ Pictures of small insects (Handout 2)—copy and cut out
- ♦ Pictures of big insects (Handout 3)—copy and cut out



Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (Revised) domains addressed:

Language and Communication:

II.A.1. Child shows understanding by responding appropriately.

II.D.1. Child uses a wide variety of words to label and describe people, places, things, and actions.

II.D.5. Child uses category labels to understand how the words/objects relate to each other.

Mathematics:

V.E.1. Child sorts objects that are the same and different into groups and uses language to describe how the groups are similar and different.

Science:


VI.B.1. Child identifies and describes the characteristics of organisms.

Lesson vocabulary:



- ♦ insects—insectos
- ♦ big/large—grande
- ♦ little/small—pequeño
- ♦ feelers/antennae—antenas

Activities:

1. The home educator models and demonstrates for the parent.


 Today we will begin learning about insects. Do you know what insects are? **(Pause)** Tell me what you know about insects.

Show the picture of the ant from Handout 3.

  Insects have three body parts, six legs, and feelers or antennae. (Point to the picture while you describe the parts of the body.) Antennae look like long, thin wires that come out of an insect's head. They help the insect feel and smell. Some insects have antennae that are so small you can't see them.

Some insects are large in size, and some are small in size. People often call them bugs, but bugs are only one kind of insect. Here are some pictures of different insects. (Show pictures from Handouts 2 and 3.) Do you know any of these insects?


Allow the child to identify and discuss any insect he/she is familiar with before providing the names of the insects to the child. Point to each picture as you name it, saying,

 This is a ladybug, an ant, a fly, a beetle, a butterfly, and a dragonfly. Have you seen these insects around? **(Pause)** Tell me about them.





Now we will decide which insects are big and which are small. We will use this paper (show the T-chart) to make two groups, one with big insects and one with small insects. On the left side we have the word "Small" (point to the word "Small"). So we will place the small insects on this side. On the right side we have the word "Big" (point to the word "Big"). We will place the big insects on this side. Let's begin.

Model and think aloud for the parent. Show a picture, identify the insect, discuss it, and sort it into the small or big category on the T-chart. First, show the picture of the ladybug.

 Look at this picture. Do you know what insect this is? **(Pause)** This is a ladybug. I've seen them on the flowers in my yard. I like ladybugs because they are red and have small dots. This is a small insect. It is the size of a pea. I'm going to place it here on the T-chart under the word "Small."

Repeat the process with a big insect and this time ask the child,

  In which of these groups do you think it goes? **(Pause)** Does it go in the group of the big insects or the small insects?

Continue the activity with two other insects, one big and one small; leave the remainder of the pictures to be used during the activity between the parent and the child.

2. The parent works with the child.



The parent repeats the process with the child, selecting a different insect. The parent can name the insect, describe it, and share experiences they have had with the insect that will be familiar to the child. For example, the parent could say,

*Here is a butterfly. Many butterflies have a big body and very big wings. Remember when we saw a butterfly on the swing at the park? **(Pause)** It was very pretty with yellow and black wings.*

Since this butterfly has a big body and big wings, I'm going to put it on the T-chart on the side with the word "Big" (point to the word "Big"). What do you think? Is that where it belongs?

The parent can continue with the last insect, asking the child to help name and describe it and share prior experiences. The parent can work with the child to sort the insect into the correct category.

3. The child works with the parent's help.



Before starting, remove the objects from the T-chart and start the activity again. The parent says,

Now it is your turn to tell me what you know about the insects and we will place them in the correct group, big or small.

The parent guides the child through the process: naming, describing, and discussing experiences. The parent prompts the child to help him/her select the correct group for the insect. The parent provides guidance and reinforcement as appropriate.

4. The child works independently as the parent and home educator watch for learning.

Watch for the child to name and describe the insects correctly.

Watch for the child to sort insects correctly into "Big" and "Small" categories. The child should increasingly discuss insects, their characteristics, and his/her experiences with insects.

5. The home educator summarizes the lesson.

Finish by reviewing the content objective and talking about what the family learned today.

Follow-up questions to deepen the child's thinking:



1. Name other insects you know and tell me about them.
2. How is a _____ (some insect) like a _____ (another insect)?
3. Which insects do you see the most often?

Ways to extend on the lesson concepts:



1. Have the child and parent go outside and look for insects. Record on a T-chart (like the one used in the activity) whether the insects are small or big. Count how many are in each category. Use the blank cards from the handout page to draw insects that are found and add them to the existing sort cards.



2. Search through magazines and find insects to discuss and sort into different categories (e.g., those that fly and those that don't fly, those the child likes and those the child dislikes).

