

# Enjoy the Countryside SAFELY

## Buzzers and Stingers worksheet 2

### LESSON PLAN / TEACHERS' NOTES

**TOPIC:** This lesson plan covers UK creatures that can sting; bees and wasps, caterpillars and ants.

**AIMS:** For children to know how to minimise their risk of being stung, and what to do if they are.

**1. Which is which? Label these insects which can sting, then check with your teacher.**

Allow children to work in mixed ability groups to write as many insect names as they can, before checking they have completed the exercise correctly.

Ask if they know what a hornet is.

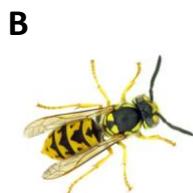
Notes:

- A hornet is a type of wasp which is can be as big as a child's hand.
- Hornets are mainly brown, not yellow and black.
- Their venom is extremely painful but luckily they are not as aggressive as smaller wasps.

red ant - hornet - bee - hairy Caterpillar - wasp



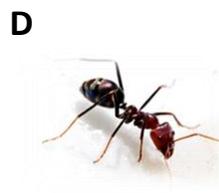
\_\_bee\_\_



\_\_wasp\_\_



\_\_hornet\_\_



\_\_ant\_\_



\_\_hairy  
caterpillar\_\_

Explain to children that:

- There we have different types of ants in Britain.
- Most ants are black and they do not sting.
- Red ants and some other types of ants do sting, so it is better not to touch ants.

- Ants usually bite with their mouth to get a grip, then sting with their tail.
- Their sting hurts but it is not dangerous.

Give children time to fill in the gaps in question 2.

**2. Fill in the gaps:**

\_\_\_Red\_\_\_ ants can sting, but most ants are \_\_\_black\_\_\_ and they don't sting.

**3. Hairy caterpillars are much more dangerous than ants. Have you ever seen one?**

Invite children to describe where they have seen caterpillars.

- Were they hairy or not?
- What colour were they?
- Where did they see them?
- Did they notice what plant they were on?
- Did they see one caterpillar, or lots?

Explain that:

- Some types of hairy caterpillar in Britain can harm us.
- If we touch them, their hairs fall off and give us sore, painful or itchy skin.
- They can give us headaches and conjunctivitis (sore eyes).
- They can cause sore throats as the hairs can fly on the wind, and even make breathing difficult.
- Caterpillars have these poisonous hairs because they do not want us to touch them.
- The golden rule of the countryside is always LOOK BUT DON'T TOUCH.

Give the children time to label the picture.

**4. This girl touched a hairy caterpillar. Label all the things it did to her:**

Painful and blurry eyes

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headache

-----

sore throat

-----

sore skin that hurts

-----

itchy skin

-----

Painful and blurry eyes  
Sore throat  
Headache  
sore skin that hurts  
Itchy skin

Explain the following safety advice to the children.

- If they disturb a hairy caterpillar it will get scared and its hairs will instantly fall out, so they should very gently remove it with a pen.
- They should hold their hand under the tap for a long time to wash the hairs off, but NOT rub and NOT dry with a towel, because this rubs the hairs in.
- When their hands have dried in the air, use sticky tape to remove any remaining hairs. The hairs will be invisible.
- They can use ice to reduce the pain or itching.
- They should change their clothes in case they have caterpillar hairs on them.

Notes:

- The school first aid kit should contain calamine lotion. ANTIHISTAMINE CREAM MAKES THE RASH FROM HAIRY CATERPILLARS WORSE.
- IF CHILDREN SUFFER ANY BREATHING DIFFICULTY OR EYE PROBLEMS AFTER CONTACT WITH A HAIRY CATERPILLAR THEY SHOULD BE EXAMINED BY A DOCTOR.
- Instruct parents to wash all the children's clothes on the highest temperature setting possible to remove hairs and neutralise toxin.

Check that children remember the advice by allowing them to complete the instructions with DO or DON'T.

**4. Complete the advice with DO or DON'T. If you touch a hairy caterpillar.....**

  DON'T   shake it off because more hairs will come off.

  DO   take it off carefully with a pen.

  DO   wash with lots of running cold water.

  DON'T   dry with a towel.

  DO   use sticky tape to get the hairs off.

  DO   use ice or calamine lotion to stop it hurting.

  DON'T   use antihistamine cream.

  DO   wash all your clothes as hot as possible to get the hairs off them.

**5. Have you or anyone in your family been stung by a bee or a wasp? What happened?**

Allow children to share anecdotes with the class.

