



Spiders

<http://ScienceForPreschoolers.com>

Begin your lesson by reading one or more of the following books, then continue with a group discussion.

[Spinning Spiders](#) by Melvin Berger

[Spider's Lunch](#) by Joanna Cole

[Are You a Spider?](#) by Judy Allen

What is an arachnid?

The word arachnid is a Greek word that means spider, but spiders are not the only creatures classified as arachnids. They share the classification with scorpions, mites and ticks. All arachnids have two body segments and eight legs.

- Difference between an arachnid and an insect – Arachnids have four pairs of segmented legs (eight total), which can grow back if broken. Insects have six legs. Arachnids have two body parts, insects have three. Many insects have antennae and can fly. Spiders have no antennae and no wings.
- Life-cycle of a spider – egg, spiderling (term for young spider), adult spider.
- Where do spiders live? - Everywhere. Some even live in lakes and ponds.
- What do spiders eat? - Insects, but some tropical species are large enough to eat minnows.

Chart of Spider Facts
There are 37,000 known species of spiders in the world. Approximately 3,500 in the U.S. and Canada.
Spiders lay between 2 and 1,000 eggs.
Their skeletons are on the outside of their bodies. This is called an exoskeleton.
The mother wolf spider carries her eggs with her and keeps the young spiderlings on her back until they are old enough to care for themselves.
Some spiders live underground and catch insects for food by jumping out at them.
Spiders use a sticky silk to make their webs. The silk comes from six "spinnerets" located on the underside of their abdomen.
They use the silk as parachutes, as shelter and to catch food.
Spiders have as many as 12 eyes.

Spider Thumbs

This activity will help to reinforce spider facts in a fun way. They will remember that a spider's body has two sections and they have eight legs. This activity is also designed to help those children who may be afraid of spiders to become more comfortable.

Materials:

[Construction Paper](#)

[Washable Ink pad](#)

[Pencils](#)

[Crayons](#)

Procedure:

1. Teach the class the song "[The Itsy Bitsy Spider](#)."
2. Pass out paper and let the kids draw places they would like to see a spider go up.
3. Help them put their thumbs on the ink pad and make two prints that form the two sections of the spider's body.
4. Let the children draw in the spider's eight legs.
5. When everyone has finished, sing "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" again, but substitute the places students have drawn for the water spout.

Questioning:

When was the last time a spider surprised you?

Activity: Spider Parade

While the preschoolers are doing this activity use this opportunity to talk about the number of parts and legs a spider has compared with insects. Also, the spider has an exoskeleton making the outside of the body hard, which can be compared to the Styrofoam balls.

Materials:

[Three Inch Foam Balls](#) cut in half

[Mini Stix](#)

[Chenille Stems](#) cut in half

[Craft Paint - Black](#)

[Wiggly Eyes](#) (Remember, spiders can have up to 12 eyes!)

[White Glue](#)

[Paper Fasteners](#)

[Elastic Cord](#)

[Craft sticks](#)

Procedure:

1. Give each student two halves of a foam ball and let them paint it black.
2. Use the mini stix to connect the two foam body sections
3. When the paint dries add the pipe chenille stem legs and glue the wiggly eyes on.
4. Fasten a long piece of elastic string to the paper fastener and insert into the back of the spider.
5. Tie the other end to a craft stick.
6. Let students have a spider parade around the room.

Game: Musical Spider Web

Materials:

Kids
Open floor space
Music

Procedure:

1. Select two children to start the game and ask the rest of the children to pretend they are the sticky silk web.
2. Ask the sticky silks to lie on the floor, twisting their bodies like parts of a spider web.
3. Instruct the sticky silks to touch the child next to them with a hand and a foot, making a continuous web.
4. The two children selected at the beginning start the game by carefully walking around the web to music.
5. When the music stops, the two children standing touch the nearest child to them and that child becomes the next to walk the web.

Activity: Make Your Own Spider Web

Materials:

[Black Yarn](#) cut into 6-foot pieces

[Cardboard](#)

[Crayons](#)

[Tape](#)

