



## Active Ants

**Skill:** Observe how animals change their environment.

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 45 minutes, observations continue over several weeks

### Teacher Preparation:

1. Purchase ants online.\*
2. Collect one empty, clean two-liter plastic soda bottle for each group.
3. Cut the tops off the bottles to create a soda bottle habitat.
4. Fill each habitat half full with lightly moistened sand.

### Materials for each group:

prepared soda bottle habitat  
ants\*  
gauze

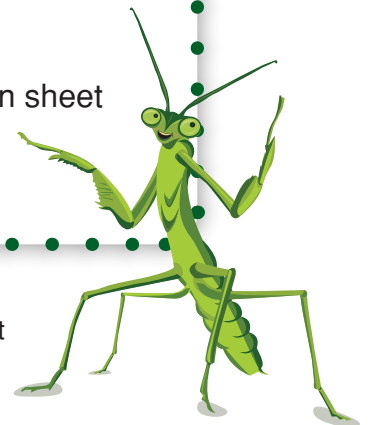
rubber band  
pencil  
crayons

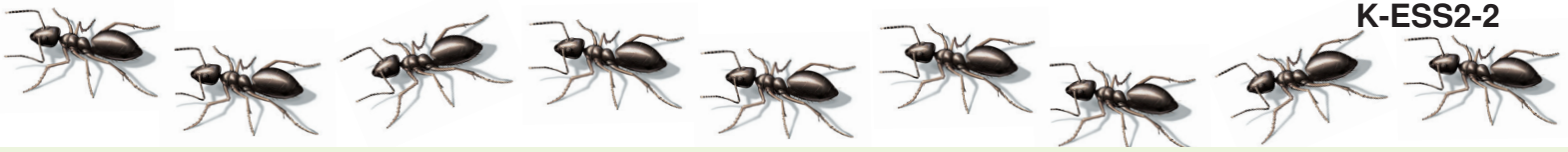
### Materials for the class:

spray bottle filled with water  
honey  
solid food, such as cookie crumbs  
hand lenses

water  
cotton balls  
copies of the observation sheet

\* Purchase ants online. If you opt to collect your own ants, be aware that some areas have fire ants and other stinging ants. Use extreme caution.



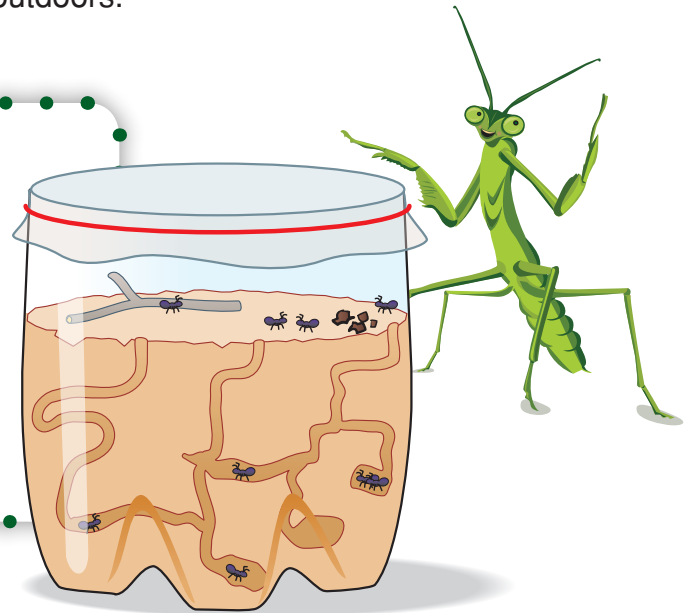


## “Active Ants” Lesson

1. Distribute one prepared habitat to each group.
2. Ask each group to poke a few holes in the sand with the pencil, which will help ants establish tunnels. Ask the following guided questions:
  - Why should we start tunnels for the ants?
  - In what ways might the ants change the tunnels once we add them to the habitat?
3. Add the purchased ants and have students in each group use the gauze to cover the top of the habitat. They secure the gauze with a rubber band and place the habitat away from direct sunlight.
4. Allow students to observe the colony over the next several weeks.
5. Place copies of the observation sheets and the hand lenses in the habitat location. Encourage the students to visit the area frequently, draw and write about their observations and discuss the changes that they observe in the ant habitats.
6. At the end of your study, release the ants outdoors.

### To feed the ants:

- Mix a small amount of honey and water.
- Give the ants a cotton ball soaked in a few drops of the mixture every few days.
- Lightly mist the sand with water as it becomes dry and introduce the solid food once a week.
- Remove unused food.



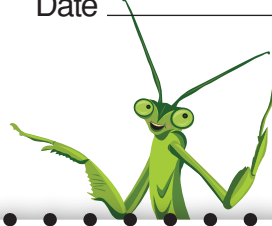
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Observation Sheet



# Active Ants



Draw here.

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

I see \_\_\_\_\_

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line, repeated multiple times.

Next Generation Science Standard K-ESS2-2

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Note to the teacher: Use with "Active Ants."