

# At Home with Nature

Nature doesn't just happen in a park; it can happen right at home!



A resource for **PRESCHOOL** and **EARLY ELEMENTARY AGE CHILDREN**  
so they may feel right **AT HOME WITH NATURE.**

## LOVE BUGS!

Videos, activities, stories and songs  
celebrating some of our planet's  
smallest creatures.

### Let's Get Started

Enjoy this video and discover some of the  
many reasons to love bugs!

<https://youtu.be/SE1WTFVEcKq>

### Literacy Connection

Enjoy The Icky Bug Alphabet Book written by  
Jerry Pallotta and illustrated by Ralph Masiello  
and learn about a whole array of bugs from  
A to Z.

<https://youtu.be/-rn9pf4pkVU>

### Music and Movement

Sing along and learn just what it takes for a  
creature to be an insect.

<https://youtu.be/qFUOV4z0q54>



### Math Connection

Count and sing while learning to identify some  
common backyard insects.

<https://youtu.be/F130BRt8f9Y>

Compare the length of your jump to that of a  
cricket!

***Directions are below.***

### Creative Expression

Create sweet love bugs using beads and  
chenille stems.

***Directions are below.***

### Let's Explore Outdoors

Take the learning outdoors with memorable  
family activities.

***Details are below.***



# Math Connection



## Mighty Muscles!

Invite your child to jump several times as far as he or she can. Count each jump.

In a large area outdoors, using rocks as marking stones, invite your child to lie down on the ground. Place one stone at your child's feet and another at the top of your child's head. Have your child lie down again, aligning his or her feet at the spot where his or her head was. Again mark the top of your child's head. Repeat until you have marked 20 body lengths. Invite your child to look at this distance. This is how far your child could go in a single jump if he or she could jump like a cricket!



**Crickets can jump great distances! Like all insects, crickets have three pairs of legs. The two front pairs of legs are small, but the back legs are long and strong! Crickets can often jump about 20 times their body length in a single leap.**

# Music and Movement



## Creatures Big and Small

*Sung to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot"*

**Our earth is home for creatures,** (extend arms to make a large circle)  
**Big and small.** (reach up high and then crunch into a small ball)  
**I love our planet Earth** (extend arms to make a large circle)  
**And I'll protect it for us all.** (nod head)

**Here's a hill for ant.** (make a hill with your hands)  
**Here's a hive for bee.** (clasp hands together)  
**Here's a hole for beetle.** (make a small circle with your fingers)  
**And here's a home for me.** (extend arms over your head like a "roof")

## The Insect Song

*Sung to the tune of "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes"*

**Head, thorax, abdomen** (point to your head, stomach and knees)  
**And six legs.** (make six little legs with six fingers placed near your waist)  
**Head, thorax, abdomen** (point to your head, stomach and knees)  
**And six legs.** (make six little legs with six fingers placed near your waist)  
**Antennae, mouthparts, compound eyes** (make antennae on your head, mouthparts and compound eyes using your fingers)  
**Head, thorax abdomen** (point to your head, stomach and knees)  
**And six legs.** (make six little legs with six fingers placed near your waist)





# Creative Expression



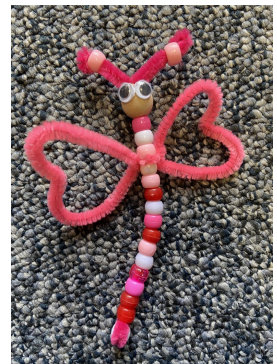
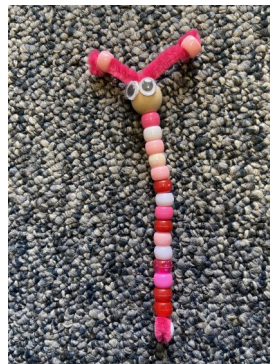
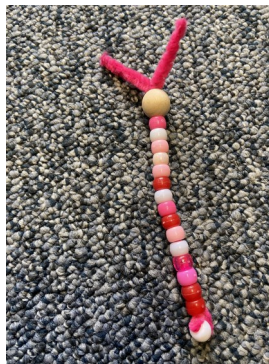
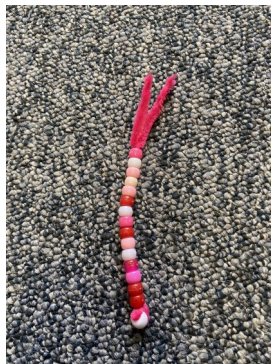
## A Sweet Love Bug

### Materials Needed:

Chenille stems  
Pony beads  
Large bead for insect head  
Wiggly eyes  
Glue dots or liquid glue

### Directions:

- Thread one pony bead to the center of a chenille stem.
- Fold the chenille stem in half.
- Count and add 15 pony beads to the folded chenille stem.
- Add the large bead.
- Fan the remaining chenille stems to create antennae.
- Add a bead to the end of each antennae.
- Add wiggly eyes to the large bead.
- Create heart-shaped wings with an additional chenille stem.



# Let's Explore Outdoors



## A Looking Jar

It's fun to observe insects! You can use a clear plastic container for a "Looking Jar." Insects need air to breathe, so be certain your jar's lid has air holes. It is fun to decorate the top of your jar to look like a favorite insect! Be sure that the insects that are collected are not the biting or stinging type. It is best to observe creatures for just a short time and then return them to their natural habitats.

## Life Beneath a Rock

Place a flat rock in a shady spot and another in a sunny spot. Visit your rocks each day for a week. Turn each rock over gently and look beneath. What do you see? Do you find the same critters under the rock in the shady area and the sunny area? Were there more creatures living under either rock?

Sit in the sun for 10 minutes and in the shade for 10 minutes. Which place do you prefer?





# Let's Explore Outdoors



## Ants on Parade

Use a black marker and ruler to divide a paper plate into fourths. Which foods do you think ants might like to eat? Put a different food item (some ideas: ripe fruit, bread, piece of a cookie, cheese, grass, leaves) in each section of the plate. Place the plate of food outdoors on the ground. Wait and then observe if ants are attracted to any of the foods. Count the ants as they arrive at the different foods. Watch as ants leave the plate. Where do they go? Watch to see if more ants appear from this place and move toward the food plate.



*Ants are social creatures that live in groups called colonies. Ants touch their antennae to other ants' antennae to communicate. Ants leave a trail of chemical signals called pheromones which other ants follow.*



## If I Were an Insect!

Create antennae using a few pieces of aluminum foil that has been crunched and molded. Create bug eyes using two sections of a cardboard egg carton and chenille stems. Invite your child(ren) to wear the antennae and bug eyes and then

crawl, jump, scurry and step just like a variety of different insects.

Ask your child(ren) to finish each of these statements:

If I were as small as an ant...

If I had six legs....

If I were waiting inside a pupa, I would think about...