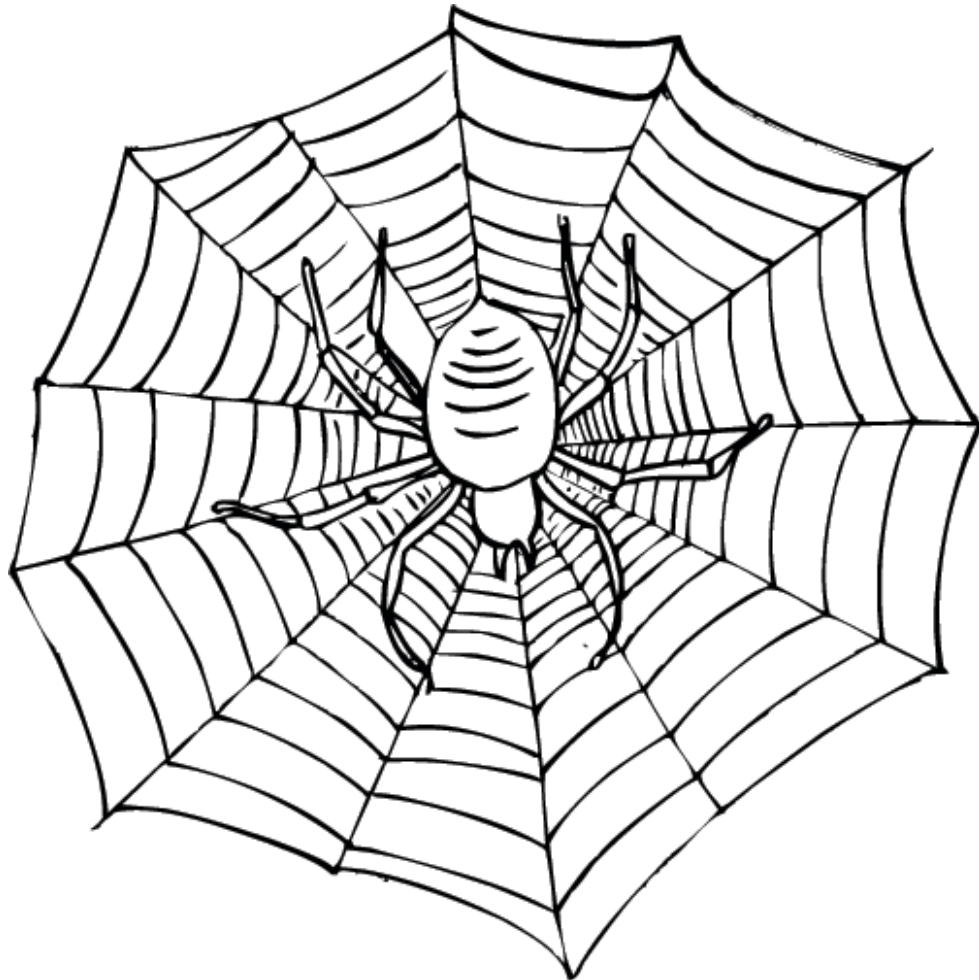
Procedure:

1. Cut the cardboard into 8-inch squares
2. Cut ½ inch slits every 1 to 2 inches around the outside of the cardboard
3. Let the children color their cardboard
4. Pull the end of the yarn through one slit and tape it to the back of the cardboard
5. Let the children weave the yarn through the slits until the project looks like a spider web

Ask the children if making a spider web with no hands would be easy. Ask how they could use their new web to catch food if they had to.

