

Spider Activities

By: Kerry Wixted

Maryland Department of Natural Resources



Did you know spiders consume 400 to 800 million metric tons of insects every year?! Spiders function both as important predators and prey in our landscapes, yet they are sadly misunderstood. Celebrate “Arachtober” with the following spider activities! To get started, [boogie down with Peacock Jumping Spiders](#) as the males “dance” to impress the females and attempt to stay alive in her presence.

Early Learners (preK-2nd grade)

1. Read one of the suggested books below or research spiders. Create a Venn diagram to compare spiders to insects. How many legs do spiders have? How many legs do insects have? What do spiders eat? Use the diagram in our [Spider Activity Guide](#).
2. Learn more about different types of spider webs by making your own web lacing cards and completing a spider web match activity. For printouts, check out the [Spider Web Wonders](#) (PDF) from Growing Up WILD. Larger web lacing card printouts can be found [here](#).
3. Check out this compilation of cross-curricular activities to teach about spiders with early learners from [Scholastic.com here](#).
4. Learn about how spiders make their webs and then [engineer your own!](#)

Upper Elementary (3rd-5th)

1. Want to know more about spiders? Check out our [Spider Activity Guide!](#)
2. Check out this [SciShow Kids episode](#) to learn about spiders and how they are different from insects.
3. Have you ever seen a spider walk up a wall? Did you know that tiny hairs on the bottom of their feet allow them to walk up surfaces like walls and webs? Check out the following PDF to learn more about spiders and [make a spider wall walker](#) (PDF).
4. Spiders have special glands in their rear ends that help to spin silk. The silk is actually liquid that is pushed out through long ducts, and the silk is stretched out to form silk fibers. Read more about spider silk on [KidZone](#). [Make your own spider “silk” with cornstarch and water](#). (Video)
5. Go on a spider hunt! Use the printable spider cards on page 18 of the [Spider Activity Guide](#) to see if you can find the different types of spiders- either indoors or outdoors!
6. Spiders can live in many different habitats. Build a spider habitat with instructions from [Alabama Outdoor Classroom](#).
7. Make some [minibeast models](#) with cups, straws, and other materials.

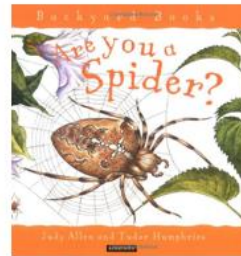
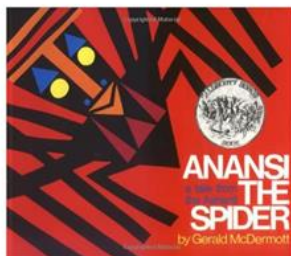
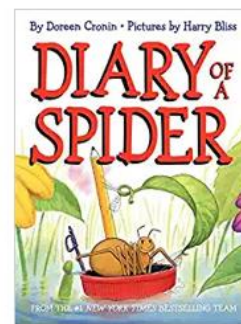
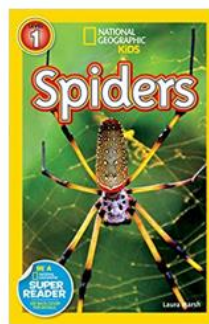
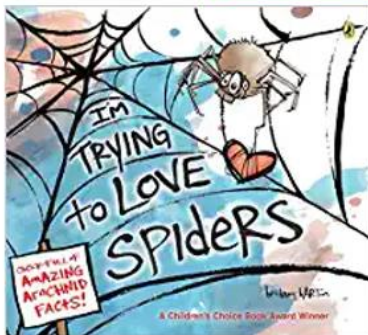
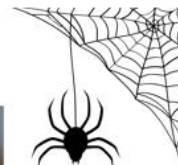
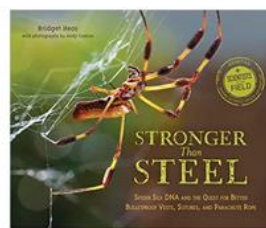
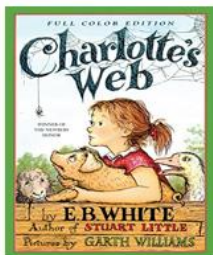
Middle School and High School (6th-12th)

1. Go on a spider safari!. Use applications like [Seek](#) or [iNaturalist](#) to identify spiders. Check out resources like the [Common Spiders of Ohio](#) printable guide. (PDF)
2. Learn how to draw and illustrate spiders based on their anatomy. Check out the [drawing prompts here](#).
3. Did you know? Spider silk is stronger than steel and is being used for many applications such as repairing bones and creating parachute rope. To help produce large quantities of silk, scientists are using transgenic goats! Learn more about this technology and others by reading the book “Stronger Than Steel: Spider Silk DNA and the Quest for Better Bulletproof Vests, Sutures, and Parachute Rope (Scientists in the Field Series)” by Bridget Heos. (It is available at public libraries). You can also read a brief news article [here](#). How do you feel about creating transgenic animals to produce materials like artificial spider silk? Do you think there is another way? Research and write about transgenic animals.
4. What’s the difference between venom and poison? Check out [this TED Talk on venom vs poison here](#). Can humans use spider venom to treat illnesses? Research different medical uses for spider venom. What other venomous animals have been used to create medicine?
5. Spiders are master engineers, weaving webs and other objects with their behinds. Try your hand at [engineering your own web](#).
6. Spiders were important symbols to some cultures. Native Americans in the Mississippi region would sometimes create gorgets, aka throat pendants, adorned with spiders and other animals. Check out this lesson from Illinois on [how to make your own spider gorget](#).



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Spider Books



For More Information:

- MD DNR Common Spider Page:
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/habitat/waspiders.aspx>
- MD DNR Wildlife Education Page:
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/Wildlife/Pages/Education/home.aspx>
- Common Spiders of Ohio (PDF):
<https://ohiodnr.gov/static/documents/wildlife/backyard-wildlife/Common%20Spiders%20of%20Ohio%20Field%20Guide%20pub5140.pdf>

