

Let's Look at Specimens!

» Find the preserved beetles in Animal Attractions in the Aquarium.

© K Eriksen



Cool fact: The horns of a male Atlas beetle (#19) can be nearly a third of their body length! They are used to fight other males.

Question: Beetle #9 is the only one with its wings pulled out, but all of the beetles have wings. Where do you think they are?

antennae legs head thorax abdomen

Any of the Beetles

Check off each body part that your group finds!



Is it an Insect?

» Find the Emperor Scorpion in Animal Attractions, under the beetles.

© tpsdave



Cool fact: Even though their bodies are black, these scorpions will glow pastel green or blue under a UV light!

Question: Is a scorpion an insect? Try to find the same body parts. If you can't find them all, the answer is no.

antennae legs head thorax abdomen

Emperor Scorpion

Check off each body part that your group finds!



Is a scorpion an insect?

Chaperone Booklet



Help your small group of students observe insects found in the Rainforest and Aquarium exhibits. As you discover the featured insects, check off each body part your group can spot.

Discussion points are included for guidance, but we encourage adults to ask questions, too. Learn together as a group!



INSECT BODY PARTS

head: the front section of the insect body, which contains the brain, eyes, antennae, and mouth.

antennae (an-ten-ee): a pair of thin, movable parts on the head of an insect which are used to feel or smell.

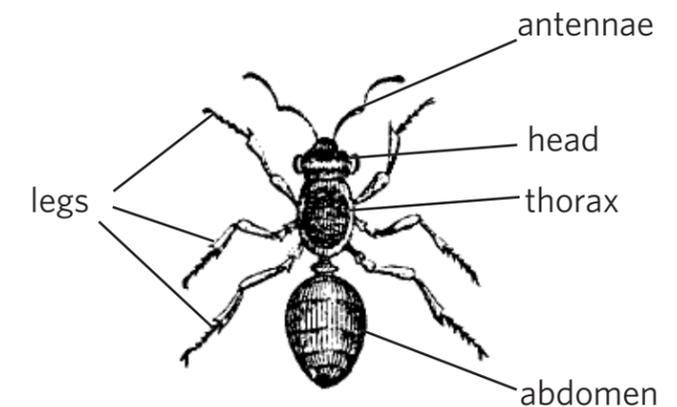
thorax (thohr-aks): the middle section of the insect body, to which the legs attach

abdomen: the rear section of the insect body, which contains important organs like the stomach

legs: the limbs of an animal that are used to support the body and to move around; insects have six legs

Before you begin your hunt:

- 1 Review the basic insect body parts with your group.
- 2 Have students practice saying the words aloud.
- 3 Note how many of each part they should look for: 3 body sections, 6 legs, and 2 antennae.



» Let's go on a hunt for insects!

On the ground of the rainforest

» Find the leaf-cutter ants before ascending the ramp to Level 2.

2006 © William Leonard



Cool fact: Leaf-cutter ants don't eat leaves. Instead, they use them to grow their favorite food—fungus!

Question: Can you spot their sharp mouth parts? What might these be for? Let's compare these with the mouth of a butterfly.

antennae legs head thorax abdomen

Leaf-cutter Ants

Check off each body part that your group finds!



» Look for the ghost praying mantis on Level 2 at the top of the ramp.

Flickr © Frupus



Cool fact: Praying mantises have excellent eyesight for hunting. They sit and wait for other insects to fly by. They use their long front legs to grab their prey all of a sudden, straight from the air!

Question: What features on this insect's body seem to match the environment where it lives? What does the insect remind you of?

antennae legs head thorax abdomen

Ghost Praying Mantis

Check off each body part that your group finds!



In the canopy of the rainforest

» Stop to observe any butterfly on the top level. Look closely at patterns and colors, since you will be coloring butterflies back at school.

Flickr © Sanbeiji



Cool fact: Many butterflies lay their eggs on the bottom of leaves. That way, the hatching caterpillars have a ready supply of food!

Question: How many wings does it have? Did any other insects from today have wings? Are you absolutely sure?

antennae legs head thorax abdomen

Any Butterfly

Check off each body part that your group finds!



» Have students look carefully at the colors and patterns on butterfly wings. Circle each one your group spots!

COLORS

red blue
orange purple
yellow black
green white

PATTERNS

dotted
striped
zigzagged
checkered

