

At-Academy Activity: Insect Anatomy Hunt

GRADE LEVELS	K-2 nd ; California Content Standards for K & 1 st Grade
SUBJECTS	Life Sciences
DURATION	Preparation: 5 minutes Activity: 45 minutes (includes walking time)
SETTING	Madagascar and Rainforest Exhibits at the Academy

Objectives

Through this scavenger hunt, students will:

1. identify, compare and contrast the major structures of an insect.
2. observe five different examples of insects and point out their body parts.

Materials

Chaperone Booklet (one copy per chaperone)
Butterfly Templates (enough so each student can select a butterfly)
pencils (one per chaperone)
clipboards (one per chaperone, optional)
markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Note: This hunt is purposefully designed to be facilitated by chaperones rather than completed by students with pencils. By having adults focus on the reading and writing, your young students can better explore the exhibits. Also, on occasion, visitors have accidentally dropped pencils into the open-top aquarium at the ground level of the Rainforest, only to be swallowed by our catfish! For the safety of the live animals on exhibit, we ask that personal belongings be stowed away as you wander up the ramp.

Vocabulary

- ❖ abdomen: the rear section of the insect body, which contains organs like the stomach.
- ❖ antennae: a pair of thin, movable parts on the head of an insect which are used to feel or smell.
- ❖ head: the front section of the insect body, which contains the brain, eyes, antennae, and mouth.
- ❖ legs: the limbs of an animal used to support the body and to move around; insects have six legs
- ❖ thorax: the middle section of the insect body, to which the legs attach.

Teacher Background

Through this scavenger hunt, chaperones will lead small groups of students on a walk around the museum in search of insects and their body parts. Students will observe specific insects, finding and discussing the parts of their body using the following vocabulary: head, thorax, abdomen, antennae and legs.

Activity

Preparation

1. Make copies of the *Chaperone Booklet* for each chaperone. Consider giving each adult a clipboard, as well.
2. Print out enough copies of the *Butterfly Templates* so that each student can select their own.
3. Go over the booklet with your adult chaperones ahead of time and make sure they are familiar with the activity and comfortable with the vocabulary.
4. This scavenger hunt is split between the Madagascar exhibit and the Rainforest dome. Half of the groups may want to start in each exhibit in order to prevent crowding. Consider assigning chaperones to specific starting locations.

Introduction

- ❖ Clearly explain the vocabulary for each body part, having students practice saying the terms aloud. Inform students that all insects have these body parts in some form or another. Then, let students share any insects with which they are familiar.
- ❖ Explain that your small group will be visiting exhibits to look for different insects that students may not have seen before. Show students the pictures and data charts in the booklet, making sure they understand what they group hopes to accomplish together.

Procedure

1. Using the hints from the booklet, help your students find the featured insects.
2. Each time your group finds an insect, lead the group in discussion to find the basic body parts of that insect. Once the group has determined what body parts they see, the adult can place an “x” in the appropriate boxes next to that insect.
3. Interesting facts and discussion points are included for each stopping point of the hunt. Adults are encouraged to facilitate discussion, and even ask questions themselves!

Wrap-Up

- ❖ Back in the classroom, let students choose their favorite butterfly template to color based on the patterns and colors of the butterflies they observed in the rainforest. The black and white templates make it easy for young students to color clumsily, yet still complete a masterpiece!
- ❖ What body parts are missing? If students want, have them add legs to their butterfly. (*How many legs should they draw in? Where should they connect them to the butterfly's body?*)
- ❖ Lastly, allow students to label all of the body parts using their newfound vocabulary.

Correlated California Content Standards

Kindergarten

Life Sciences

2c. Students know how to identify major structures of common plants and animals (e.g., stems, leaves, roots, arms, wings, legs).

Grade One

Life Science

2a. Students know different plants and animals inhabit different kinds of environments and have external features that help them thrive in different kinds of places.

Investigation and Experimentation

4e. Make new observations when discrepancies exist between two descriptions of the same object or phenomenon.