



Mighty Ants

Ants are insects. They have three body parts—head (tap head), thorax (tap chest), and abdomen (tap tummy)—6 legs, 2 elbowed (touching your elbows) antennae (2 fingers sticking out of forehead).



We can learn about ants. Ant bodies have 3 parts—let's count 1,2,3—head (touch head), thorax (tap chest), abdomen (tap tummy), and a petiole (hands on waist) or waist between the thorax and abdomen.



Six (Let's count 1,2,3,4,5,6.) legs are attached to the middle part, the thorax. Ants have hooks on their legs for climbing and combs for cleaning their bodies (Can you find a hook or comb in your house?).



Ants have an (big word alert!) exoskeleton. Tap your forehead, elbow and knee—can you feel the hard parts, bones/skeleton, under your soft skin? Feel the skin on the outside and bones on the inside. Ant hard parts are on the outside.



Ants communicate by touching antennae (putting 2 fingers by your head and touching mommy's or daddy's two fingers), by smell (sniffing something scented) and by vibration.



Ants live in a colony or group (interlacing fingers).

There are different jobs in an ant colony, and you can find objects at home to act out the roles: nurse (rocking baby), builder (hammer), food gatherer (shopping bag), food maker (cook/stir), protector (punching), custodian (sponge), queen and drone (family dolls and crown) and different stages of development (egg, larva, pupa, adult).



More about ants....



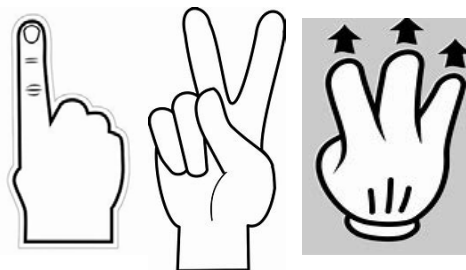
- Ant legs have 3 jointed parts
- Ants have 2 compound eyes (made up of ommatidia) which can detect motion, and 3 simple eyes (ocelli) assist in navigating, like a compass.
- Ants have jaws (mandibles) for grinding, tearing, crushing and chewing. They are also used for protecting, and a wide range of other tasks.

More ant facts

- Ants can have 1 or 2 petioles. Those with a petiole and post-petioles sting. Those with a single petiole spray venom from the rear.
- Ants have elbowed or kinked antennae and the number of segments are helpful in identification.
- A queen can live 7 years and produce 2000 young.
- Males and queens have wings. Female workers are sterile.
- Polygyne colonies are larger and not territorial and have multiple queens. Monogyne colonies are smaller and aggressive and have one queen.
- The ants bring solid food to the larvae which regurgitate it and it is carried to the rest of the colony by trophallaxis.
- Monomorphic ants look alike. Polymorphic ants differ in size and/or color.
- Common local ants include harvester ants, fire ants, acrobat ants, Leaf cutter ants, black and tawny crazy ants, cheese ants, big-headed ants, pyramid ants, carpenter ants, sugar ants, pavement ants, rover ants, and army ants.

You can do the fingerplay to remind you that ants live in a

colony or group.



Ants work together—1, 2, 3-- (putting up 1, 2, 3, fingers)

Ants live in a colony!



(spreading fingers and bringing both hands together)

This song, to the tune of *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*, teaches you the parts of an insect like an ant. From Growing Up WILD

Head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen 2x
(touching head, chest, tummy)

6 legs, some wings and exoskeleton,
(3 fingers each hand, flapping hands at shoulders fingers bending, going head to toes both hands)

