

#7.3 – Bugs and Spiders

Before You Begin

- Review Introduction and Preparation for the Focus Area – More Animals.
- Refer to Developing Weekly Activity Plans for Adventures for Toddlers for information on how to develop your plans.

Big Ideas

Here are some big ideas about bugs and spiders that you can help toddlers explore:

- Bugs and spiders can crawl.
- We see bugs in the grass and on the ground.
- Spiders spin webs.

Materials to Collect and Make

Featured Books

The Itsy-Bitsy Spider by Rosemary Wells (+BB)

The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle (+BB)

Mother Goose Books

Key: (BB) – Available in Board Book only
(+BB) – Also available in Board Book

Teacher Note: See the **Book List** section for additional books that can be used if some of the featured books are unavailable and as supplemental books to read with children.

Books to Make

Our Bug Book (See Attachment: [Our Bug Book](#))

Storytelling Figures and Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme Charts

- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *The Very Busy Spider* (See Attachment: [The Very Busy Spider](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly* (See Attachment: [There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the Mother Goose Rhyme, “Little Miss Muffett” (See Attachment: [Little Miss Muffett](#))
- Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme chart for “Little Miss Muffett”

Additional Materials

- Small plastic bugs and spiders
- Bugs and Spiders Cube (See Attachment: [Bugs and Spiders Cube](#))
- Animal cards - use 2 sets of pictures from Animal Cube (See Attachment: [Animal Cube](#))
- Bugs in a bottle
- Chenille stem/ pipe cleaner spider

Book List

Featured Books

The Itsy-Bitsy Spider by Rosemary Wells (+BB)

The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle (+BB)

Additional Books:

The Eensy-Weensy Spider adapted by Mary Ann Hoberman, illustrated by Nadine Bernard Wescott (+BB)

The Itsy-Bitsy Spider illustrated by Iza Trapani

The Little Ladybugs by Melanie Gerth, illustrated by Tony Griego & Laura Huliska-Bath

Reading Books with Toddlers

Teacher Note: Review the section in *Curriculum Tips and Techniques on Reading Books with Children*, for suggestions on how to use books with children.

Learning Goals:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories (*engagement with books and stories*)

Book: *The Itsy-Bitsy Spider* by Rosemary Wells

First Reading of *The Itsy Bitsy Spider* (YT & OT)

- Create a spider by twisting four chenille stems / pipe cleaners together at the center to make eight legs. Attach a piece of elastic thread to make a dancing spider puppet.
- Take the spider and the book to the book area and say to the children, "I'm going to the book area to read a book about a spider."
- Say or sing the rhyme, *The Itsy-Bitsy Spider*, with the children who join you. Move the spider up and down your arm (water spout) as the spider goes up the water spout, is washed out, then goes up again.
- Show the book and invite children to look at the cover and tell you what they see.
- Say the title and read or sing the story with the children.

Second Reading of *The Itsy-Bitsy Spider*

- Show the cover and ask children if they remember the name of the book.
- Read or sing the story with the children.
- Follow up the reading by showing the cover and each page and inviting children to identify the characters they see and describe what is happening.

Book: *The Very Busy Spider* by Eric Carle

First Reading of *The Very Busy Spider* (YT & OT)

- Begin to sing the following song as you take the book to the book area:

The Spider Spins a Web
(Sing to tune of "Farmer in the Dell")

The spider spins a web,
The spider spins a web.
Hi ho the dairy oh.
The spider spins a web.

- Show the cover and invite children to tell you what they see.
- Say the title and author.
- Read the story with the children, calling attention to the web the spider is spinning.
- Follow up the reading by inviting children to touch the finished web.

Second Reading of *The Very Busy Spider*

- Show the cover of the book and invite children to say the title with you.
- Read the book with the children.
- Follow up the reading by showing the pages and involving children in making the sounds of the different animals.

Third Reading of *The Very Busy Spider*

- Read the story with no more than two or three children.
- Invite the children to touch the web on each page and notice how the web is growing.

Language, Literature and Cognitive Materials and Activities

Learning Goals:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

Planned Activity: Our Bug Book (YT & OT) (See Attachment: [Our Bug Book](#))

How to begin:

- Use the attached cover and related pages to create a book titled *Our Bug Book*.
- Laminate the pages or put in clear plastic sleeves.
- Bind with metal rings or place in three ring binder.
- Invite a group of children to join you to read a book about bugs.
- Show the cover and read the title.
- Read the book with the children.
- Follow up by showing the pages and inviting the children to "read" the pages with you.

