Wisconsin Water Library
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Lesson Plan
"Critters Need Not Give us Jitters"

This lesson plan works very well with children preschool through second grade. The lesson lasts between 45 minutes to an hour, based on the number of books read. To orient the children to what it means to be a scientist, think scientifically and "do science," use the **"A Scientist Is. . ." and "Scientific Method"** handouts available at the end of this lesson plan.

SING

Begin with your favorite welcome song.

SCIENCE CHAT

Begin a theme on insects at circle time by freestyle asking the children what they know about them.

SOME FACTS ABOUT INSECTS

Ask the children: **What do we know about insects?**

Leading question:

Where do you think insects live? (dirt, manure, your house, in trees, in WATER such as ponds…) AQUATIC and TERRESTRIAL

Did you know?

Insects are the most plentiful creature on Earth
A scientist who studies bugs is an ENTOMOLOGIST

Any guess how long the longest Beetle is? (refer to scientific method handouts at the end of the lesson plan to walk through the process of hypothesizing and testing how long different insects are; acquire different bug specimens and use a ruler to measure)

25 cm = 10 in. Show with a ruler = South American Longhorn Beetle
Huge Stick Insect. Females can be over 36 cm long = One Foot, Two inches!

There is a lot to DISLIKE about insects but what is good?

Suggest: honeybees pollinate flowers/give us honey, spiders get rid of flies that carry diseases

READ

Suggestions from the Wisconsin Water Librarians, but feel free to swap out with your own OR visit our **subject specific reading list:** Insects.

READ: one or two poems from *Insectlopedia(1998)* by Douglas Florian to highlight diversity of insects and their homes.

READ*: Bugs! Bugs! Bugs! (1999)* by Bob Barner

READ: *The Very Lonely Firefly (1995)* by Eric Carle

READ: For younger children: *The Icky Bug Alphabet Book (1986)* by Jerry Pallotta illus. by Ralph Masiello

Have children choose letters & let them guess what insect they think will represent the letter!

READ: *The Beetle Book (2012)* by Steve Jenkins

SING

Use any song you like adapted to the theme of insects. Here is one suggestion:

I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly (if you aren't familiar, watch this lovely rendition – with companion animation – by the National Film Board of Canada)

I know an old lady who swallowed a fly
I don't know why she swallowed the fly
Perhaps she'll die

I know an old lady who swallowed a spider
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly
But I don't know why she swallowed the fly
Perhaps she'll die

I know an old lady who swallowed a bird
How absurd to swallow a bird
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly
But I don't know why she swallowed the fly
Perhaps she'll die

I know an old lady who swallowed a cat
Imagine that. She swallowed a cat.
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly
But I don't know why she swallowed that fly
Perhaps she'll die

I know an old lady who swallowed a dog
What a hog to swallow a dog!
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly
But I don't know why she swallowed that fly
Perhaps she'll die

I know an old lady who swallowed a goat
Opened her throat and down went the goat!
She swallowed the goat to catch the dog
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly
But I don't know why she swallowed that fly
Perhaps she'll die

I know an old lady who swallowed a cow
I don't know how she swallowed the cow
She swallowed the cow to catch the goat
She swallowed the goat to catch the dog
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly
But I don't know why she swallowed that fly
Perhaps she'll die

I know an old lady who swallowed a horse
She's alive and well of course

CRAFT: DRAGONFLY ON A LILY PAD

Supplies

1 thick paper plate for each child
Construction paper, different colors, enough for each child to make a body for a dragonfly (**template at the end of this lesson plan**)
Sheets of tissue paper, pictured above, enough for each child to make wings for their dragonflies
Googly eyes, insect or flower stickers, etc.

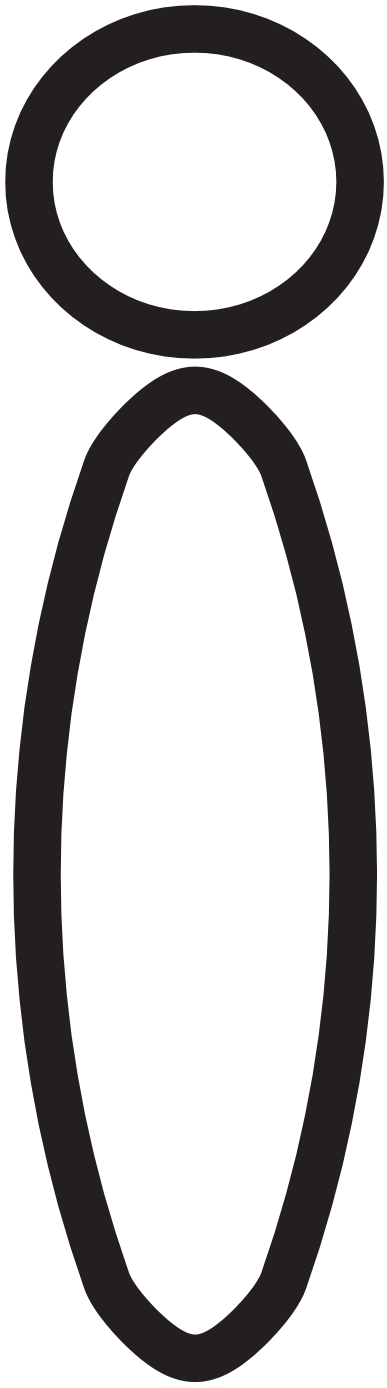
How To

- Use the simple pattern included at the end of this lesson plan) with this story time to cut out dragonfly body shapes out of the construction paper
    - *Younger children may need help or supervision with scissors*
- Have children paste the body onto the paper plate
- Have children cut out a part of the plate to mimic the shape of a lily pad
- Allow children to cut dragonfly wings out of the tissue paper, explain how many wings a dragonfly has
- Let children add eyes, etc

Explain

Dragonfly eggs hatch in the water and dragonfly larvae are aquatic (the larvae live in the water). Sometimes dragonfly live in the water as larvae (naiads) for up to 5 years! Dragonflies are predators and will eat other invertebrates and sometimes small fish or tadpoles while they are in this larval stage! When a naiad is ready to go through metamorphosis its skin splits and it turns into a dragonfly. The insect then becomes terrestrial.

Dragonfly Body Pattern



A SCIENTIST IS SOMEONE WHO…

Observes and wonders

Asks questions

Listens to ideas of others

Conducts experiments

Shares his/her ideas and discoveries

Explores the world around him/her

Uses tools to solve problems

A SCIENTISTS SAYS…

I agree with you because…

I disagree with you because…

Why do you think that?

So, what you're saying is…

Can you tell me more?

Can you give me an example?

How could we test that?

That reminds me of…

DOES IT SINK OR FLOAT?

SCIENTIFIC METHOD