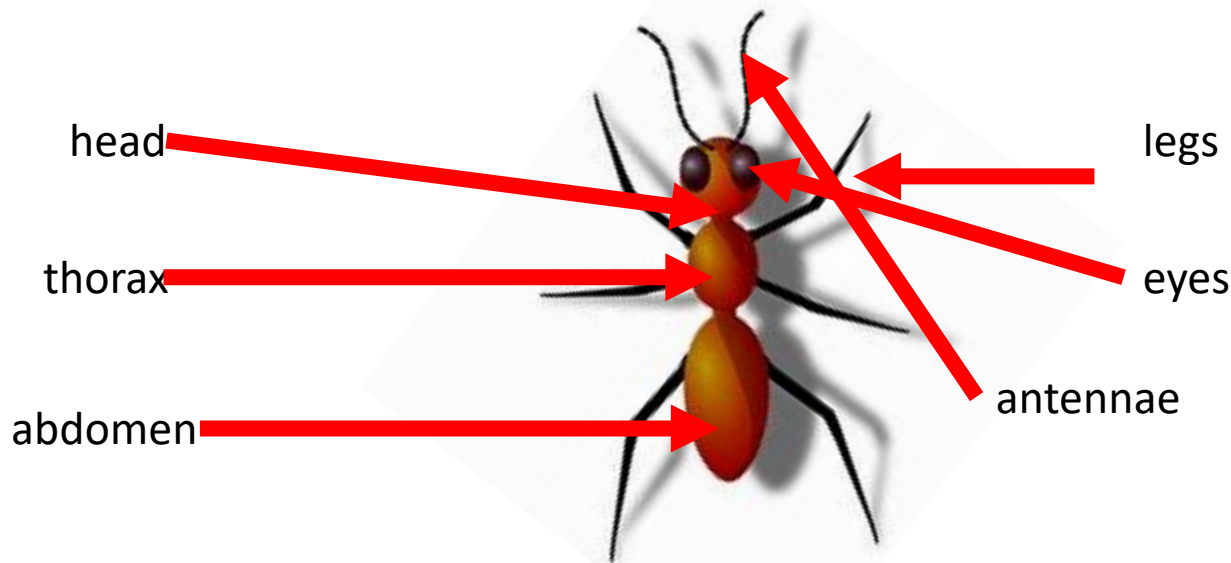
Head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen.

Head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen 2x
(touching head, chest, tummy)

Big eyes, small size and 2 antennae too

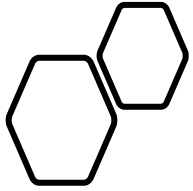
(2 fists, pointer fingers together, pointer fingers on head)

Head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen.





You can act out some of the roles ants perform in the colony: daddies, queens, food collector, custodian, protector, builder, guard and nurse.



The queen ant lays eggs, which become larvae and are fed to grow, and then become pupae to transform into ants—complete metamorphosis!

