Unit 4 Lesson 2: What’s Bugging You?

Focus Areas: Pest Identification; Science
Focus Skills: identifying, comparing/contrasting, drawing conclusions, recognizing visual clues

Objectives

- To develop an understanding of the term “pest”
- To identify pests that bother people

Essential Questions

- What is a pest?
- How do pests affect peoples’ lives?

Essential Understandings

- “Pests” come in many shapes and sizes.
- Some creatures are pests to farmers; others affect homeowners.

Background

Some animals and plants are a nuisance, and others cause destruction, damage, and disease. These we consider pests. However, the vast majority of plants and animals with whom we share the earth are beneficial. They provide food, kill other animals that harm our environment, and provide beauty and variety to our natural environment. It is important that we learn to distinguish between pests and pals.

Vocabulary

garden a place for growing food or decorative plants
pest something that bothers you or your environment
sprouts the young form of plants we eat
vegetables plants that are eaten
Logistics

**Time:** 30 minutes  
**Group Size:** 2 to 30  
**Space:** a classroom

Materials

Izzy puppet*  
props for pest role plays such as hats, stuffed animals, plants, vegetables, and (models or real) garden tools.

* single copy provide

Preparation

Collect props such as hats.  
Display the “pest scenario” pictures.

Activity

Introduction

Write the word “**PEST**” on the board.

1. Ask the children what they think of when they hear the word pest.  
2. Have the children draw pictures of some things that they consider to be pests.  
3. Discuss what they like and dislike about these things.  
4. Ask, “When have you been bothered by this pest?” (Record answers on chart paper.) **Note:** These responses become the basis of the pest scenarios the children develop later in the lesson.

Involvement

1. Divide the children into groups, and based on the previous discussion or using their drawings of pests, encourage the children to role-play the “pest scenarios.” Give them a few minutes to rehearse and have the scenarios acted out one at a time.

   - **After watching a role-play, ask the participants:**  
     a. What is the pest that is causing the problem?  
     b. What is the damage or problem that the pest causes?  
     c. How do you think you should control this pest?
Note: The initial responses will probably not involve plants.

2A) Izzy asks for volunteers to act out each of the following scenarios:
   • “Suppose you are being bothered by...”
     a. ants at a picnic?
     b. mosquitoes in your yard?
     c. bats in your attic?
     d. bees in flowers you want to pick?
     e. mice in your kitchen?
     f. cockroaches in your cupboards?
     g. weeds in your garden?
     h. poison ivy in your yard?

2B) Following each scenario, Izzy asks:
   • What can you do to get rid of a pest but not hurt the Earth?
   • Is the “pest” harmful, helpful, or both?  (Example: Bees sting but also make gardens grow by moving pollen from flower to flower.)

3. Izzy leads the children in the IPM Song. He sings line 1 of each verse, and the children repeat it by singing line 2. Izzy sings lines 3 and 4, and everyone sings line 5.

Follow Up

Provide examples of pests for the children to observe such as mold on bread, aphids on roses, ants on food, etc. discuss what they could do to control them.

(Weather and season permitting) Go on a pest hunt around the school grounds. Create a class journal of pictures of insect pests such as mosquitoes, bees, and ants. Include pest plants (weeds) such as crabgrass and dandelions.

Observe insects such as bees that pollinate flowers. Discuss how a bee is helpful (pollination) and sometimes harmful (stinging people.) Tell the children that without bees spreading pollen, the plants could not grow flowers or make fruit.