

Insects & Spiders

Science Specimen Set

Designed to meet these objectives:

Science

- Students will compare and contrast features of living organisms.
- Students will identify parts of insects and spiders.

This set of four authentic classroom specimens provides the perfect way for students to get an up-close look at nature! Each creature is permanently encased in indestructible acrylic, so kids can safely examine it from any angle. Plus, labels inside the acrylic make it easy to identify each animal's parts. You'll find a brief description of each animal in this guide.

We're sure you'll find many ways to use the specimens during science lessons. Try some of the ideas we've included in this guide!

About the Specimens

House Spider

Spiders are not insects. They belong to a group called arachnids, along with scorpions and mites. House spiders eat mostly flies and other insects that they catch in their sticky webs. All spiders have poisonous bites, but most do not harm people.

Tarantula

These large, hairy spiders live in hot areas of North and South America. Instead of spinning webs to trap prey, tarantulas are active hunters. Their excellent eyesight helps them find and catch their meals.

Beetle

There are more types of beetles than any other creature—and scientists are still finding new ones! Like all insects, beetles have 6 legs and 3 body parts. Their delicate, filmy wings are protected by hard wing covers called elytrons.

Wasp

Wasps are related to bees and ants. Common wasps live in colonies and build large, papery nests. They use their stingers to kill the insects that they eat and to defend themselves against attackers.

Activities

A Close Look

Provide magnifiers and invite students to examine the specimens in detail. Encourage them to draw what they see, labeling the body parts or features.

Write About It

Prompt students to write a few paragraphs about the specimens, describing their appearance and features. Suggest that they include details about the animal's life cycle, habitat, or other information they have learned.

Make a Diagram

Have students choose two of the specimens and make a Venn diagram to compare them. Remind them to draw two large, overlapping circles and to label each with one of the animal's names. List features that are unique to each animal in that animal's circle. In the area where the two circles overlap, list features that are common to both creatures.

Label It

Provide enlarged photocopies of the diagrams on pages 5 through 8. Direct children to complete the diagrams by filling in the names of the body parts.

Meeting Individual Needs

ELL

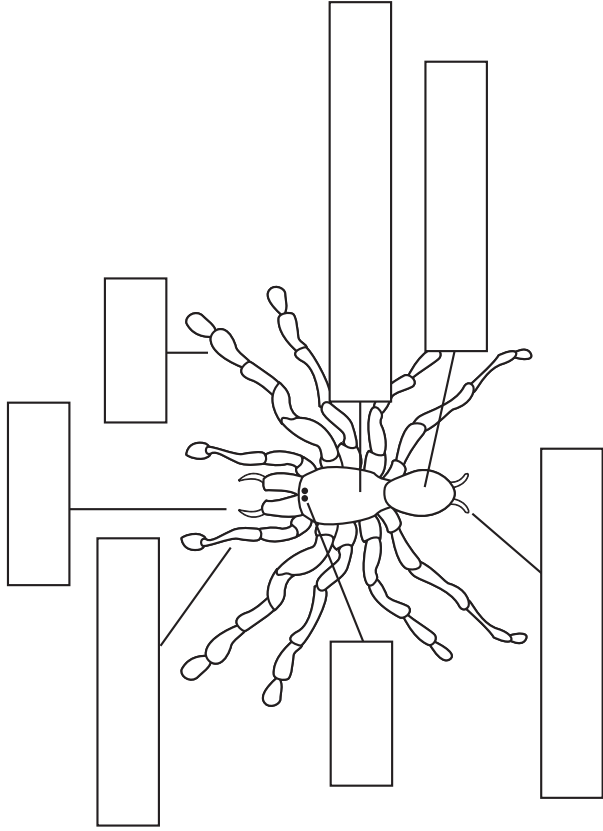
Have children work with one specimen in a small group. Encourage them to draw a picture of their specimen. Then, write the names of the features on index cards. Hold up each card and ask students to identify the part, using the specimen for reference. Finally, have them label the parts on the drawing they made.