- Eggs
- Larvae
- Pupae
- Adults



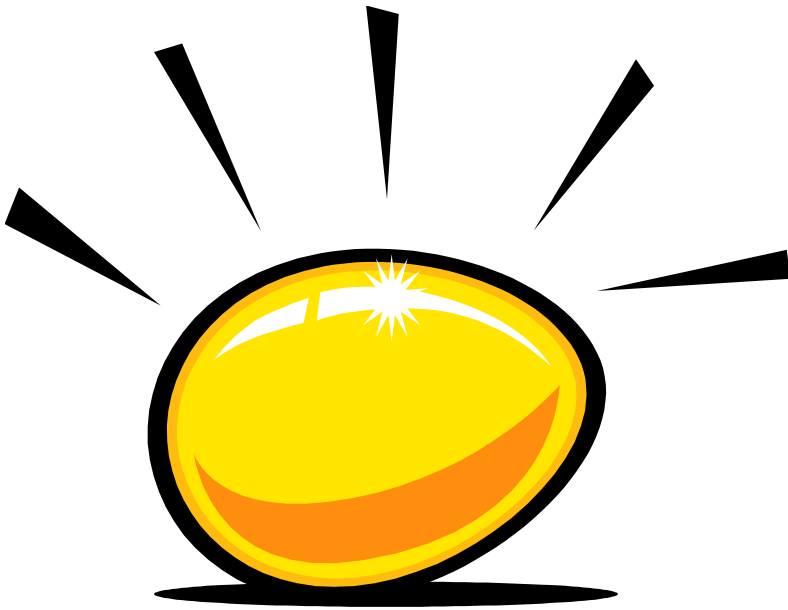
Males/drones=
daddies

Mate=make babies



Queen=mommy

Lays eggs



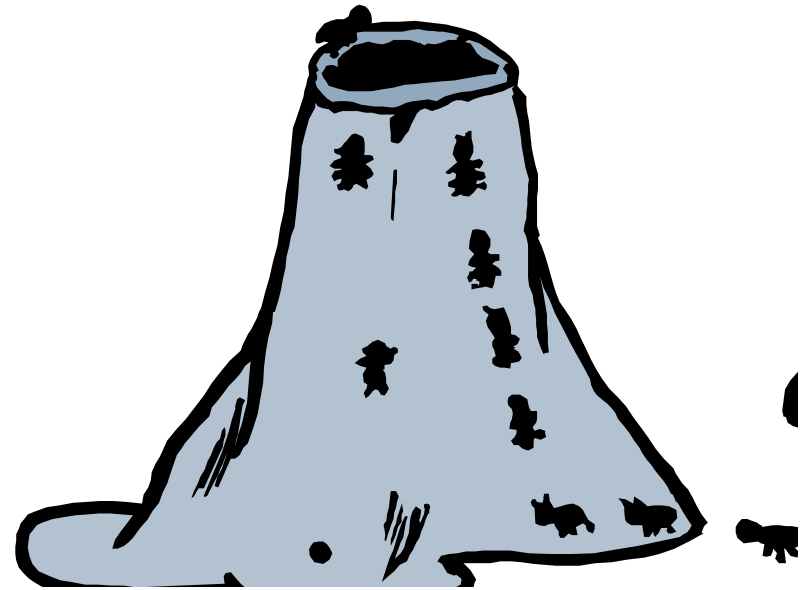
Worker

Food collector, forager



Worker

Nest builder, tunnel digger



Worker

Daycare, nanny, babysitter



Worker

Protector, defender



Worker

Custodian





Worker
care, nanny, babysitter, parent

Food collector
Worker

Queen/mommy

Worker

Can you find an analog for an ant role?

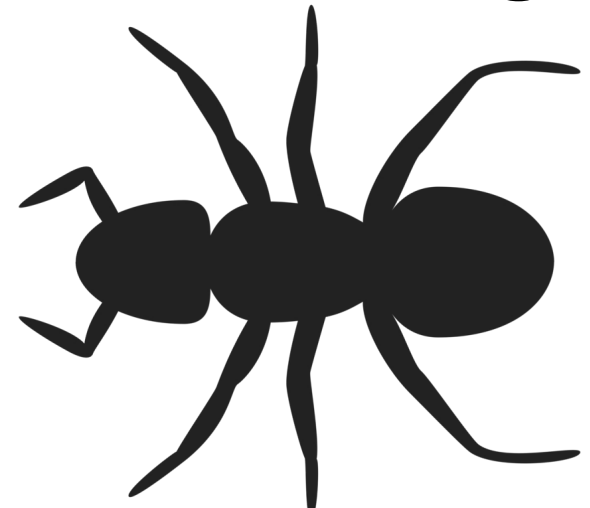
You can cut out an ant and act out the Ant Chant!



Ant Chant by Peggy Spring

Ant Chant

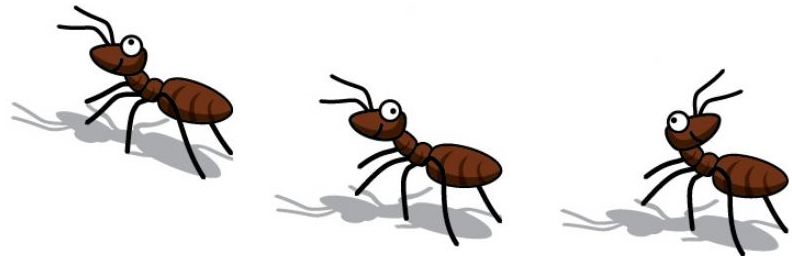
**Ants have a great big head, I say,
With two large eyes and two antennae.
Their thorax is like what we call a chest--
Six legs are there, that is best.
They have an abdomen; you can call it a
tummy.
They like it best filled with something
yummy.**



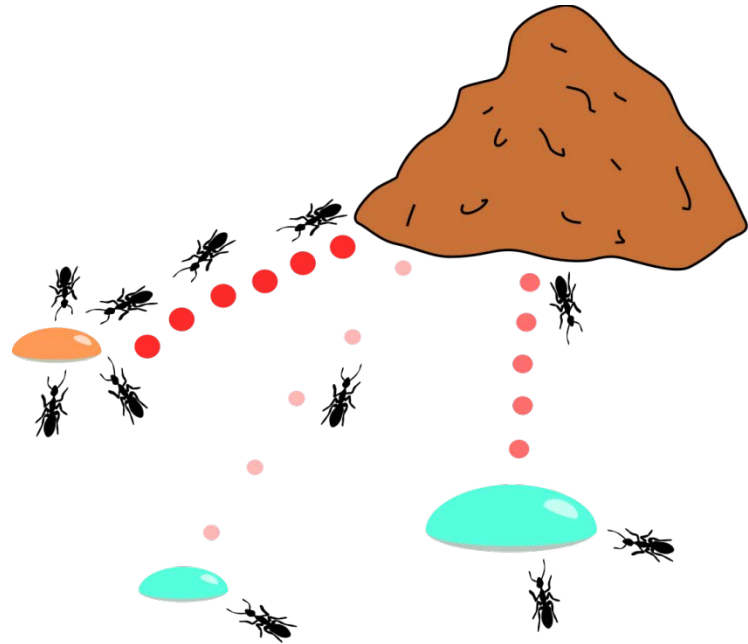
**Some ants live in a great big mound;
Some ant hills are much smaller and
round.**