Planned Activity: Storytelling (YT & OT)

The Very Busy Spider (See Attachment: [The Very Busy Spider](#))

There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly (See Attachment: [There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly](#))

How to begin:

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the story.
- Read the book with children several times so that they are familiar with the characters and the order of events.
- Use the storytelling figures to tell the story.
- Involve children in placing figures on the storyboard when you feel they can do this.

Planned Activity: Storytelling (YT & OT)

Mother Goose Rhyme, “Little Miss Muffett” (See Attachment: [Little Miss Muffett](#))

How to begin:

- Make felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the rhyme.
- Read the rhyme with the children from a Mother Goose book that has one rhyme per page so that children can see illustrations more clearly.
- Use the storytelling figures to say the rhyme.
- Involve children in placing figures on the storyboard when you feel they can do this.

Little Miss Muffett

Little Miss Muffett
Sat on her tuffet,
Eating her curds and whey;
Along came a spider,
Who sat down beside her
And frightened Miss Muffett away.

Planned Activity: Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme Chart (YT & OT)

“Little Miss Muffett” (See Attachment: [Little Miss Muffett](#))

How to begin:

- Make an illustrated rhyme chart for the rhyme. Laminate or cover the chart with clear self-adhesive paper for durability. (Refer to Tips and Techniques: Making Charts, for information on making charts).
- Read the rhyme at another time, again using a Mother Goose book.
- Show the rhyme chart and again read the rhyme with the children.
- Post the rhyme chart on the wall at children’s eye level. Observe children and, if they notice the chart, join them in saying the rhyme.

Itsy Bitsy Spider
(Suit actions to rhyme)

The itsy bitsy spider
Went up the water spout.
Down came the rain
And washed the spider out.
Out came the sun
And washed up all the rain.
And the itsy bitsy spider
Went up the spout again.

Extension:

- Sing about the “itsy bitsy spider” and use a high voice as you sing.
- You can also sing about the “great big spider” and use a deep voice.

The Ants Go Marching
(Suit actions to words)

The ants go marching one by one,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching one by one,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching one by one,
The little one stops to suck his thumb.
And they all go marching down
To the ground.
To get out
Of the rain.
BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Continue by changing the first four lines as follows
and repeating the last five lines:

The ants go marching two by two,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching two by two,
The little one stops to tie her shoe.
(Repeat last 5 lines)

The ants go marching three by three,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching three by three,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching three by three,
The little one stops to climb a tree.
(Repeat last 5 lines)

The ants go marching four by four,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching four by four
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching four by four,
The little one stops to shut the door.
(Repeat last five lines)

The ants go marching five by five,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching five by five,
Hurrah, hurrah.
The ants go marching five by five,
The little one stops to take a dive.
(Repeat last five lines)

Additional Learning Goal:

MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity (*number names and count sequence*)

I'm a Little Ladybug
(Sing to the tune of I'm a Little Teapot)

I'm a little ladybug, you can see.
I'm as pretty, pretty as can be.
I am brightly colored, red and black.
Look at the pretty spots on my back!

Learning Goal:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

Planned Experience: Bugs and Spiders Cube (YT & OT)

Materials: empty cube shaped tissue box, newspaper pages, colored paper, self-adhesive paper, bugs and spiders (See Attachment: [Bugs and Spiders Cube](#))

How to begin:

- Make a Bugs and Spiders Cube as follows:
 - Carefully fill an empty cube shaped tissue box with crumpled newspapers. Use several sheets because this will make your cube more durable.
 - Cover the cube with self-adhesive paper.
 - Glue a different picture of a bug or spider on each side of the cube.
- Invite a child to toss the cube and name the animal that shows on the top of the cube.
- Continue with each child having a turn to toss the cube.

