



Musical Insects

Idea 1: Insect Songs

For younger students, collect several songs that have insect themes. Allow the students time to develop actions to illustrate the lyrics of the song. Provide a forum for each team to showcase their creation.

Another idea for older students is to allow them to create their own insect song lyrics. Challenge them to develop actions or costumes that illustrate their lyrics. As before, provide a forum to showcase their talented creations.

Another twist on the lyrics is to challenge students to incorporate specific details of an insect into the song, such as the parts of an insect, life cycles, or scientific classification (order, family, species). A song about the parts of a butterfly and its life cycle could be taught to second graders during their butterfly project.

A few ideas provided by Corinne Koehler (Havana Junior High, Havana, IL) for nature songs includes:

The Ants Go Marching One by One

Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me

The Eensy Weensy Spider (or Itsy Bitsy Spider - same song)

I Know An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly

La Cucaracha

The Blue-tailed Fly

I'm Scooping Up a Baby Bumble Bee

Lucky Little Cricket

Five Little Speckled Frogs

Herman the Worm

Inch Worm

The Death of Mister Fly

Never Argue With a Bee

If I Was a Butterfly

I Wish I Was a Little Musky-Toe (mosquito)

Idea 2: The Sound of Nature

Plan a field trip to a nature area. Allow the students time to sit and listen for the various sounds from nature, such as those made by birds, insects, and other animals. Use their observations to imitate the sounds they heard. Give awards to the student with the best imitation of a bird or insect.

Students might also developed a song using the sounds around the Old MacDonald theme. Instead of "Old MacDonald had a farm ...," create a new beginning that ties into the nature theme, such as "Mother Nature had a prairie" (or a pond, desert, etc.) A few animals found in a pond habitat, such as frogs and fish, would be great for a verse or two. Integrating other animals and their habitats will reinforce the learning in the Nature Center.

Create flash cards with the various sounds they observed. Challenge students to make each sound as you hold up a card. Combine several sounds to create a new one or a specific rhythm. Students with the best new sound or combination could be awarded prizes.

Use Internet resources and CD-Roms to identify sounds created by specific animals (Cardinal, Blue Jay, Hummingbird, cricket, wasp, frog, etc.) Provide a chance for students to explore the natural world with their "ears" looking for the sounds they studied.

Idea 3: Natural Instruments

The natural world is home to many objects or materials that can be used to create sounds. Rubbing twigs together, crunching leaves, tapping rocks, or blowing on a blade of grass produce sounds that can be used to create "instrumental" creations. Combining natural items together would be an excellent way of making instruments.

Challenge students to create their own natural sound makers to share with their classmates. Use their creations to study rhythms and other musical topics.