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Science Action Labs

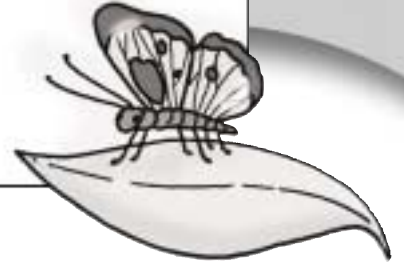
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The World of Insects

Insects

1



Insects Rule

Man's history on Earth may go back less than half a million years. The cockroaches that live in our houses may go back 350 million years.

There may be six billion people living on the entire Earth. There could be that many insects in only one square mile.

There are about one and a half million different kinds of animals on Earth. Two out of three of them are insects.



Most people are a certain size—not too big, but not too small. Insects come in all sizes. Most insects are about $\frac{1}{4}$ " long, but some are quite large.

A fairy fly wasp can go through the eye of a needle. Try to measure the eye of a needle.

The owl moth has a one-foot wing span. Hold up a ruler to see how big that is.

Very few insects are pests. Most are helpful. Bees make honey. Silkworms make silk. We should treat all insects with respect because they are an important part of nature.

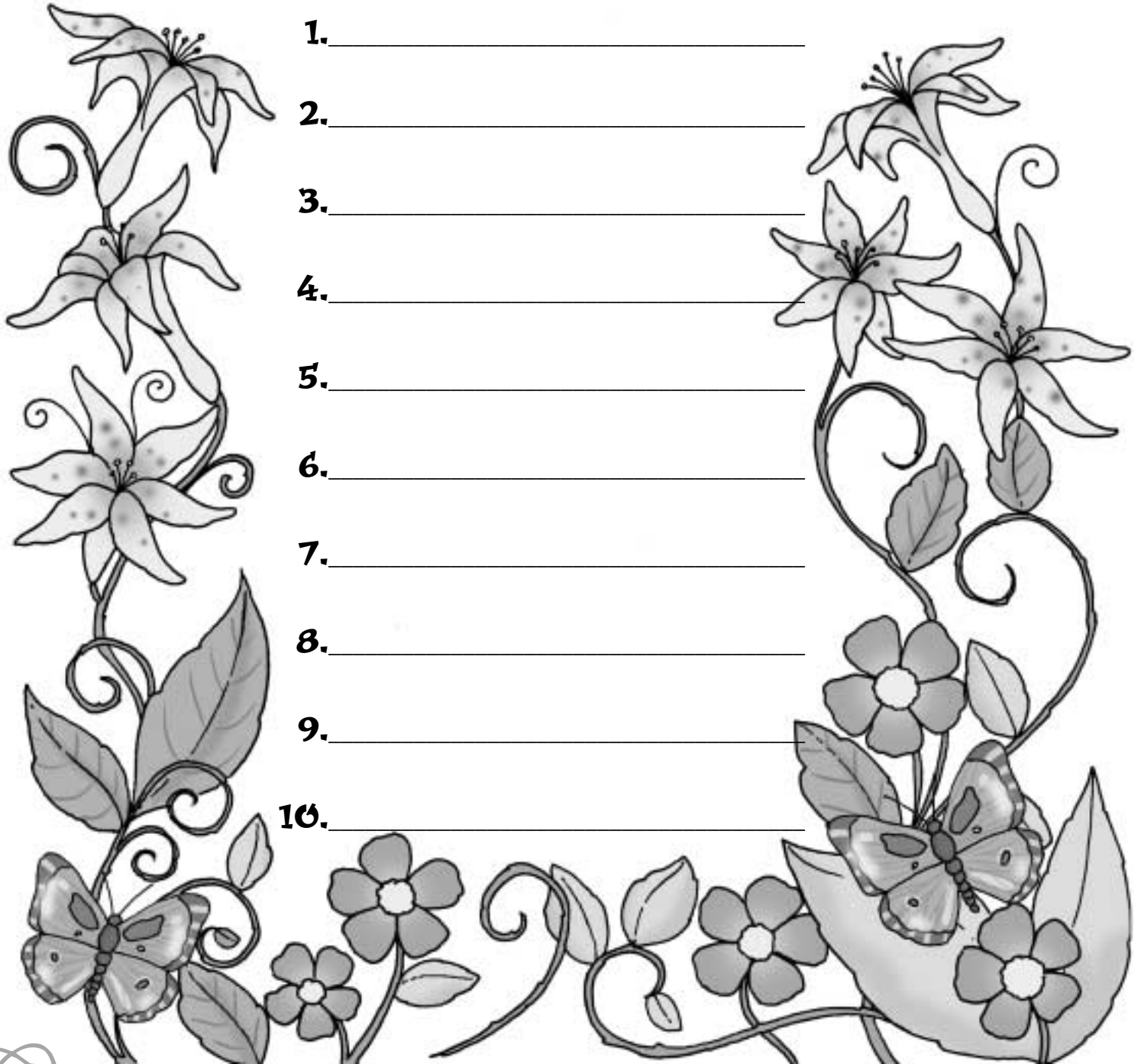


The World of Insects



Insect Neighbors

Name 10 insects that live around you. Don't count spiders or millipedes. They are not insects.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

The World of Insects



Comparing Insects and Yourself

Here are just a few ways in which insects are superior.

Can you signal from a light on your belly? A firefly can.

Can you live underground for 17 years? A cicada can.

Can you move at 25 miles per hour? A horsefly can.

Can you hang upside down from the ceiling? A housefly can.

Can you increase your weight thousands of times in only one week? An oak silkworm can.

Can you fly for six hours without landing? A fruit fly can.



cicada

Experiment

A tiny flea can jump 13 inches. A grasshopper can jump 30 inches. If you were an insect, you might be able to jump 100 feet.

Try jumping the longest distance you can.

What was your longest jump? _____ feet

An ant can pick up 30 times its own weight. If you were a 100-pound ant, how much weight would you be able to pick up?

_____ pounds



A housefly's wings beat 200 times a second. Try flapping your arms for 30 seconds. How many flaps can you do in 30 seconds?

_____ flaps. Tiring, isn't it?

Insects can be faster and stronger than you are.

But don't feel too bad. No insect has your ability to think. No insect is able to control its environment. Humans are in charge, not insects.