Teacher Note: *If you do not think that children can toss the cube, you toss it, and ask a child to say the name of the bug or spider. Should a child say that an ant is a bug, say, "Yes, Jenny, that's a bug. That bug is called an ant."*

Learning Goals:

CD3.1 Uses reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems and reach goals (problem solving)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

Planned Activity: Match the Animals (YT & OT)

Materials: pairs of animal cards: rabbits, squirrels, turtles, frogs, bugs and spiders
(See Attachment: [Animal Cube](#)) – Cards made for previous topic: Frogs and Turtles

How to begin:

- Use cards made for previous Toddler Topic: Frogs and Turtles.
- Take the cards to a table or the book area and say, "I need help finding the animals that are alike."
- Keep one set of the cards and place the other cards face up on the table or the floor.
- Show one animal card and invite a child who has joined you to find a card like yours. Say, "Justin, can you find a spider just like mine? That's right, Justin, you found a card with a spider."
- Continue by inviting other children who have joined you to find a matching card.

Extension: (OT)

- Place all of the cards face up on the table or floor.
- Invite a child to find the two cards that are alike and to name the animal.

Self, Social and Emotional Activities

Learning Goal:

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (*sense of identity, characteristics of self and others*)

Planned Activity: Ladybug, Ladybug, Who Do You See? (YT & OT)

Materials: photos of each child with a piece of felt or magnetic strip attached to the back, a ladybug with a piece of felt or magnetic strip attached to the back, a felt or magnetic board

How to begin:

- Place the ladybug on the board and say, "Ladybug, ladybug, who do you see?"
- Place a child's photo on the board and say, "I see Malena looking at me."
- Point to the ladybug and say, "Ladybug, ladybug, who do you see?" and add another child's photo, saying, "I see Aaron looking at me."
- Continue this until all of the children's photos have been added to the board.
- Conclude by saying, "Ladybug, ladybug, who do you see? I see all of the children looking at me."

Extension: (OT)

- Allow children to hold their own photos and explain that when you say their name they can put their photo on the board.
- Invite children to say the name of each child on the board.

Sensory and Art Materials and Activities

Learning Goals:

PH2.1 Demonstrates fine-motor, strength, control and coordination (*hand-eye coordination*)

PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordinates movements to use tools (*variety of tools*)

CA2.1 Explores, manipulates, creates, and responds to a variety of art media (*art exploration*)

Planned Activity: Lots of Animals Mural (YT & OT)

Materials: pictures of bugs and spiders, glue, small craft sticks for spreading glue

How to begin:

- Involve children in adding bugs and spiders to the mural they began in the Topic: Rabbits and Squirrels.
- Place the glue, craft sticks and containers with pictures of bugs and spiders on the art table.
- Detach the mural from the wall and place it on the table.
- Invite children to glue pictures of bugs and spiders to the mural.
- Reattach the mural to the wall.
- Invite a child to join you and point to all of the bugs they see, then all of the spiders. Invite them to point to all of the squirrels, rabbits, turtles and frogs they see.

Extension:

- Invite a child to find a spider. Can she find another spider?
- Repeat this with other animals.
- Point to an animal and invite a child to name it.
- Invite an older toddler to tell you something about one of the animals.

Planned Activity: Creating Spider Webs (OT)

Materials: thick white school glue, small containers for glue, black construction paper, cotton swabs, the book, *The Very Busy Spider*

How to begin:

- Prepare for the experience by pouring a small amount of glue into small containers.
- Invite children to feel the illustrations of the spider's web in the book.
- Explain to the children that they can create their own web.
- Show them how to dip their cotton swabs into the glue, and then paint it onto the black paper.
- Allow the glue to dry, and then invite children to feel the web they have created.
- Invite them to compare their web with the ones in the book.

Teacher Note: *This activity must be carefully supervised.*

Learning Goals:

CD1.1 Show curiosity and a willingness to try new things (*exploration and investigation*)

CD3.1 Uses reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems and reach goals (*problem solving*)

Planned Activity: Bugs in a Bottle (YT & OT)

Materials: clear plastic water or drink bottles (Gatorade®, whipping cream, single serve juice), small plastic bugs and spiders, sand, dirt, clear corn syrup, superglue, strong tape

How to begin:

- Add sand (about half a bottle) and small plastic bugs to one bottle, dirt (about half a bottle) and small plastic bugs and spiders to one bottle, and 1/3 cup of corn syrup and spiders to one bottle.
- Superglue the caps on securely and cover with strong clear tape.
- Place the bottles on a low shelf or on a table.
- Observe toddlers as they interact with the bottles. Do they shake them? Do they seem to have a favorite? Do they say they see bugs or spiders in the bottle?

