

Tiny Creatures, Big Jobs

From worms to ladybugs to dragonflies, small creatures play big roles on our farms and in our gardens. These activities will introduce your entire family to these incredible critters and how they help grow the food we eat.



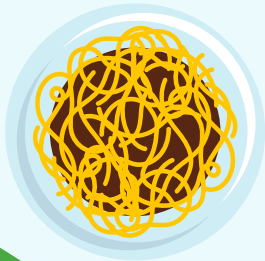
Bug Sensory Bin

AGE ≤ 1

Fill a shallow bin with dirt or potting soil, then add toy bugs, leaves, stones, sticks and small scoops or spoons. Touch and feel the textures. Pick up a handful of soil and then sprinkle it back into the bin. Use the scoop to make small holes and place the bugs inside, or arrange sticks and leaves to make a bug "house."



What happens if you add a little bit of water? Can you make some mud pies?



Worm Wiggle Play

AGE 2+

Mix cooked spaghetti noodles (pretend worms!) with coffee grounds or damp soil in a bin. Use small shovels or your hands to dig for the "worms." What do the coffee grounds and the "worms" feel like in your hands? What smells or other sensations do you notice?



Can you count how many you discovered? Where do you think you would find real worms?



Bug Hunt in the Garden

AGE 3+

Take a walk outside with a magnifying glass. Look under rocks, inside flowers and near old logs for ants, beetles, worms and other insects. Observe what they're doing – are they resting? Having a snack? Are they hard at work?



Where did you find the most bugs? Why do you think they picked that spot?

Build a Mini Compost Jar

AGE 4+

Layer a clear jar with soil, leaves, small food scraps and a sprinkle of water. Check it each day. Do the food and leaves look different? How does it smell? Do you notice any small creatures who have made the jar their home?



What do you think is happening? Who do you think has been snacking on what's inside?

Pollinator Picnic

AGE 5+

Use crayons and markers to draw bees, butterflies, beetles and flowers. Then, cut them out and create a "garden." Move each insect from flower to flower and talk about what's happening: What does the bee get from the flower? What does it do for the flower in return?



When you're done, set up a pretend (or real!) picnic with fruits, veggies and other snacks. How do different creatures help these foods grow?