

Questions Asked by Second Graders in Reading Instruction About Insects

Insect Questions For Professor Ken Raffa

1. Why do insects have 6 legs and not 2 like us or 4 like a dog? Does each leg have a special job? Tayshaneshia and Cody
2. How do the wings of a butterfly stay strong so that they can fly all the way to Mexico? Tayshaneshia How do they decide where to go – how far – when to stop?
3. How does the firefly turn on its light? Karen and Alexis
4. Have they ever found dinosaur DNA or animal DNA inside an insect? Trevon
5. Since some insects chirp and make sounds, do any insects have a song that they sing to their babies – sort of like a lullaby? Shanita
6. Do insects miss each other when they leave? Do they get used to seeing or smelling each other? Trevon
7. What was the last insect discovered? Cody and Trevon
8. If the butterflies migrate to the south or Mexico every year, why do they keep coming back? That's a lot of flying. They could die. They won't be missing anybody because a lot of the butterflies are there together. Trevon
9. If you take off the light of the firefly to use as an earring will it keep lighting? Will a new one grow back? Mina
10. How can you tell the age of an insect? Abraham and Cody
11. What happens in the life of the firefly to give it light? Abraham
12. What was the first insect alive? How did it get here? Cody and Trevon
13. Which insect do you think is the smartest? Mina
14. How did the first insect alive have a baby? Cody

Insect Questions For Professor Raffa

1. Crickets hear because they have ears on their legs. Grasshoppers hear because they have ears on their abdomen. We all hear because we have ears on our head. Why don't all insects have ears in the same place just like all people do? Chris
2. Why are insects little? Lauran
3. When some insects attack, they let out a liquid. This liquid is poisonous to other insects and animals but it's not poisonous to us. Why? Jatoya
4. How do honeybees make wax from flowers? Brianna
5. How do wasps make their hive so that it doesn't fall apart? I know that they don't use glue. Weaving isn't real strong either. Brad and Diana
6. If bees sting when they get scared then how come they say that insects don't have feelings or emotions? How can that be? Michael
7. How did they come up with the name "insect"? Sammy
8. What is inside an insect's body? And I'm sure that it's a lot so how does it all fit in there? And how can it be studied really well since everything is so small? Nick
9. How can a butterfly fly so far - all the way to Mexico - and not break its wings? The wings look so fragile and the rain and wind are hard. Erica
10. What is in your lab? Marcus
11. How did you get interested in studying insects? Brianna

12. How do insects live in the winter so that you can study them? Do you keep them alive in the winter for experiments? Brianna
13. If I rub my finger across a comb to make a sound like a grasshopper, do you think that a grasshopper will answer? I'm going to try this experiment. Would you like me to write it down so you know what happens? Chris
14. When an ant lays eggs in a tunnel does she go to a certain place? How does she know where to go and how to get there - especially the first time? Michael
15. All people grow in pretty much the same way. How come it's different for insects? Some have wings and fly and some don't. It's almost like they are part bird and part people. How does this happen? Satiyea
16. Why do bees make honey? Chris
17. How did you get interested in studying insects? Laura
18. Do other people work in the lab with you? Deondra

Questions For Professor Raffa

1. How do insects change colors? Cynthia and Tinika
2. Are there any insects out there that are so little that we can't see them? Yee Leng
3. Do any insects lay colored eggs? Kenisha
4. Does the caterpillar notice when it's in the cocoon that it's changing? Dylan
5. Can an insect sneeze? Dylan
6. Why do some insects live underground? Giovanni
7. Do insects get hiccups or gas? Yee Leng, Dylan, Brandon
8. Do insects get a chance to play? If not, why not? Lexus
9. Why do insects need six legs? We only get two. Tinika, DeDe, Kenisha
10. Can you usually tell how old an insect is just by looking at it? (so you could celebrate their birthday) Brandon
11. If dragonflies lay their eggs in the water, what keeps them from floating away all over the place and dying? Nick
12. Do many insects spit? Cesar
13. How do different kinds of insects get to know each other? Can they do this? Martin S.
14. What would happen if an ant went into another tunnel by mistake? Would it start working there? Would the other ants show it what to do? Would the other ants kill it? Martin
15. What happens if an ant doesn't know what to do when it hatches and can't learn? Martin
16. What does a mason wasp eat? Brandon
17. How do the bees make wax? Tanisha
18. How do you know when the ants mate whether they're making a queen or a worker? Cesar, Jonny
19. How does the bark beetle help us? everybody
20. If some insects were here before the dinosaurs – that's a long time – why aren't they extinct by now too? Martin Sanchez and Martin Avila

Questions About Professor Raffa:

