

SPIRIT ANT ACTIVITY



ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

There are about 6,000 mammal species in the world. Most of us are familiar with at least several species of monkeys, bears, wild cats and even whales. But when it comes to insects, diversity within major groups is less well known. All you may be aware of is that there are many pretty butterflies and a few different looking beetles. When it comes to ants, most people know that there are black ants and red ants - and maybe fire ants, but they belong with the red ants.

In reality, insect diversity is enormous. There are more than 1,000,000 insect species currently alive, and of all these insects, about 14,000 are ant species. This means that there are almost three times as many ant species as there are mammal species in the world!

In the "Spirit Ant" activity, students have a chance to explore some of this vast ant diversity. Students will learn about some of the traits of a selection of ant species by comparing them to their own characteristics. Students will find their "spirit ant" by researching the characteristics of common ant species and can then make a small poster that compares their own personalities to the "personalities"/behaviors of their selected ant.

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- YourSpiritAnt.com website
- One set of printed spirit ant slides or access to yourspiritant.com website
- Student Directions Sheet: "Find your spirit ant" below (one per student)
- Chart paper & markers for poster or access to computer if done digitally



DIRECTIONS

1. Print and copy the student directions sheet below
2. Make spirit ant slides available (either directly via yourspiritant.com or by printing each slide, see helpful hints)
3. If time allows, students can present their spirit ants to small groups or the class which is also a nice icebreaker or hook activity for the "Tree of Life" or "Ant ID" activity.



HELPFUL HINTS

- The directions ask students to create posters on paper, however the teacher can choose to allow them to use a digital tool such as Google Slides or Docs. If using paper, larger size sheets of construction paper are recommended.
- If the teacher chooses not to use technology, the spirit ant slides should be printed so students can read them. Students can take turns reading different slides, and do not need to each have a full set. Depending on the class size, the teacher may print two or three slide sets and have students trade slides as they finish reading them.



Name: _____

Find Your Spirit Ant!

You might not know it, but there are many different ant species living all around you. Just like humans, these ants have different behaviors and characteristics that help them survive.

This activity will help you find the ant that is most like you - your spirit ant!

Directions

1. Learn about the ants!

Online:

- a) Using a device that connects to the internet, go to <https://YourSpiritAnt.com>.
- b) In the menu, click on Ant Gallery.
- c) Read through the ant information slides.

Or if your teacher gives you hard copies:

- a) Read through the ant information cards provided by your teacher.

In the chart below, record information about three different potential spirit ants:

Common name	Scientific name	Characteristics of this ant that are like me.	Characteristics of this ant that are <u>not</u> like me.

2. From your list, choose the ant that is most like you. Write the ant's common name here:

3. Make a poster!

- a) In the top center, give your poster a title.
- b) Divide your paper in half.
- c) On the left side, include:
 - i. Your ant's common and scientific name
 - ii. An image or drawing of your ant
 - iii. At least two interesting facts about your ant's behavior
- d) On the right side, include:
 - i. Your name
 - ii. An image or drawing of you
 - iii. At least two reasons why you connect to this ant
- e) At the bottom of your page, write a one-sentence summary about why you picked this ant as your spirit ant.

Layout Guide

TITLE

INFO ABOUT YOUR
SPIRIT ANT

INFO ABOUT YOU

SUMMARY SENTENCE

Checklist

For full credit, make sure you have checked off everything on this list:

- Chart filled out for three ants**
- Poster formatted correctly based on layout diagram**
 - Includes required facts about ant and you**
 - Includes images or drawings**
 - Creative, colorful, and neat**
 - Summary is one complete sentence and concisely states how this ant is like you**