**6. Bee or wasp? Draw lines to connect each fact with the bee or the wasp. One fact is about both bees *and* wasps.**

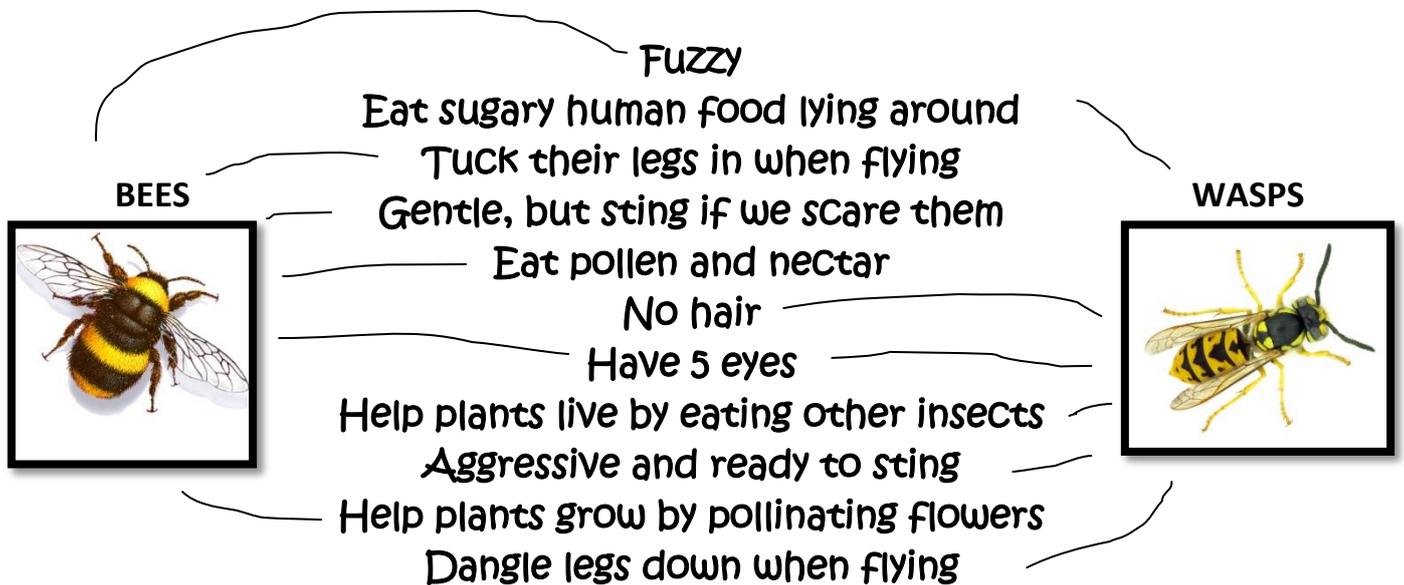
Allow the children to work in mixed ability groups to decide on the answers. Tell them to complete the answers they are sure about first, and then think about the remaining answers.

Check all answers with the class together.

Ask children if they know any other facts about bees, wasps or hornets.

Notes:

- Wasps evolved in the Jurassic period as predators. They are aggressive because they sting other insects to kill and eat them. Stinging is part of their daily behaviour.
- Bees evolved from wasps in the Cretaceous period, when more flowering plants had evolved which gave them a different type of food. Bees die when they sting, so it is a last resort to protect other bees.
- Bees tell others in the hive where to find flowers by using movement patterns which scientists call dances.



Explain that:

- Bee and wasp stings hurt a lot, but they do not give us diseases.
- A bee will leave its stinger behind. This has to be flipped out by sliding a long finger nail, hair clip, credit card or other flat object across the skin against it. Do not squeeze the stinger because more venom could enter the body.

Ask the children to look around the classroom for something that could be useful for removing a bee stinger.

Notes:

- The sting area should then be cleaned with disinfectant.
- The swelling from both bee and wasp stings usually lasts 3 to 5 days. An ice pack is best for the immediate pain. Antihistamine cream can reduce the itching as it heals.
- A very small number of people are allergic to bee or wasps stings and this makes their whole body swell up, particularly their lips and throat so that it is difficult for them to breathe (anaphylactic shock).
- If the children see this happen to anyone, it is an emergency. If the person cannot speak, the child should phone 999 for an ambulance, if they have a phone, before looking for an adult.

Give children time to copy the advice into the boxes.

**7. How to BEE safe from WASPS and HORNETS! Copy the advice into the correct box.**

<b>If you get bitten</b>	1. 2. 3. 4.
<b>When it's an emergency</b>	1. 2.

- Rub antihistamine cream on the bite to stop the itching.
- Scrape bee stingers out immediately but don't squeeze them.
- Clean the sting area with disinfectant.
- Call 999 for an ambulance.
- Put ice on the sting to reduce the pain.
- Very rarely, someone could have trouble breathing or fall unconscious after a sting.

## Follow-on activities/challenges

- WRITING: Children imagine they are an insect or arachnid and describe their adventures for a day. Set the scene by asking them to imagine the personality and mood of the creature, what it wants and how it feels. Is their bug a villain or a hero?
- SCIENCE: Children research the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods online. They should make posters in groups showing EITHER what insects existed for wasps to eat in the Jurassic, OR what flowering plants existed in the Cretaceous for bees to eat. Help them to plan layout, the right mix of text and pictures, and use of colour.
- ART: Children choose their favourite insect or arachnid, and make a large collage showing it in detail. Encourage them to bring in different materials such as shiny foil, transparent cellophane or even furry fabric to make the various parts of the body.

Remember to teach your family what you have learned today. To find out more, go to [www.EnjoyTheCountryside.com](http://www.EnjoyTheCountryside.com)

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