**These ants are marching into the
ground.**

**Let's look inside and see what's
found.**



**Ants live together like a family;
They all have a job in the colony.
Some ants are workers; some ants
guard
And when they bite, they bite hard!**

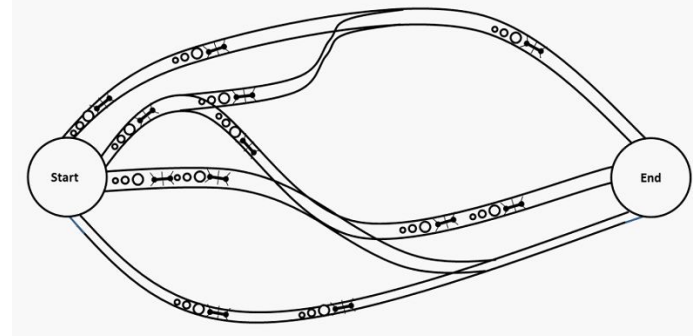


We build a house with hammer and nails.

Ants build their nests by digging trails.

We rock babies to help them sleep;

Ants keep their babies in a great big heap.



Some of the workers must find some food.

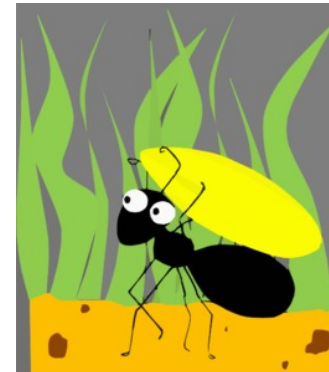
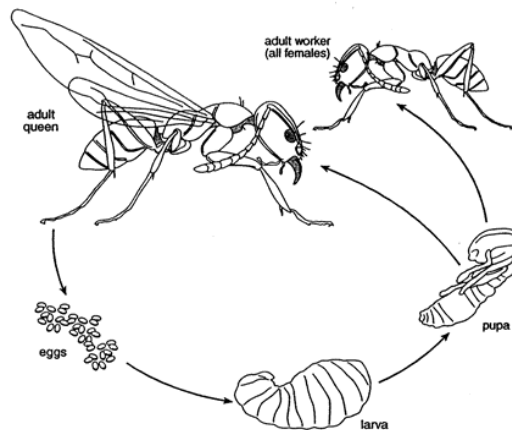
There're so many mouths in the ant nest brood.

You have a mommy; ants have a queen.

She lays more eggs than you've ever seen!



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**The daddy ants also have six legs;
Their job is to help the queen make
eggs.**

