

FOCUSING ON OBSERVATION: INSECTS AS TEACHING INSTRUMENTS OF SCIENCE SKILLS

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Utilization of insects as teaching instruments in the exploration of life concepts is widespread. Not only are they relatively easy and cost-efficient to maintain, but they also stimulate interest in the subject of biology. As learning tools, insects have made their way into countless classrooms as well as community learning centers including natural history museums, zoos, and science museums. I have found that insects also have the potential to be put to use in the instruction of scientific process skills such as observing nature, generating questions, and communicating scientific findings. These skills, among others, are elemental to the function of the scientific method and the critically thinking mind. Insect-based learning experiences that have been used in educating people of all ages to foster the enhancement of thoughtful observation and reflection are discussed.