1. Where do you work? Tinika Martin
2. How old were you when you started to get interested in insects? Tanisha, Nick

3. Are you like an insect doctor? Do you know if they perform surgery on insects to keep them alive? And do they need anesthesia and how much can you give them? Brandon
4. What is your favorite insect? everybody
5. What is your favorite insect book? everybody
6. What kinds of insects do you work with? Yee Leng, Joshua
7. What is your lab like? What kinds of things do you do each day? Everybody

Questions for Professor Raffa

1. A fly knows - somehow - to get out of the way of a fly swatter. How does it know this? Keegan
2. Why do insects have six legs? They're so little. Do they need that many to get around? Does each leg have a special job? Sam
3. When honeybees do their dance to let the other honeybees know where the food is and how far it is, do they ever mess up and wag the wrong way and maybe get killed? Chris
4. Do you need a lot of ants to make an ant tunnel work? And if there are a lot of anthills and tunnels, how does an ant know which tunnel it's supposed to return to after it goes out to get food? And if it goes to the wrong tunnel by mistake, do the other ants kill it? Brett
5. Are insects used for medicine? Are there insect potions that can make sick people better? Chris and Keegan
6. If insects, especially the housefly, have compound eyes - which means they can see up and down, straight, and to both sides at the same time, what keeps them from getting dizzy? And if they fly - do they just get dizzier? Kayla
7. Is there any research going on with ant antennae? I wrote a paper about it. I want to know if there is a way we can find out what they are saying with the antennae. Keegan
8. Has anyone ever done research on what it's like to be an insect? Paul
9. How did butterflies get their name? Does it have anything to do with butter and that their wings are smooth like butter? Jessica
10. Most moths fly at night but yet they like to fly around the light. So, why don't they fly in the daytime when there's light everywhere? Chelsea
11. My dog went into shock from the pain when a big bookshelf and books fell on her. Do insects go into shock when we step on them and they're not yet dead? Has anyone ever studied if insects go into shock from pain? What did they find out? Chelsea
12. How do the butterflies grow their antennae? Are they just really grown out of the head or do they run through the whole body? Valesa

Questions About Your Job

1. What is your lab like? What kinds of things do you have in there? Megan, Brandon, Paul
2. What insect experiments are you doing right now? What insects are you studying? Paul, Keegan, Chris, Aza, Amanda
3. How did you decide to become a scientist? Keegan, Chelsea
4. Can I visit your lab sometime? Do you have special hours when you're open? Keegan
5. Did you like insects in second grade? Did you like science in second grade? Everybody

Questions For Professor Raffa 2002

1. What would happen if an ant went into another tunnel by mistake? Would it just start working there? Would the other ants show it what to do? Would the other ants kill it? And, if it did return to its own tunnel, would the ants there smell it and treat it as the enemy? Martin Sanchez
 2. Why is it that the honey ants only live in the Southwest? Tanisha
 3. How did the daddy – long legs get its name? Does it only apply to the male? Cesar, Joshua
 4. What would happen if a spider or bee entered an anthill? Lexus, Tinika
 5. Since the ants all work together, do they love other ants the way people do? Do they have ant kisses and ant hugs? Tanisha
 6. Do the ants have bosses? Jonathan, Yee Leng
 7. Do the queen ants ever help out the workers so that they can relax? If there's an emergency like somebody's trying to step on them or flood the ant hill, has the queen ant ever helped? Tanisha, Lexus
 8. Do the bark beetles ever have wars? Brandon
 9. What would happen if the worker ants didn't work? Brandon, Nick, Kenisha
- Questions For Professor Raffa
21. How do insects change colors? Cynthia and Tinika
 22. Are there any insects out there that are so little that we can't see them? Yee Leng
 23. Do any insects lay colored eggs? Kenisha
 24. Does the caterpillar notice when it's in the cocoon that it's changing? Dylan
 25. Can an insect sneeze? Dylan
 26. Why do some insects live underground? Giovanni
 27. Do insects get hiccups or gas? Yee Leng, Dylan, Brandon
 28. Do insects get a chance to play? If not, why not? Lexus
 29. Why do insects need six legs? We only get two. Tinika, DeDe, Kenisha
 30. Can you usually tell how old an insect is just by looking at it? (so you could celebrate their birthday) Brandon
 31. If dragonflies lay their eggs in the water, what keeps them from floating away all over the place and dying? Nick
 32. Do many insects spit? Cesar
 33. How do different kinds of insects get to know each other? Can they do this? Martin S.
 34. What happens if an ant doesn't know what to do when it hatches and can't learn? Martin
 35. What does a mason wasp eat? Brandon
 36. How do the bees make wax? Tanisha
 37. How do you know when the ants mate whether they're making a queen or a worker? Cesar, Jonny
 38. How does the bark beetle help us? everybody
 39. If some insects were here before the dinosaurs – that's a long time – why aren't they extinct by now too? Martin Sanchez and Martin Avila