**Ant babies change as they grow.
You have changed too, that is so.**



Queen



Male

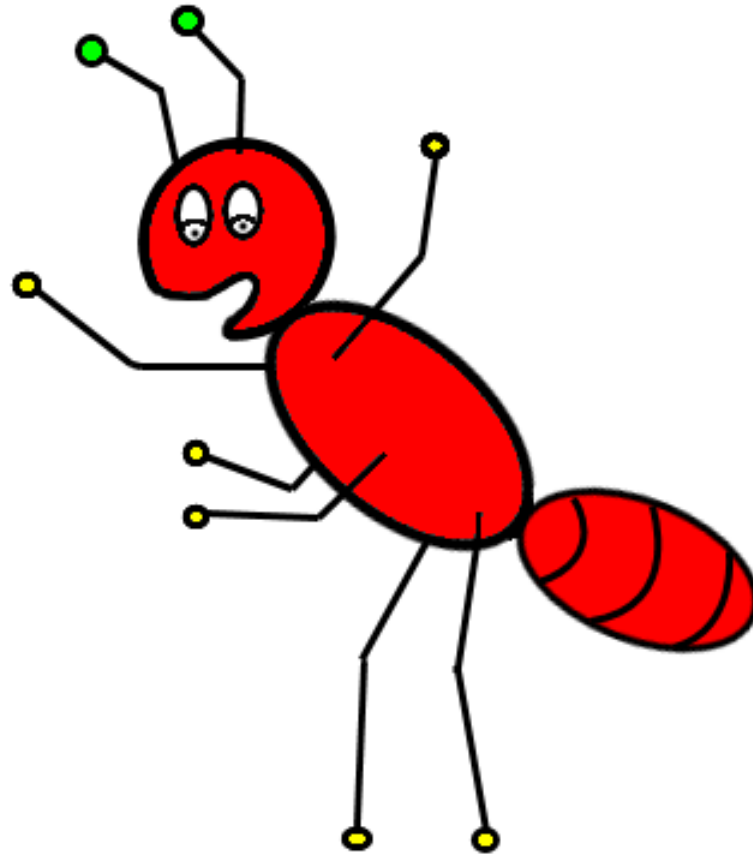


Normal-sized worker

Soldier

**Now you know the story; let's
give a chant!**

Let's all say, "Hey, Little Ant!"



You can sing *The Ants Are Busy* song. Ants do a lot of work.

Sung to: "She'll Be Coming Round The Mountain"

Oh, the ants are moving, moving all about. (hands moving in circles)

Oh, the ants are moving, moving all about. (hands moving in circles)

Digging tunnels, gathering food.(digging)

Protecting, caring for the brood. (hands over chest then rocking)

Oh, the ants are moving, moving all about. (hands moving in circles)





The Very Busy Ant

Here is a story you can read about a very busy ant.



Once there was a very busy ant.

Who tried to find the way out of the plant.



Looking all over....





and all around....



up and sideways and upside down!



Mighty Ants

Ants are social insects.

Ants work together



Ants work together--

1, 2, 3



Ants live in
a colony!



Follow a pheromone trail.

You can make a pheromone trail with any scented spray or spice and act out being an ant following the scent (pheromone) trail.



You can be an ant following a pheromone (smell) path and sing *The Ants Go Marching* and march!

Sung to: *When John Comes Marching Home*

Adapted from Growing Up WILD



The ants go marching low and high
Hooray! Hooray!

The ants go marching low and high
Hooray! Hooray!

The ants go marching low and high

The ants go marching by and by,

So, let's all go marching way down to the ground
and up high to the tree. You and me!

Let's Go Collecting Bag

- Get a bag or envelope and



- Glue on the net and ant and decorate it for the Let's Go Collecting Game!



Your family can hide the ants around the house, and you can play the Let's go Collecting Game and try to collect all the ants in your bag!



And you can make ants following a pheromone trail too!

You can be an
ant
investigator.....

And look for ants in
your neighborhood. Do
you see ant hills; careful
some ants bite! Are
there ants on a plant or
tree or under a stone or
log?



Imagine an Ant Snack!