Safety Note: *Make sure caps are securely glued on the bottles. Make a daily check of the bottles to make sure caps remain secured.*

Planned Activity: Find the Bugs and Spiders (YT & OT)

Materials: clean sand, containers such as small dish pans, small bugs and spiders

Hot to begin:

- Place about three inches of clean sand in at least two containers.
- Hide four or five small bugs and spiders in the sand.
- Place the container on a low table.
- Observe a child who is playing in the sand. If the child finds the bug or spider, invite the child to tell you about the experience. Respond to what they tell you. For example, if a child shows you a spider and says, "Spider," say, "Isabella, you found a spider buried in the sand. I wonder if there is another spider or bug in the sand."

Teacher Notes:

- *Be aware of children who may be afraid of bugs or spiders. Stay near them if they choose this activity. Assure them that the bugs and spiders are not real and will not hurt them.*
- *Allow one child to play in each container of sand.*
- *Closely supervise this activity to prevent children from throwing the sand.*
- *Make sure children wash their hands before and after playing in the sand.*

Movement, Music and Gross Motor Activities

Learning Goal:

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills (*traveling*)

Planned Activity: Bug Crawl (YT & OT)

Materials: hula hoop, box with both ends cut out, snap-together cubes, pictures of bugs

How to begin:

- Show pictures of bugs to children and talk with them about how bugs crawl in the grass and on the ground.
- Hold a hula hoop vertically with it touching the floor.
- Invite one child at a time to crawl through the hoop

Extensions:

- Place a cardboard box on the floor and invite one child at a time to crawl through the box.
- Provide large snap-together cubes for children to crawl through. The cubes can be used indoors or outdoors.

Note: Check your CDs to see if any of them contain "Itsy Bitsy Spider." If so, involve children in dancing and singing along to the song.

Learning Goals:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension, follows directions*)

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills (*traveling*)

PH1.2 Shows stability and balance (*core stability*)

Planned Activity: Walking the Spider Web (OT)

Materials: masking tape, scissors (for adult use only), CD of instrumental music (violin, flute, or harp music), CD player

How to begin:

- Create a large spider web on the floor with strips of masking tape.
- Read the story, *The Very Busy Spider*, with the children.
- Talk with the children about how the spider walked along the strings of her web.
- Explain to children that they will pretend to be spiders and tiptoe or walk slowly along the strings of the web as you play the music. They are to stop when the music stops.
- Start the music and observe children to see if they understand the directions. Demonstrate if necessary.
- Stop the music and see if children stop walking.
- Start the music again and children start moving along the strings again.

Teacher Notes:

- Remind the children that the spider was very quiet as she was spinning her web.
- This activity adapted from an activity featured in the book, *Story Stretchers for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos*, by Shirley Raines, Karen Miller, and Leah Curry-Rood, published by Gryphon House (2002).

Transition Times

Learning Goal:

CD2.2 Shows flexibility in adjusting thinking and behavior to different contexts (*adjusting behavior to match context*)

Who Sat on a Tuffet?

- Say the Mother Goose Rhyme Little Miss Muffett with the children.
- Show one child's photo at a time and ask the children, "Who sat on a tuffet?"
- Reply as follows when children name the child in the photo: "Miss (if it's a girl's photo) Angelina sat on a tuffet" or "Mr. (if it's a boy's photo) Max sat on a tuffet."
- Child transitions to next activity.

Busy Spiders Clean up the Room

- Sing the following to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" when you want children to join you in cleaning up the room:

Busy spiders clean up the room,
Clean up the room, clean up the room.
Busy spiders clean up the room,
So we can go outside. (or whatever the next activity is)

Teacher Note: *Change the song to "Crawling Bugs Clean up the Room" or "Tiny Ladybugs Clean up the Room."*

Teacher Note: *Adapt other finger plays previously listed as transitions to move children from one activity or place to another.*

Family Connection and Engagement

Here are some ways to involve families in this toddler topic:

- Ask families to collect and bring to you pictures of bugs and spiders.
- Send home the nursery rhyme, Little Miss Muffett. Reduce the storytelling figures for the rhyme and use them to illustrate the rhyme.