

Insect Orchestra

One way some insects communicate is by making sounds. They use various body parts to sing, chirp and buzz. You can create an insect orchestra with some simple household items.

Give every “insect” in your orchestra an instrument. (see below)

You'll need:

Crickets: 2 small squares of sandpaper

Termites: one small piece of stiff cardboard

Grasshoppers: a comb

Cicadas: canning jar lid (approx 3-inches in diameter)



Grasshoppers rub their wing over the teeth on their leg.

Crickets rub scrapers on their wings together. (Rub two pieces of sandpaper together.)

Termites hit their head against a hard surface. (Hold the cardboard in one hand, and tap your finger against it.)

Grasshoppers rub their wing over the teeth on their leg. (Run your finger along the teeth of a comb.)

Cicadas vibrate membranes on their thorax. (Hold a canning jar lid in both hands with your thumbs on top. Repeatedly press the flat part of the lid with your thumbs to make it “rattle.”)

Conduct your orchestra. Cue different parts of your orchestra one insect group at a time to start and stop “playing.” Cue in multiple kinds of insects at the same time.

Find Your Singing Mate (Alternate activity)

Blindfold one or more singing insects and give them an insect noisemaker. Have them stand in the center of a circle of children. If more than one child is in the center of the circle, give them a different instrument from each other. Give a cicada, termite, grasshopper and cricket “instrument” to four children in the outside circle. When the center insect makes her sound, all the singing insects in the outside circle should answer. Have the insect(s) in the center try to find their singing mate.

