



Singing Crickets

Skill: Observe crickets and discuss how they use their legs to communicate with one another.

Estimated Lesson Time: Part One—observe daily for one week
Part Two—20 minutes

Teacher Preparation:

1. Purchase several male crickets from a local bait shop or fishing supply or pet store.
2. Poke airholes in the lid of a jar or plastic container to create a cricket habitat.
3. Cut a small piece of poster board for each student.
4. Place copies of the observation sheets in the observation area.



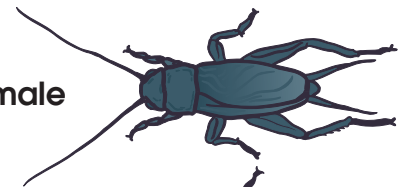
Materials for the class:

prepared cricket habitat
grass or straw
dark cloth or black sheet of
construction paper
water
chart paper

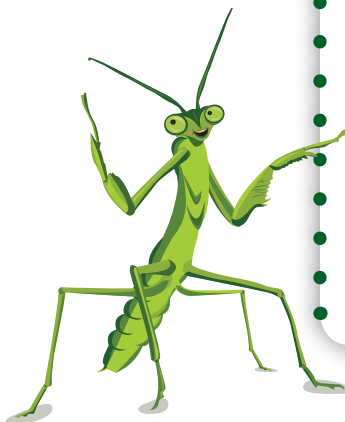
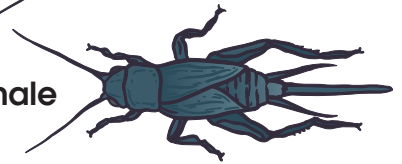
Materials for each student:

science notebook
piece of poster board
fingernail file
observation sheet

male



female





“Singing Crickets” Lesson—Part One

1. Ask students to sit in a circle on a carpet to set up the cricket habitat. Place the crickets in the jar with some grass or straw and a little water. Ask
 - Is a cricket living or nonliving? How do you know?
 - What do living things need to survive? (*water, air, a place to live, and food*)
 - What do crickets eat? (*plants and the remains of other insects*)
2. Set the cricket habitat in an area of the classroom away from direct sunlight. Invite students to observe the habitat in groups. Ask
 - How can you find out if a cricket is male or female? (*A female has a long egg-laying tube called an ovipositor. A male has upper wings that look like large fiddles.*)

Fun Fact: An adult cricket has wings that are almost as long as its abdomen.

- Do both males and females chirp? (*The songs of crickets are produced mainly by the males when they rub their wings together.*)
3. Discuss the crickets' behavior and listen for chirping. To encourage chirping, place the dark cloth or black sheet of construction paper around the jar. Explain to students that crickets are most active in the evening.
 4. As students observe, encourage them to share what they would like to learn about crickets. List their questions on a sheet of chart paper near the cricket habitat. Encourage your students to use their observation sheets to record their observations daily. Research any unanswered questions at the end of the study and share the results as a class.



“Singing Crickets” Lesson—Part Two

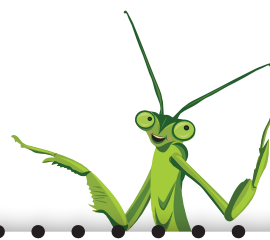
1. Explain to students that crickets do not have voices like humans. Instead, they sing by rubbing their two front wings together.
2. Help your students re-create the familiar cricket sound by providing each student with a piece of poster board and a fingernail file. To create the chirping sound, ask students to move the side of the file back and forth against the edge of the poster board.
3. Why do crickets chirp? (*They use the chirping sound to help males and females find one another. They actually hear sounds with organs located in their front legs! Each kind of cricket makes a different kind of sound.*)

Name _____

Date _____

Observation Sheet

Singing Crickets



Draw.

A large rectangular area with a dotted border, intended for drawing a cricket.

I see _____

I hear _____

I wonder _____
