

Exploration Spiders

COMPARE

What's different about these spiders? Describe each spider using words.



How would you describe this spider's body?

What do you think this spider is doing?

Funnel Web Spider



How would you describe this spider?

How do you think this spider would feel if you touched it?

Barn Spider



Do you see any designs on this spider?

How many colors do you see on this spider?

Australian Rainbow Spider

Exploration Spiders

FUN FACTS



This spider likes to make a large flat web with a funnel at one end to hide in. This one is making a tasty meal of a moth he has caught.

Funnel Web Spider



This spider makes a real orb web (one which looks like a wheel complete with spokes). When a flying insect gets tangled in the web she rushes to the prey and wraps it up with special silk before biting it. With the insect safely packaged up she can take her time before she starts her meal. Look for this common spider around your house or yard.

Barn Spider



This spider lives in the rainforests of Australia. It's a jumping spider. Instead of making a web to catch its food, it sneaks up on insects. The beautiful colors on this spider are made by scales on the spiders body reflecting light. When you walk through the rainforest these harmless spiders jump on your clothes and sparkling in the sun they look like jewels!

Australian Rainbow Spider



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FIELD JOURNAL

Instructions

Let's look at different spiders! If there aren't any around your house, you might want to visit a zoo or look in a book. Remember, not all spiders are friendly.

Try to find three different spiders and draw a picture of each one (if you are looking in a book, you can look at photographs to get ideas for your drawings). As you are drawing, you might want to think about these questions:

- How would you describe this spider?
- How would you describe its body? legs? head?
- Where do you think this spider might live?

When you are finished, look at all of your pictures. How are these spiders the same? How are they different?

Your Name:	Today's Date:
What's the Weather Like?	
Draw the shells you find in the space below.	



Exploration Spiders

TIPS FOR ADULT HELPERS

General Tips

- 1. Try to ask children open-ended questions.** These kind of questions help children talk about nature. For example, a useful open-ended question could be, “How would you describe this shell?”
- 2. There are many “correct” answers.** When asking open-ended questions, remember that there is no one “correct” answer. There are many “right” answers. The goal is to have children and adults have a thoughtful discussion.
- 3. Praise thoughtful answers.** If you ask a close-ended question (such as “What animal lives in that shell?” or “What color is that bird?”), any thoughtful answer could be praised. Even if the child’s answer is inaccurate, you could say something like, “That was a great idea. You know, that is how scientists learn, by thinking and trying out different ideas.”
- 4. Start from what the child knows already.** When trying to get a thoughtful discussion going, start with what the child already knows about a topic. Use that information as a springboard for further exploration. Through discussion and exploration, children can expand and revise their knowledge about nature.
- 5. Explore together.** If the topic is new to you as an adult helper, share this information with the child. You can make guesses and explore together. All science starts off with questions, not answers.
- 6. Science IS exploration and discovery.** When you let children try out different theories, you help introduce them to the scientific method and start building research skills.
- 7. Explore a science book together.** If a child is interested in a particular topic, you might want to follow up the activity reading a science book together and writing down what you have learned about the topic.

Examples of Open Ended Questions About Spiders

When you compare and contrast different spiders, you might ask questions, such as:

- How would you describe this spider’s body?
- How would you describe this spider’s legs?
- Do you see any designs on this spider?
- How do you think this spider would feel if you touched it?

To help discuss similarities and differences, you might want to ask questions, such as:

- How are these spiders similar to each other?
- How are they different?

You might try asking questions about a specific body part of the spiders, for example:

- Look carefully at the legs of each spider.
- How are they the same?
- How are they different?

If the child is having a hard time coming up with ideas, you might prompt her/him with more narrow questions such as:

- Do all of the spiders look like they are the same size?
- Are all of these spiders the same color?
- Do you think all of these spiders would feel the same if you touched them?