

Lesson Plan

Investigating Anthills

Book: *Anthills*

Series: Animal Engineers

Level: Beacon

Objective

To help students practice using the features of a text to answer questions and define topic-specific terms.

Supplies

- *Anthills* book
- Anthills Group Questions (attached)

Before the Activity

Read through the *Anthills* book, or assign it to students to read on their own. Print the Anthills Group Questions and cut them so that each group's questions are on a separate slip of paper.

Activity

Ants live together in groups called colonies. In this activity, students will work in groups to learn more about what life in an ant colony is like. Divide students into three groups. Give each group a list of questions. Students should use the *Anthills* book to find the answers to the first three questions. They should write their answers down using complete sentences. Then students should work together to answer the fourth question. They should write this answer as a complete sentence as well.

Evaluation

Using the attached answer key, give each group 1 point for answering each question about the book's text and 3 points for thinking of another example to answer the fourth question, for a total of 6 points.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 3 (RI 3.4) and the National Science Education Standards' content standard C, grades K–4.

Anthills Group Questions

Group 1: Chapter 2

1. What body part is described on page 12?
2. What are mandibles?
3. How do ants use their mandibles to build the anthill?
4. Can you think of another animal that uses a special body part to build its home?

Group 2: Chapter 3

1. According to page 18, what do ants store in the chambers in their anthill?
2. What is honeydew?
3. What do ants do with the honeydew?
4. Can you think of another example of animals that work together to make or get food?

Group 3: Chapter 4

1. According to page 25, what happens to soil as ants dig tunnels?
2. How does this help the soil?
3. What are nutrients?
4. Can you think of another animal that helps plants grow?

Anthills Group Questions **ANSWER KEY**

Group 1: Chapter 2

1. What body part is described on page 12?

This page describes the ants' mandibles.

2. What are mandibles?

Mandibles are jaws that stick out from an ant's head.

3. How do ants use their mandibles to build the anthill?

Ants use their mandibles to carry dirt up to the hole at the top of the anthill, where the dirt forms a pile.

4. Can you think of another animal that uses a special body part to build its home?

Answers will vary.

Group 2: Chapter 3

1. According to page 18, what do ants store in the chambers in their anthill?

Ants store food, eggs, and aphids in the anthill's chambers.

2. What is honeydew?

Honeydew is a sweet substance that ants collect from aphids.

3. What do ants do with the honeydew?

Ants feed the honeydew to baby ants.

4. Can you think of another example of animals that work together to make or get food?

Answers will vary.

Group 3: Chapter 4

1. According to page 25, what happens to soil as ants dig tunnels?

As ants dig tunnels, soil from different layers is mixed together.

2. How does this help the soil?

It helps air and water flow through the soil, and it also adds nutrients to the soil.

3. What are nutrients?

Nutrients are substances that humans, plants, and animals need to stay strong and healthy.

4. Can you think of another animal that helps plants grow?

Answers will vary.