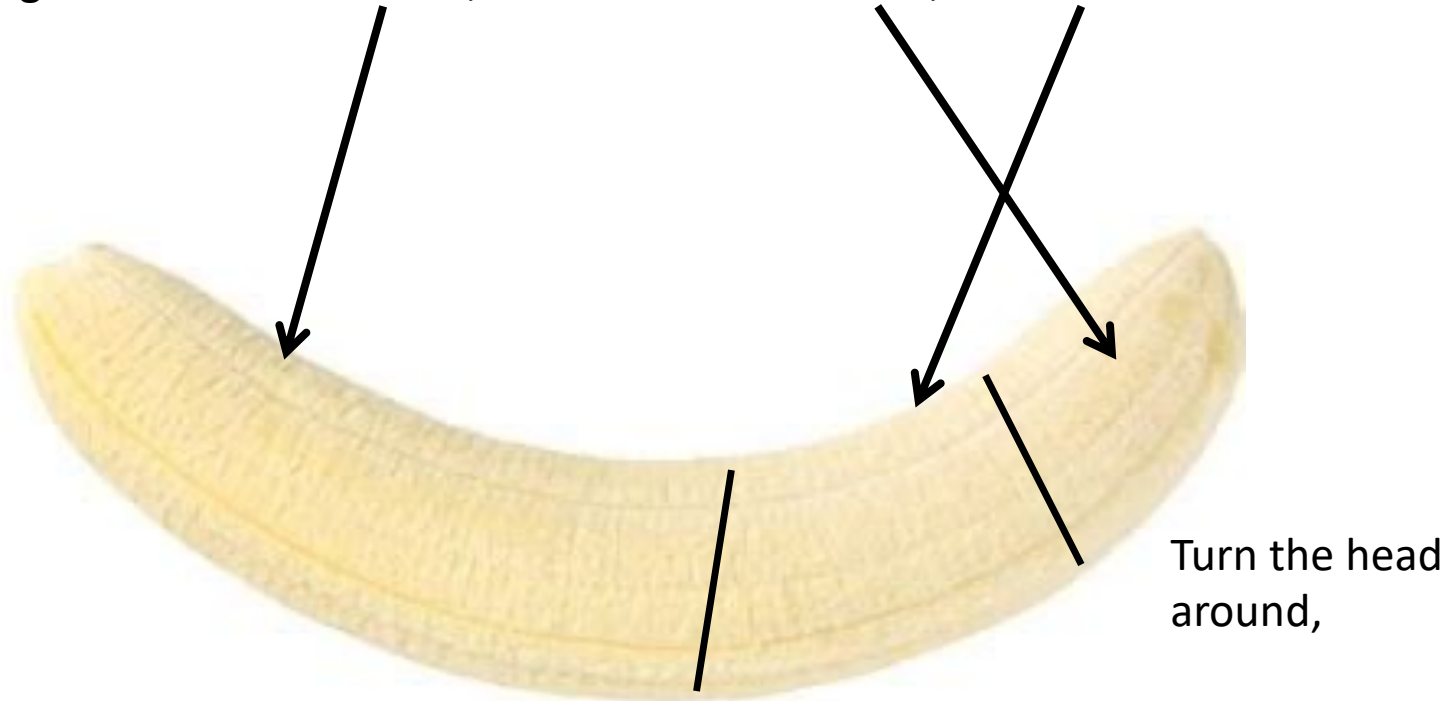
What can you use to make an ant?

- What can you use for the three body parts—slices of banana, round cookies or crackers?
- What can you use for the eyes—raisins, sunflower seeds, M&Ms?
- What can you use for the legs and antennae—thin slices of carrots or celery, pretzels or shoestring potato chips?



A banana makes a healthy ant.

One long end for the abdomen, short end for the head, middle for the thorax.....



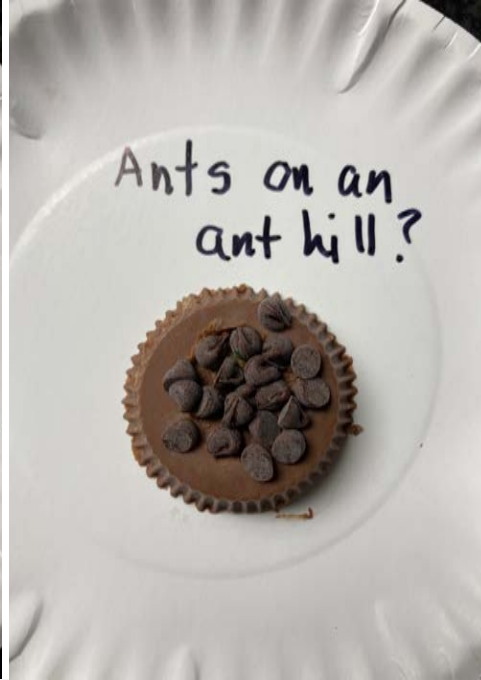
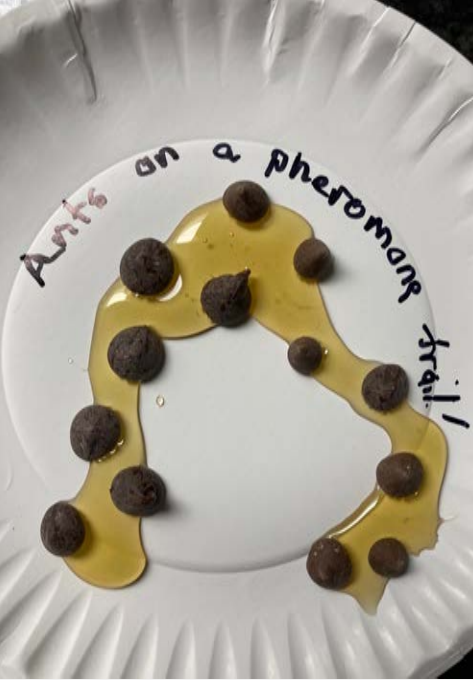


What could you use?