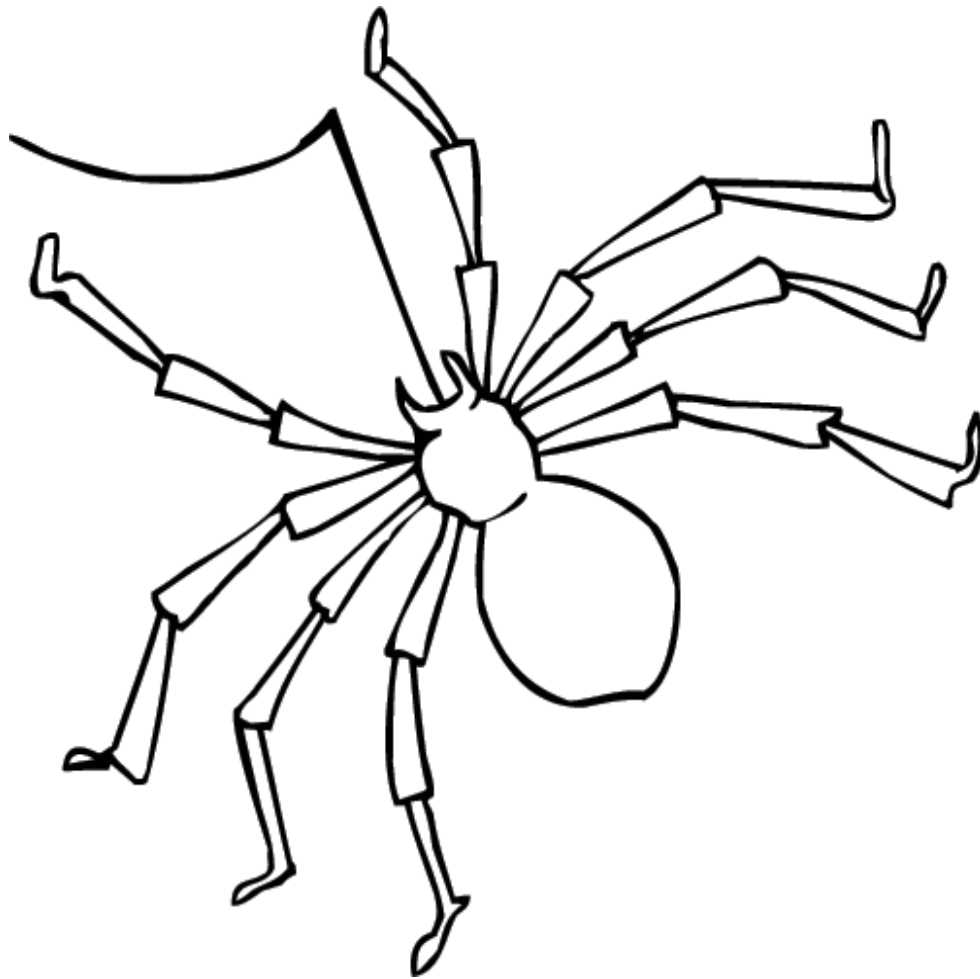
Final closure

Discuss the physical features of spiders and how those features help spiders catch their food. Then explain that spiders help farmers by eating the “bad” insects. Ask why the class thinks most people are afraid of spiders and if they've learned anything in class that changed their opinion about spiders.



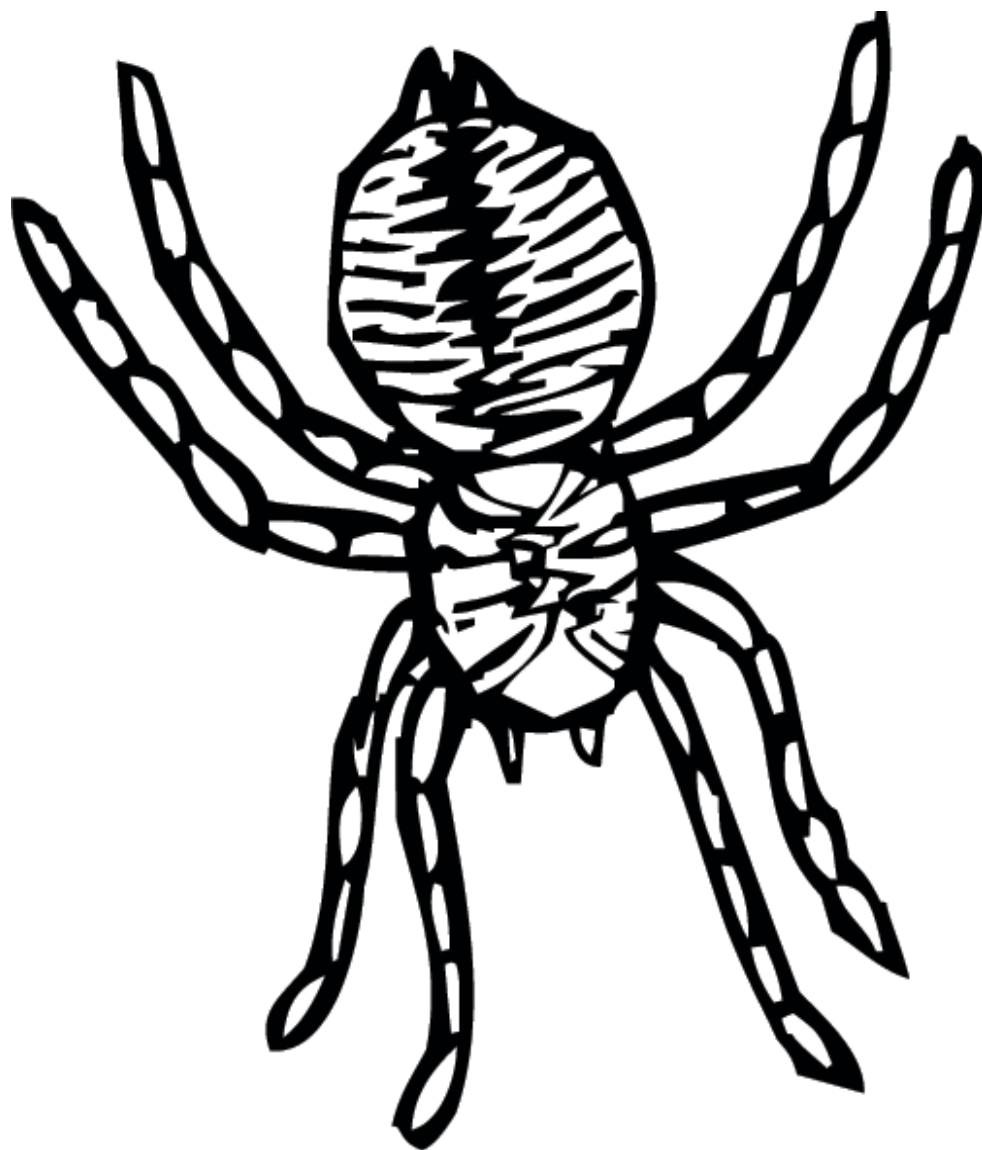
Spider Web

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Spider Silk

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