Reteach/Extra Support

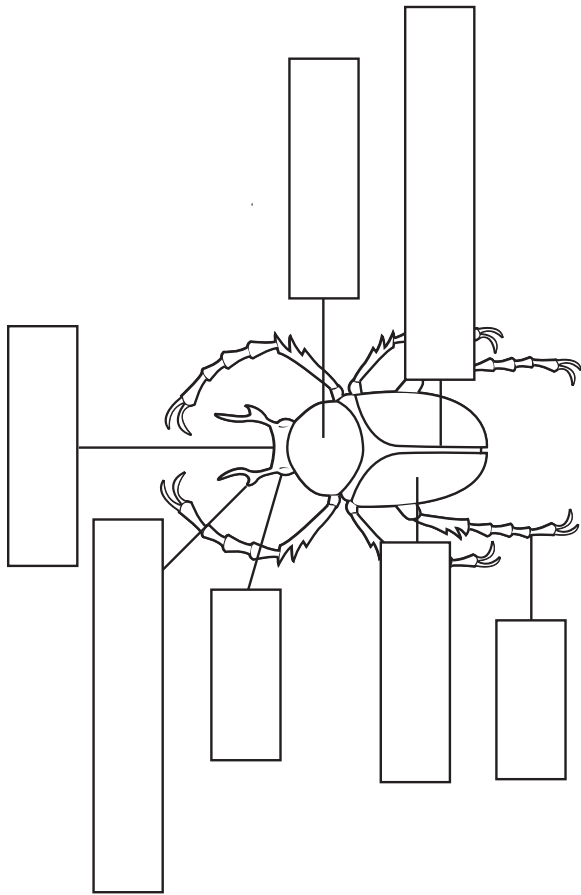
Work with a small group to make a K-W-L chart. Have students list what they already know about one of the specimens on the chart, and then have them list what they would like to learn. Review the information in this guide, and provide books and other reference materials for students to read. Finally, have students write what they have learned in the last column on the chart.

Challenge

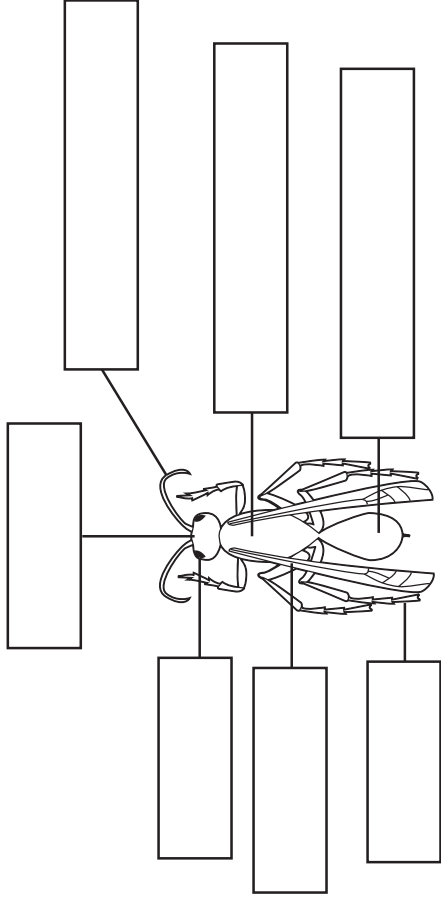
Invite students to choose one of the specimens and use reference materials to find out more about it. Direct them to prepare a report about what they have learned and to share it with the class.



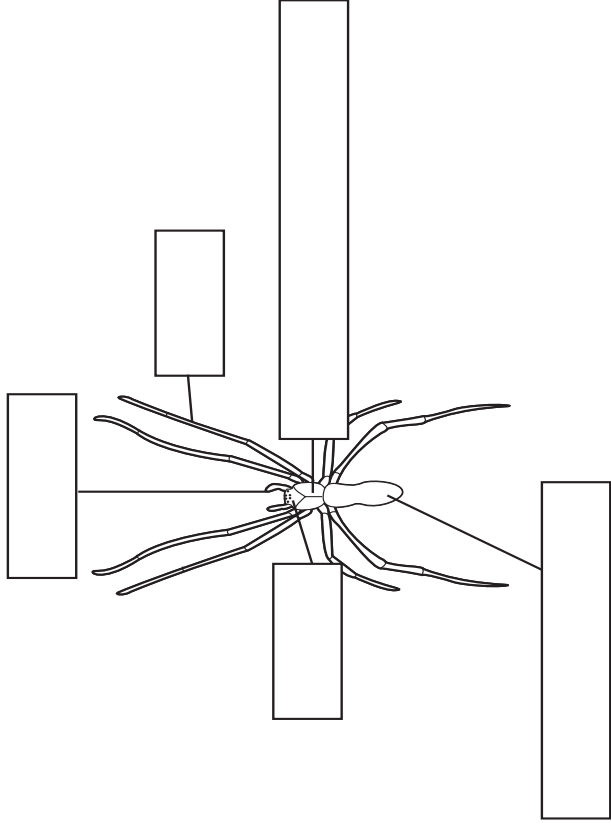
Tarantula



Beetle



Wasp



House Spider