Remember 3 body parts, 6 legs, 2 antennae and 2 big eyes!



Yummy ants!



Where's the ant?

Where can you make your ants go?

Design your ant
snack.....

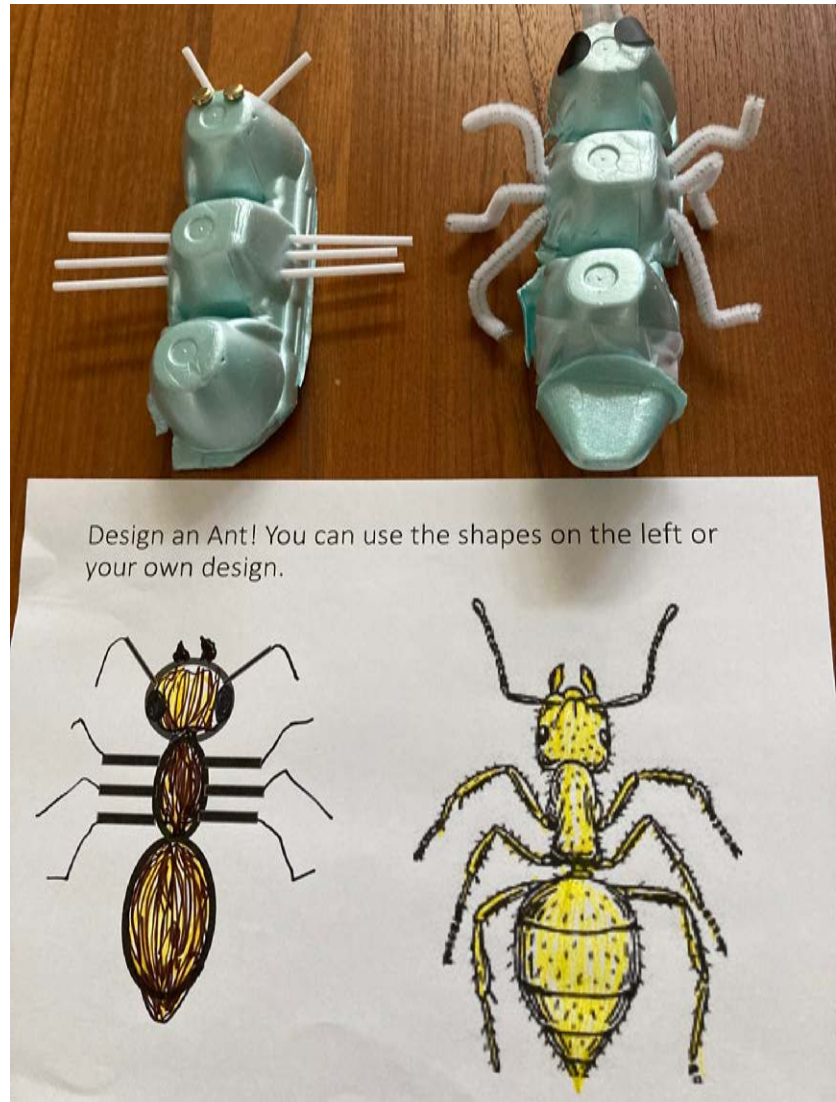
Ants in tunnels in an ant hill, or ant anatomy!