Modifications:

If the lesson activity is too hard—

1. Begin with fewer insects.
2. Discuss all the small insects first, and then discuss large insects.

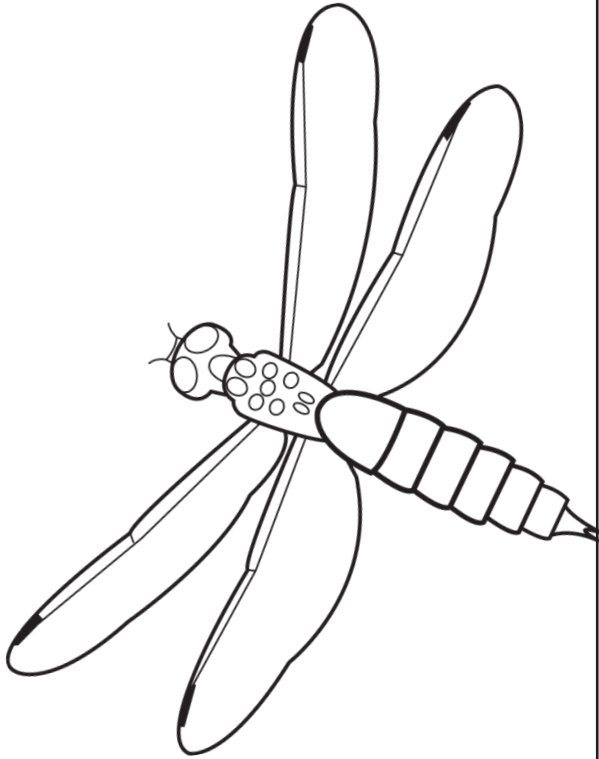
If the lesson activity is too easy—

1. Draw attention to the words on the T-chart. Encourage the child to use the beginning letter of the words to help determine the name of the group where the insects belong.
2. Sort more insects.
3. Ask the child to draw his/her favorite insect and to point to characteristics (six legs; antennae; wings, if appropriate; etc.)
4. Show a picture of a spider, a scorpion, and/or a tick and point out that they have eight legs, so they aren't insects. (They're all arachnids, and all arachnids have eight legs.)

Big

Small

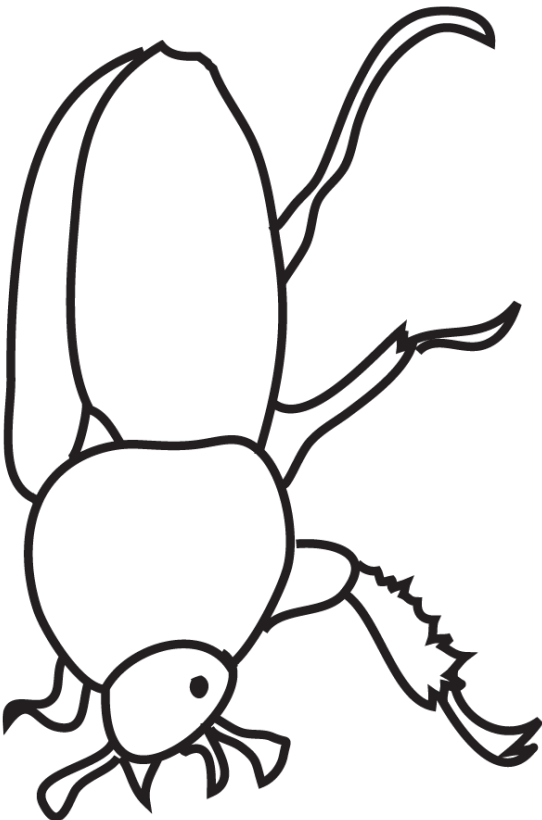
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dragonfly

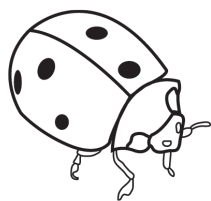


butterfly

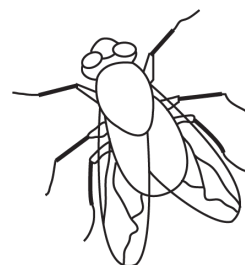


beetle

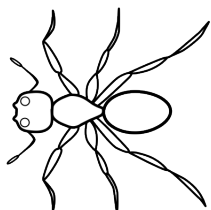
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ladybug



fly



ant

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INSECTS (LESSON 1)

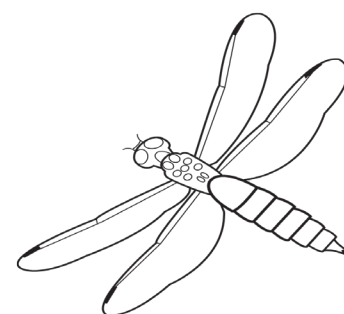
PARENT PAGE

What we are learning:

Your child will identify and describe size characteristics of insects and sort insect illustrations into categories: big and small.

Words to know:

- ♦ insects—insectos
- ♦ little/small—pequeño
- ♦ big/large—grande
- ♦ feelers/antennae—antenas



What to ask:

1. *Name other insects you know and tell me about them.*
2. *How is a _____ (some insect) like a _____ (another insect)?*
3. *Which insects do you see the most often?*

What else to do:

1. Go outside with your child and look for insects. Record on a T-chart (like the one used in the activity) whether the insects you find are small or big. Count how many are in each category. Use a blank card or piece of paper to draw each of insects that are found and add them to the existing sort cards.
2. Search through magazines and find insects to discuss and sort into different categories (e.g., those that fly and those that don't fly, those your child likes and those he/she dislikes).

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