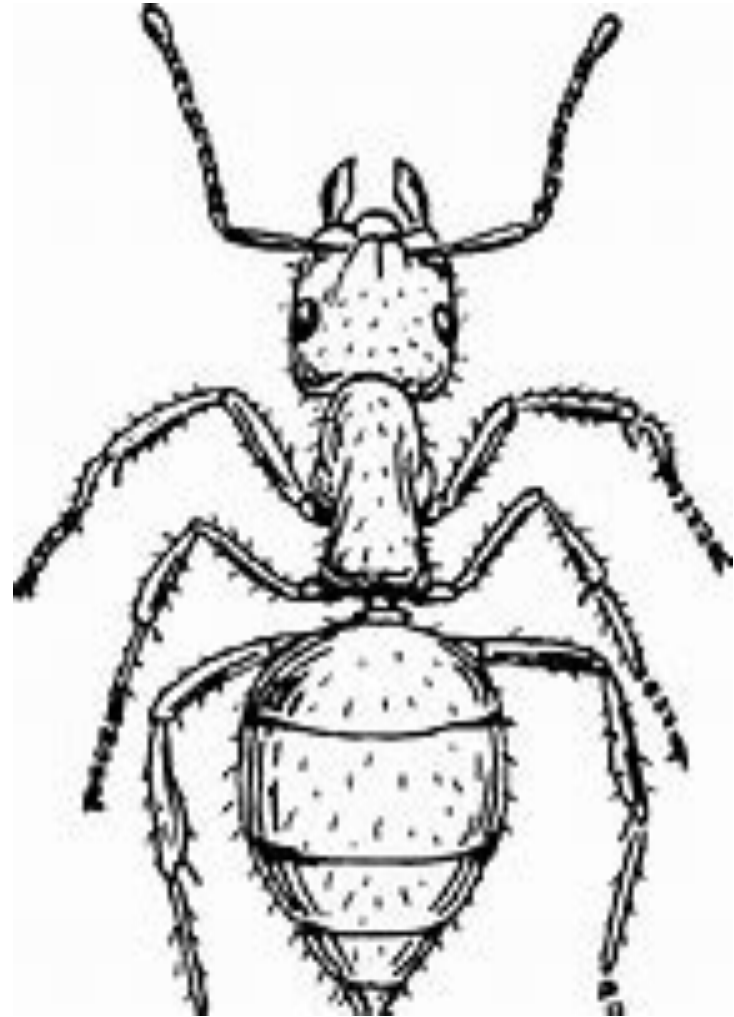
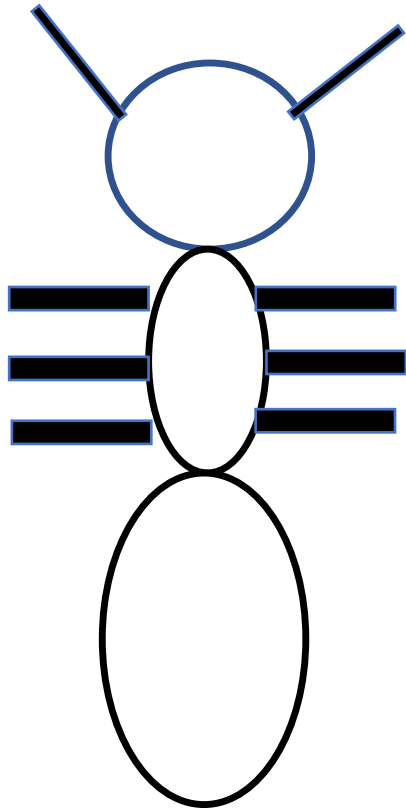
How many ways can you make an ant?

What can you find for engineering an ant?

Could you use lids and caps and toothpicks, straws and plates, cups and muffin cups?

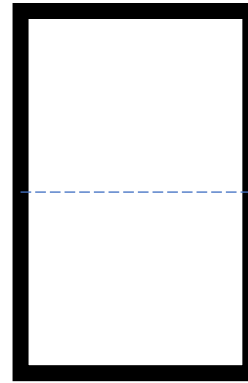
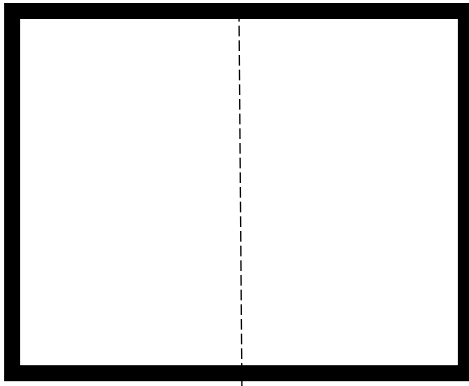


Design an Ant! You can use the shapes on the left or your own design.



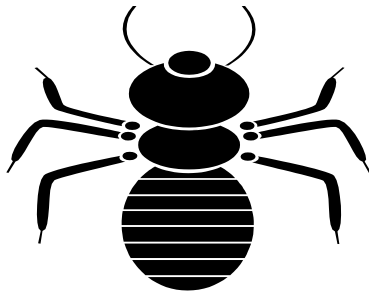
You can make a mini-book!

- Fold the paper in half
- Then in half again.





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Hey Little Ant teaches us to respect all living creatures and Ant Cities teaches us how ants live. Books provide affective and cognitive learning.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehH6l6v5sYM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuiTqw9YB10>

